ASSESSMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SACCAR'S INFORMATION UNIT

April 1997

APAP III
Research Report
No. 1023

A Report of the Sustainable Financing Initiative (SFI)

Prepared for

Agricultural Policy Analysis Project, Phase III, (APAP III)

USAID Contract No. LAG-4201-Q-00-3061-00

Author: Sloan Mahone
Consultant

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction..... 1

Methodology..... 2

Assessment and Recommendations Summarized..... 3
SACCAR Information Unit..... 3

Review of SACCAR Documents..... 7
SACCAR newsletter..... 7
SACCAR brochure..... 17
Impact Assessments..... 20
Annual Report..... 23
Electronic Communications..... 24
Zimbabwe Journal of Agricultural Research..... 25

Scenarios for the Administration of the Journal 29

Dissemination of Public Relations Materials..... 32

SACCAR and the Sustainable Financing Initiative..... 38

SACCAR Workshop/Debriefing Agenda..... 39

B

LIST OF SAMPLE MATERIALS

(i) Production schedule

(ii) Newsletter formatting

(iii) Author submission guidelines

(iv) Policy memo

(v) Tri-fold brochure (inside panels)

(vi) Tri-fold brochure (outside panels)

(vii) Report-in-Brief

(viii) Impact Assessment

(ix) Database & mailing list ads

(x) Press (news) release

LIST OF ANNEXES

I. Statement of stakeholders perspectives, March 1997;

II. SFI presentation outline, SACCAR Stakeholders meeting

III. Job descriptions; SACCAR Information Unit

IV. SACCAR newsletter survey, 1996

C

Introduction

Under the Sustainable Financing Initiative, this TDY was planned to develop reporting systems, formats, and presentation ("public relations") materials that highlight SACCAR's contributions to the food, agriculture, and natural resources sectors (FANR) and the effects of SACCAR programs and activities. This task was undertaken in close collaboration with SACCAR's Information Unit, the SACCAR Director, and other staff, and included participation in a week long Stakeholders Meeting with representation from 11 of the 12 SADC member states. In addition, this task was conducted with coordination from Task No. 3 in order to clarify stakeholder interests and information needs.

The terms of reference for this task (Task No. 2) were as follows:

1. Review existing SACCAR reports, documents, brochures, etc. and assess suitability of materials for demonstrating SACCAR's impacts and ANR "value-added;" explore reporting/information links to SACCAR's national ANR partners (e.g., NARS and national programs) and electronic networks.

2. Make recommendations for SACCAR's management information/reporting system (including information sources external to SACCAR, e.g., NARS etc.), reports, documents, brochures, etc. to highlight SACCAR's contribution to ANR and the effects and benefits of its programs and activities.

3. Prepare sample reporting formats and PR/promotional materials that highlight SACCAR's contributions to ANR, the impacts and benefits of its programs and activities, and the need for financial sustainability.

4. Investigate the possibilities for disseminating PR/promotional materials in the national and regional media, donor and SADC meetings, and other fora.

5. Draft a plan for a PR/promotional campaign for SACCAR and SFI.

6. Conduct a workshop for SACCAR and interested partners to present MIS recommendations, sample reporting formats and PR materials, the results of the dissemination survey, and the draft PR campaign plan.

Expected outputs or products are as follows:

1. Assessment and recommendations summarized.
2. Pilot reporting system, sample formats and PR/promotional materials prepared.
3. PR/promotional campaign plan prepared.
4. Workshop conducted.

Methodology

The nature of this task is both strategic and product/action-oriented. Collaboration with the Director of SACCAR and the Senior Information Officer resulted in a workplan for the duration of the task in-country. Recommendations have been made with the following criteria:

1. Recommendations are inherently feasible and practical and include the creation, redesign, or implementation of marketing strategies and products.

2. Recommendations exploit existing resources and capacity.

3. Recommendations gravitate toward immediate impact with follow-up recommendations for mid-range and long-range goals.

The consultancy lasted for three weeks. The first week consisted of a SACCAR sponsored stakeholders meeting in Gaborone. Eleven of the twelve SADC member states were represented (excepting Angola) by Ministers, academics, the private sector, and NGOs. The Sustainable Financing Initiative was presented, and participants prepared a statement outlining stakeholders' perspectives regarding the future structure and role of SACCAR.

During weeks two and three, the consultant reviewed previous consultant reports, and SACCAR publications and documents, and interviewed SACCAR staff members, working most closely with the Executive Director and the Senior Information Officer. On the final working day, the Executive Director and consultant called a debriefing for Program Officers and Assistants to discuss the progress of the past three weeks, and review recommendations. Staff were encouraged to provide feedback. A second debriefing was held on the same day with a representative from USAID.

The basic tenets of the Sustainable Financing Initiative, as they were presented to the SACCAR leadership and stakeholders, were utilized as a guideline for the development of the recommendations included within this report.

ASSESSMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS SUMMARIZED

SACCAR's Information Unit

As published by SACCAR, the mandate of the Information Services Unit is to:

1. maintain and operate an inventory of agricultural research resources;

2. facilitate rapid and continuous exchange and use of scientific and technical information systems;

3. promote and facilitate the publication of research tools and materials.

The Information Unit is coordinated by a Senior Program Officer for Information who supervises an Assistant Program Officer and a Secretary. The SACCAR job descriptions for the unit (complete job descriptions are included as Annex III) are lengthy, but highlight the following:

Senior Program Officer for Information

By definition, the Senior Program Officer for Information prepares the unit's annual workplan and budget, and monitors and evaluates the department's performance against the workplan and budget throughout the year. The SPIO designs appropriate databases for bibliographic and non-bibliographic information needed by management, produces and disseminates information about SACCAR to scientists and others, formulates strategies related to regional information needs, writes, edits, and distributes all publications, participates in the preparation and publication of the regional agricultural research journal, and represents and advises management on regional information activities.

Assistant Program Officer for Information

By definition, the Assistant Program Officer collects, organizes, and maintains data related to research, training and extension, maintains mailing lists for publications, assists in the editing, production, and distribution of publications, and proposes and secures articles from potential newsletter authors.

Secretary

The secretary is responsible for clerical functions of the unit, including word processing, mailings, filing, scheduling of appointments and arrangement of travel, and dissemination of the newsletter and other publications.

Management of the Information Office

The environment within the unit is relaxed and informal, but so much so that work is not delegated

effectively, and results and follow-up are not expected or demanded. Structured communication is poor between the Senior Information Officer and support staff with regard to the overall operation and needs of the unit. The result is that the unit staff does not work as a team toward the accomplishment of key projects. There is little regard for accountability, follow-up, or personal initiative. Deadlines are ignored or never set, and obstacles to the success or completion of projects are accepted, but not questioned or confronted.

The Senior Information Officer spends a significant amount of time compensating for weaknesses in administrative support, and is therefore distracted from strategic and management functions.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Senior Information Officer should meet individually with support staff to review individual job descriptions, set priorities, and discuss levels of responsibility, accountability, performance evaluation, and understanding of the needs of the unit as a whole.

   a. The Assistant Program Officer for Information acts as the primary support for the Senior Information Officer and the Office. This position should be capable of handling substantive projects over extended periods of time, should demonstrate professional judgement and initiative, should communicate progress and problems to the Senior Information Officer, and require medium to minimal supervision.

   b. The unit Secretary should require project oversight and direction, but minimal task supervision. Competence in clerical and organizational skills is a minimum requirement. Ideally, this position should manage the administrative needs of the unit with oversight from the Senior Information Officer.

2. A production schedule should be printed, posted, and adhered to as much as possible (see sample i). The schedule should include all publications, annual meetings, and any other activities that pertain to the unit's time management. The Executive Director should have a copy of the unit production schedule for his own management and oversight purposes.

3. The Senior Information Officer should call regular (weekly) unit meetings to discuss the unit production schedule and upcoming deadlines, delegation of tasks, and the progress of individual assignments. Weekly individual progress reports (verbal) help to ensure that projects do not get dropped or lost. The Senior Information Officer requires better information so that he may address problems in a timely manner, and report the progress of tasks to the Executive Director.

4. The Secretary for the Information Unit should be moved to the office adjoining that of the Senior Information Officer. This will allow for greater supervision, and will help instill the Secretary's role as integral to the unit and the success of its mission. Furthermore, this office is large enough to house an organized file and small publications area (this exists, but is not organized to be

user-friendly or attractive) which the Secretary should be responsible for managing. This office is also a suitable reception area for the unit.

5. After a period of 6 months, the Executive Director and the Senior Information Officer should undertake an audit of the unit to assess the following:

a. Have agreed upon recommendations and new policies been implemented? What are the outcomes? What revisions are necessary?

b. Review unit staff performance. What are the shortfalls? Are there additional training needs? Are there additional staffing needs?

Note: Unit staff should be allowed to give feedback about their own performance, efficacy of the new policies, training needs or desires, and suggestions for changes to the unit. The audit should not take the place of a formal annual employee performance review, and should not be threatening to staff. The review aims to assess the operation and progress of the unit, include the perspectives of support staff, and identify areas to be strengthened.

After the completion of the internal audit, the Executive Director and Senior Information Officer may wish to conduct a full staff debriefing to report on the progress of the unit, the results of the audit, and to solicit further feedback from both senior and junior staff regarding the Information Unit's collaboration with other program offices.

Potential for SACCAR internships

6. It is reasonable to assume that SACCAR's Information Unit would benefit from additional skilled staff. While budgetary limitations may not allow for the hiring of support staff, SACCAR should investigate the possibility of sponsoring professional internships for university graduate students. While the University of Botswana in Gaborone does not sponsor any form of communications, public relations, or journalism studies, other member states do. The universities in South Africa, generally Technikons, often require journalism students to work for one year in a professional environment as a condition of graduation.

SACCAR should propose an outline of an internship to selected journalism or communications departments, emphasizing key objectives for the year, such as; the development and placement of feature articles related to FANR, the development of a media database, assistance with the layout and design of a potential SACCAR website, etc.

A communications intern or interns would require assistance with housing and perhaps a stipend. SACCAR should interview schools to discern whether or not university assistance is available. In some cases, the intern may wish to work part-time at SACCAR and leave time for a second job. The University of Botswana should be approached for assistance with dormitory housing.

SACCAR INFORMATION UNIT

PRODUCTION SCHEDULE 1997

JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL
Zimbabwe Journal of Agricultural Research mailed Jan 15: March newsletter article deadline	February 15: newsletter copy to printer	Newsletter printed and mailed	Preparation of materials for board meeting April 15: June newsletter article deadline
MAY	**JUNE**	**JULY**	**AUGUST**
SACCAR board meeting May 15: Newsletter copy to printer	Newsletter mailed	Follow-up on status of ZJAR printing & mailing July 15: Sept. Newsletter article deadline	ZJAR 2nd annual issue mailed August 15: Newsletter copy to printer
SEPTEMBER	**OCTOBER**	**NOVEMBER**	**DECEMBER**
Newsletter mailed Preparation for Annual Report	Preparation of materials for board meeting Oct. 15: Dec. Newsletter article deadline	SACCAR board meeting Prepare final production of Annual Report Nov 15: Newsletter copy to printer	Newsletter Mailed Follow-up on status of ZJAR printing and mailing

REVIEW OF SACCAR DOCUMENTS AND PUBLICATIONS FOR DEMONSTRATION OF IMPACT AND FANR "VALUE-ADDED."

SACCAR Newsletter

The newsletter is SACCAR's primary means of communication with its constituency. It has suffered from a series of production and distribution problems, an under-developed mailing list, a sometimes conflicting mandate, and a host of competing or awkward design styles. Despite its problems, the newsletter is generally appreciated and highly rated by some constitutents. Its scope may be larger than its mailing list would indicate, due to the fact that it is often distributed to libraries and academic departments where it is displayed or circulated. However, the total number of newsletters mailed (1200 mailed of 2000 printed) may fall far short of the potential market.

In 1996, the Information Unit mailed a two-page survey with the newsletter. A copy of a completed survey appears as Annex IV. The newsletter reached its readership months late and this, in itself, prompted numerous cover letters expressing dismay at SACCAR's distribution problems. A similar response was seen with the return of a 1996 survey of stakeholders, distributed by SACCAR in support under the Sustainable Financing Initiative. The survey requested a response from stakeholders by December 1996, but the survey's return revealed that stakeholders only received the survey in late January, or in some cases, February 1997. As a result, few surveys were returned at all.

The Senior Information Officer is also the Editor of the newsletter. The design and layout of each issue is handled by the Assistant Program Officer. An editorial board, comprising the Executive Director and some senior staff members, is available to review and critique the content of each issue. Editorial board members' level of involvement in the actual editorial process seems to depend upon the individual interest of the staff member rather than a specific mandate.

SELECT RESULTS OF THE 1996 NEWSLETTER SURVEY

1. Number of respondents by country

Country	number of respondents	Country	number of respondents
Botswana	12	Swaziland	3
Kenya	5	Tanzania	9
Lesotho	4	Zambia	4
Malawi	18	Zimbabwe	17
Mauritius	1	Africa unknown	1
Mozambique	1	non-African	10
Namibia	9	**Total**	95*
South Africa	1	xxxxxxxxxxxxxx	xxxxxxxxxxxxx

* Angola is the only SADC member state not represented.

2. Respondents by type of organization

Organization type	Responses
Research organization	41
Training institution/academic	25
Private	2
NGO	3
Donor	7
Government	15
Journalist	
Diplomatic organization	
Inter-government institution	
Total	93*

* Some respondents indicated more than one 'type' of organization, but only one classification is represented here.

3. Internet access of respondent organizations

Access to Internet	38
No access to Internet	57

Newsletter survey continued:

Select written responses to key survey questions:

1. How do you think the SACCAR newsletter could be improved?

CONTENT	TECHNICAL/DESIGN/PRODUCTION
more news on research activities within SADC, including RSA	Quicker mailing (frequent response)
Should solicit more articles from numerous scientists including research from other countries and non-SACCAR centers (frequent response)	Publish a less glossy, expensive publication and create larger or more frequent editions
Enjoy the summaries of MSc. theses	Layout needs work.
Include agricultural engineering articles	Layout is dull. Needs more graphics
Cover what NGOs are doing	Needs more thorough editing and proofing
Publish on informative issues; income generating projects, marketing, etc.	Space wasted on large photographs of administrators
Publish review of new books and research papers for suggested reading	Should change the deep green color
Publish more applied research, including impact on farmers and transfer of improved technologies	Add sections: Opinions, and Calls for Cooperation and Collaboration.
Publish more research findings, including statistics and demographic information	Include a section for Facts and Figures.
Incorporate articles on training programs, reports of academic meetings	
Publish articles on livestock, natural resources and conservation	

Research articles should be summarized/ research articles belong in scientific journals **(many respondents would prefer to see more research articles)	

2. Give your general overview of the SACCAR newsletter:

SELECT POSITIVE RESPONSES	SELECT NEGATIVE RESPONSES
Ideal for regional coordination among researchers and scientists	Quality varies a great deal between issues
Very informative for scientists within the SADC region	Too infrequent or late
Very helpful to students doing research or studying agriculture	Only represents the views of governments
Only newsletter in Southern Africa disseminating research information	

Assessment of SACCAR Newsletter design, content, and production/distribution.

1. Design

The design and layout of the SACCAR Newsletter is done in-house, and camera-ready copy is sent to a print shop for reproduction. A tendency to employ too many styles, leave no white space, and over utilize columns for all text has resulted in a cluttered and disorganized look that is often difficult to read. Extensive use of color is unnecessary and costly in both time and money. All print shops in Gaborone send color work to South Africa. Depending upon the management of the individual print shop, this may or may not take a great deal of time. In general, simplifying the look of the publication, and the application of very basic design principles will improve the sophistication of the newsletter, and will also result in a smoother production.

2. Content

Research articles appear in every issue and are appreciated by the readership. This judgement is based upon the results of the newsletter survey, however, and this is not an adequate sample. In general, the research articles are not edited or synopsized, but published virtually as received. This results in articles that may either be too long or unwieldy or too 'report-like.' As one would expect, the quality of the writing in submissions varies a great deal.

Some survey respondents remarked that the newsletter need not publish the entire paper. Other readers called for some focus on applied research that demonstrates relevance to communities and small farmers. There are no written guidelines, dictating the style or length that submissions should follow.

In some cases, it is unclear exactly what has been submitted, whether it is a project update, a book review, a paper that has been presented, or a piece written directly for the newsletter. Content generally appears in the newsletter under the general heading of 'Research' or 'News,' but is not necessarily shaped to fit the tone or the needs of the newsletter or its readership.

3. Production

The newsletter has suffered from extensive delays and production difficulties. A policy requiring three competitive quotes from printers for each job has been applied too rigidly, and has resulted in poor decisions regarding production/printing contracts. The delays are substantial and were reflected often in the results of the newsletter survey. In some cases, survey respondents reported receiving the newsletter 7 months after the publish date. Often, the material presented is time-sensitive such as conference or application dates and the material is not altered or pulled when extreme delays occur. A policy of competitive quotes is not unusual, however, there is little room for competition in Gaborone. Only certain outfits are qualified to do the more complicated jobs. SACCAR needs a simple policy that will allow for good judgement when contracting services.

Interviews with Gaborone print shops clarified some of the specific problems SACCAR has had with publications. Print shops in Gaborone do not have color separation capabilities and a primary reason for the egregious delays once the proofs hit the printer is that printers are sending the proofs to be done in South Africa, where most likely, they are not put on a priority deadline. All shops in Gaborone operate under this constraint, however, some shops manage the process effectively and avoid production delays.

The Information Unit has not had the benefit of good, professional advice from printers. Certain design decisions, such as the use of a separate process color for headers and footers on each page of the newsletter have resulted in very high extra expenses. To this end, two things need to occur: (1) SACCAR needs to contract a print shop with sufficient design and production expertise and a professional attitude toward customer service and satisfaction, and (2) SACCAR needs to ask appropriate questions and advice, and demand a level of cost-effectiveness and customer service.

The only highly professional, well-equipped printer in Gaborone (Printing & Publishing Co. Botswana Ltd. (PCCB) is being used for the printing of business cards and invitations, and small, poorly managed, but less expensive shops are printing the newsletter. Copy for the December 1996 issue was sent to the Gaborone Printing Works in late January. A visit to the print shop revealed that the material actually reached the presses in the third week of March. The presses are small and jobs are backed-up at every stage of production. The production manager of the shop claimed to have received the proofs only the week before. As of the last week in March 1997, the December 1996

issue of the newsletter (2000 print run) had not been delivered to SACCAR.

4. Distribution

The Senior Information Officer reports that distribution has been a problem for most of SACCAR's materials, and the newsletter is not an exception. The mailing list is small (1200 copies mailed), but it suffers from inaccurate or out-of-date listings. Repeat correspondence from subscribers has come in to SACCAR asking that the mailing list be updated, but these requests are not always acted upon in a timely manner or they are forgotten about. The newsletter is mailed from the SACCAR offices and this seems to have resulted in delays and in some cases, it is reported back to SACCAR that materials were never received at all.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Design and content

1. Cut the overuse of color. Color photographs of good quality can, and should be used, but there is no need for 3 or 4 colors of text on the cover and a 5th color for page headers or footers. Although cost should be a consideration, the unit should ensure that the newsletter does not give the impression that it is now produced "on the cheap." A color photograph on the front cover is still a good idea, and a mixture of black and white and color photographs should still be incorporated throughout the newsletter.

2. Switch to a more cost-effective and environmentally friendly paper. Promote the fact that SACCAR has changed its paper stock in an effort to save money and trees. Again, avoid any appearance of "cheapening" the newsletter. Review sample materials (preferably provided by the print shop as examples of other print clients) to choose a quality, attractive and less costly paper.

3. Develop a succinct guideline sheet for article submissions describing tone and length of each department of the newsletter (Research, Program Updates, News). Include a list of quarterly publication dates and corresponding deadlines for submissions. The guidelines should be made available during SACCAR/SADC sponsored meetings and conferences as a way of soliciting quality material. See sample (iii).

4. Create numerous mechanisms for soliciting material for the newsletter, such as 'call for articles' ads in the newsletter, direct mail solicitations to academic departments, and hard-copy and electronic dissemination of the one-page submission guidelines.

Production

1. Develop a policy that allows for good judgement when contracting services. See sample (iv). Costs, although always a consideration, should be weighed against the quality and reliability of

contracted services. As of March 26, 1997, this recommendation has been recognized by the Executive Director as a policy guideline.

2. Contract Printing & Publishing Company Botswana Ltd. (PCCB) to publish the newsletter for one year. After one year, competitive bids can be sought again. Small print jobs that are not deadline driven may remain for consideration with the smaller print shops in Gaborone. In most cases, the smaller shops will be more economical for simple jobs (stationary, envelopes, business cards).

Distribution

1. Call for additions and corrections to the mailing list with an ad with response form placed in the newsletter. See sample (ix). The ad should appear in every issue. Updates to the mailing list should be made immediately upon receipt of updated information. The date of a subscriber's last update should be indicated inconspicuously on the list or mailing label.

2. Contract PCCB for the distribution of the newsletter. PCCB has the capability to insert the newsletter into mailing envelopes, attach mailing labels, sort by country, and deliver the newsletters to the post office. The extra cost to SACCAR for this service is 150 pula per 1000 items mailed (US $50.00). An additional occasional cost for a stock of A4 plastic, self-seal mailing envelopes is also incurred.

3. The Senior Information Officer should review the mailing list annually for its completeness and representation of the region. For instance, all member states, all sectors and various types of organizations should be represented. Deficiencies in the mailing list should be discussed by the Senior Information Officer and the Executive Director, and if it is discerned that a certain sector or region is not being reached, a suitable 'subscription campaign' should be designed by the Information Unit. A cursory review of the mailing list with recommendations should be conducted by the Assistant Information Officer, as it is this position that is responsible for all subscription databases.

Sample newsletter formatting

SACCAR News

SACCAR News is published quarterly by the Southern African Centre for Cooperation in Agricultural & Natural Resources Research & Training, an institution of the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

Contributions:
SACCAR welcomes articles from policy makers and scientists throughout the region. Articles should be written in a clear, simple style and sent to the Editor. Illustrations or photographs of good quality are welcome.

Editor: Christopher Lungu

Editorial Committee:
B.J. Ndunguru
C.T. Nkwanyana
J.J. Woodend
C. Madzorera
C. Lungu

Design & Layout:
Master Jacobs Moelenyane

SACCAR
Private bag 00108
Gaborone, Botswana
Tel: (267) 328847/328848
Fax: (267) 328806
Telex: 2752 SACCAR BD.
Email:
100075.2511@Compuserve.com

The views expressed by contributing authors are not necessarily those of SACCAR.

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

This issue of SACCAR News follows closely on the heels of two very important meetings held in the southern African region; SACCAR's stakeholders meeting, in Gaborone, March 10 - 14, 1997, and the meeting of the European Union.....in Lusaka during the same week. The high energy of these two meetings kicks off some major initiatives within SACCAR and the southern African region as we work to incorporate the views of our stakeholders into our strategic planning for greater productivity, cost-consciousness, future financial sustainability, and respect for our natural resources. A survey mailed to stakeholders in December provided SACCAR with critical feedback regarding the diverse needs and expectations of our constiuency. The stakeholders meeting provided an opportunity for representatives from national and international research organizations and grassroots NGOs to come together to discuss common ground for our shared future.

The results of the SACCAR newsletter survey were invaluable, and with this issue, we hope you'll find that we've kept what readers find informative and useful (high marks for our research-based articles) and we continue to shape and improve other areas. A streamlined look and a new production and distribution strategy should help to ensure that the newsletter reaches all readers in a timely fashion. But please don't wait for a survey to keep us informed! We encourage your letters, contributions, feedback, and inquiries at all times.

Christopher Lungu
Editor

GUIDELINES FOR SUBMISSION TO SACCAR NEWS

SACCAR News is the quarterly newsletter of the Southern African Centre for Cooperation in Agricultural and Natural Resources Research and Training (SACCAR).

How to submit: A typed, double-spaced copy of the article should be submitted. Whenever possible, a PC compatible diskette (WordPerfect or Microsoft Word) should accompany a hard copy. Indicate on the diskette which word processing software is used.

Electronic submissions via email or a document attached to email should be sent to chrlungu@cis.co.za. Receipt of electronic submissions will be acknowledged by email.

What to submit: **Research articles:** Space does not permit the publication of research papers in their entirety. Articles should be edited to approximately 750 to 1000 words. Where possible, ordering information should be included for readers who wish to request the complete research paper. Complete bibliographies and reference lists will not be published, but submissions may wish to highlight "recommended reading" or key references.

Research summaries: Research articles may be submitted as summaries of approximately 500 to 750 words. Summaries should resemble a standard proposal format (introduction or objective, background, methodology, results, and conclusion). Research organizations are encouraged to submit groups of research summaries. Information for requesting the complete research papers is encouraged.

News: Short articles of approximately 500 words describing research or programmatic news or events, conference proceedings, reports of research or extension activities, and other items of interest to the SADC community are encouraged.

Announcements: Conference dates, employment/academic opportunities, calls for papers, publications, and other announcements are encouraged.

Letters to the Editor: Letters for publication in the newsletter are encouraged, but may be edited for length.

Quarterly submission deadlines are the 15th of January, April, July, and October.

Submit articles to:
Editor, SACCAR News
P/bag 00108
Gaborone, Botswana
Fax: (267) 328 847
Chrlungu@cis.co.za

MEMORANDUM

March 21, 1997

To: B. Ndunguru, Director

From: C. Lungu, Senior Information Officer
S. Mahone, Consultant, USAID

GUIDELINES FOR THE PURCHASE OF PRINTING SERVICES

A review of the current guidelines related to the procurement of printing services (Schedule 3, Approval for Procurement of Goods and Services) has indicated that the current policy requiring consideration of three competitive bids per job generally results in the selection of the least expensive quote despite significant differences existing in the abilities of certain shops to handle large or complex print jobs.

The Office of Information recommends that the following guidelines be followed with regard to the approval of purchasing of printing services:

1. Large, complex, and deadline driven materials should be contracted to Printing & Publishing Co. Botswana Ltd. (PCCB). These jobs include:

SACCAR Newsletter
Proceedings
Impact Assessments
Training Manuals

2. Small and routine print jobs that are not deadline sensitive may remain under the current policy of consideration of three competitive quotations per job. In most cases, it may be most economical to use the smaller print shops in Gaborone: Gaborone Printing Works and Associated Press. Appropriate print jobs include:

business cards
stationary/envelopes
*invitations/announcements

*all deadline driven jobs should remain under the discretion of the Senior Information Officer.

SACCAR brochure

The SACCAR general information brochure is a very basic, two-color, poorly-produced publication of 19 pages (plus cover). It manages to list generally all of the information that SACCAR has about its organization (and SADC). It includes history, mandates, lengthy lists of objectives, strategies, and an organizational chart. The result is a wholly uninteresting 19 page list. The brochure does not market SACCAR or demonstrate its value or impact. The level of detail regarding programs is more suitable to an annual report. Some program staff have reported that it is useful to have all of this information in one place, but as a marketing tool, the brochure falls short.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

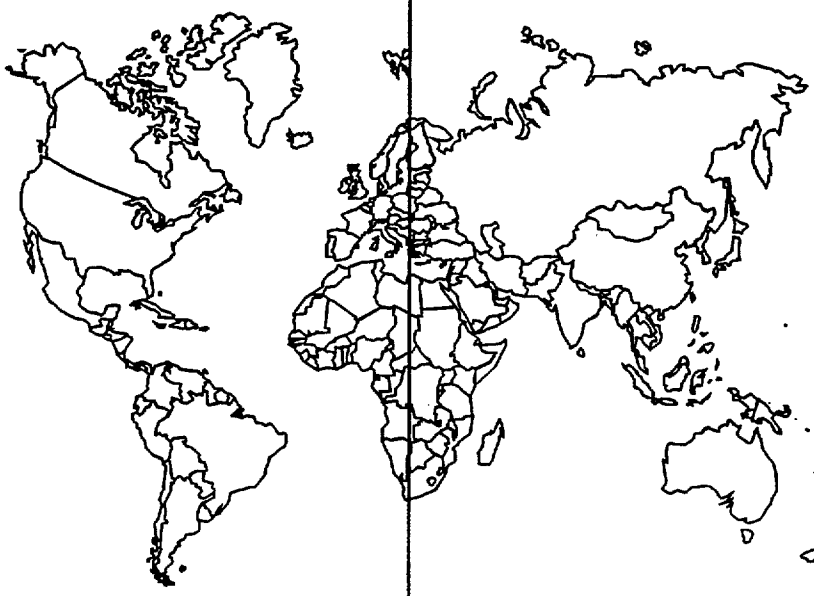
1. Develop a smaller, more precise brochure to highlight the three areas of activities of SACCAR (research, training, and information) and the organization's value to the southern African region. See sample v: tri-fold format.

2. The brochure should be mailed in response to inquiries about the organization, displayed at conferences and meetings, and supplied to information offices at the national research centers of all the member states.

Tri-fold: Inside panels (text is an example only).

RESEARCH

TRAINING



INFORMATION

SACCAR DISSEMINATES SCIENTIFIC LITERATURE TO AGRICULTURISTS IN SADC, AND COLLECTS AND MAINTAINS A DATABASE ON CURRENT AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH IN SADC.

SACCAR IS THE FOCAL POINT WHERE DONORS, AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH INSTITUTES AND OTHER INTERESTED INDIVIDUALS OBTAIN INFORMATION ON AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES IN SADC.

SACCAR PUBLISHES:

SACCAR NEWSLETTER; A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION WHICH AIMS TO INFORM RESEARCH, TRAINING AND EXTENSION PERSONNEL AND POLICY MAKERS ON FOOD, AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES WITHIN SADC.

ZIMBABWE JOURNAL OF AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH; THE DESIGNATED JOURNAL OF SACCAR IS PUBLISHED TWICE YEARLY. RESEARCHERS AND TRAINERS FROM MEMBER STATES MAY CONTRIBUTE SCIENTIFIC ARTICLES.

OCCASIONAL PUBLICATIONS.... IMPACT ASSESSMENTS, ETC...

Tri-fold: Outside panels (text is for example only).

MISSION AND OBJECTIVES OF SACCAR THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN CENTRE FOR COOPERATION IN AGRICULTURAL AND NATURAL RESOURCES RESEARCH AND TRAINING WAS ESTABLISHED IN 1984 BY SADC TO COORDINATE AGRICULTURAL AND NATURAL RESOURCES RESEARCH AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES AND TO PROMOTE COOPERATION BETWEEN MEMBER STATES IN THESE FIELDS. SACCAR IS A COMMISSION OF SADC. SACCAR'S OBJECTIVES ARE TO: ■ ■ ■ ■	SACCAR MEMBER STATES ANGOLA BOTSWANA LESOTHO MALAWI MAURITIUS MOZAMBIQUE NAMIBIA SOUTH AFRICA SWAZILAND TANZANIA ZAMBIA ZIMBABWE BACK COVER	SACCAR FRONT COVER ILLUSTRATION OR PHOTOGRAPH
SACCAR AND SADC LOGOS	SACCAR P/BAG 00108 GABORONE, BOTSWANA TEL: (267) 328 847/8 FAX: (267) 328 806 EMAIL: NDUNGURU@CIS.CO.ZA	FOOD, AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

Impact Assessments

SACCAR publishes Impact Assessments, such as the "Impact Assessment of Cotton Research and the Enabling Environment in Zimbabwe, 1970--1995." These publications are used as case studies for workshops and trainings that are conducted by SACCAR throughout the region. The objective of the training is to "assist scientists trained in impact assessment methodologies to undertake country level studies." The reports themselves are technical and intended for a scientific audience, and are not generally suited to mass distribution. However, the studies have scientific and technical value, and represent technical expertise and capacity within the region. This is an area that should be marketed more aggressively to SACCAR's constituents, the general public, and the donor community.

In discussions of the uses and marketability of the Impact Assessment (with the Senior Officer for Research in Impact Assessment, the Director, and the Senior Information Officer) a "Reports-in-Brief" format was developed. All of the Impact Assessments include an Executive Summary or a "Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations" section. In general, these sections are 3 to 4 pages long. These summaries are well-suited, without rewrite or significant revision, to synopsize the studies for distribution to a wider audience.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Market the availability and value of Impact Assessment reports via a "Reports-in-Brief" or "Impact Assessment" format (see samples vii and viii). This will entail the following:

- Pre-printing quality stationary with "SACCAR Reports-in-Brief" or "Impact Assessment" heading. Using the term, "Report-in-Brief" will allow for publication of materials (such as Proceedings) as well as the Impact Assessments.

- As a matter of routine, when Impact Assessments (or other appropriate occasional publications such as Proceedings from workshops) are published, the 3 to 4 page summary sections should be formatted to this basic layout. References and information on how to order the full report or inquire about training should be included at the end of the Report-in-Brief.

2. Disseminate Reports-in-Brief to appropriate segments of the standard mailing list. It may be desirable to develop, over time, a mailing list specifically for this product. Reports-in-Brief should be available at SADC meetings, conferences, trainings, and other activities in the region. Special interest media (environmental editors, agriculture and natural resource publications) should receive Reports-in-Brief when the complete Impact Assessments are first published. The publication of the Impact Assessments should be seen as a potential news story, for national, regional, or special interest media. Academic libraries and clearinghouses should receive both the full reports and the Reports-in-Brief.

3. Consider marketing a series of Reports-in-Brief bound as a compendium.

SACCAR
REPORT-IN-BRIEF

EVALUATION OF AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH: CURRENT STATUS AND EXPERIENCES IN EASTERN, CENTRAL AND SOUTHERN AFRICA

P. ANANDAJAYASEKERAM
D.R. MARTELLA

1996

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT (R&D) EVALUATION WITHIN AGRICULTURE IS BECOMING INCREASINGLY IMPORTANT AS A PLANNING TOOL IN THE RESEARCH MANAGEMENT PROCESS IN EASTERN, CENTRAL AND SOUTHERN AFRICA (ECSA). EVALUATION OF AGRICULTURE RESEARCH IN THE REGION IS PERFORMED AT VARIOUS LEVELS FOR DIFFERENT PURPOSES. THIS REPORT TRACES THE EVOLUTION OF R&D ACTIVITIES, LOOKS AT THE CURRENT STATUS OF THE AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH EVALUATION, AND THE CAPACITY TO UNDERTAKE SUCH EVALUATIONS AS A PART OF RESEARCH MANAGEMENT BOTH AT THE NATIONAL AND REGIONAL (ECSA) LEVELS. IT CRITICALLY EXAMINES THE EXPERIENCES OF THE REGION IN EVALUATING AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH AND THE EFFORTS MADE TO PROMOTE SUCH ACTIVITIES: LESSONS LEARNED ARE SUMMARIZED. FINALLY, THE PAPER ANALYZES THE CRITICAL CONSTRAINTS IMPEDING THE SUCCESSFUL ADOPTION OF THE AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH EVALUATION PROCESS AND SUGGESTIONS ARE MADE
WHICH COULD ALLEVIATE THESE CONSTRAINTS.

CONTINUED.....

SACCAR
IMPACT ASSESSMENT

IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF COTTON RESEARCH AND THE ENABLING ENVIRONMENT IN ZIMBABWE, 1970-1995

M. MUDHARA
P. ANANDAJAYASEKERAM
B. KUPFUMA
E. MAZHANGARA

1996

The need to assess the impact of cotton R&D in Zimbabwe arose out of the initiative of both the Department of Research and Special Services (DRSS) and SACCAR. The main objective of this study was to assess the impact of cotton R&D in Zimbabwe over the period 1970 to 1995. The study covered four distinct aspects: background material covering brief descriptions of the agricultural sector, the cotton industry and the evolution of cotton R&D programs, the methodological issues, survey results, and impact assessment results.

Continued.....

Annual Report

It is surprising that an organization as established as SACCAR, with its geographic scope and constituency, has never instituted the publication and dissemination of an annual report. In both principle and practice, the annual report communicates not only the organizational profile, but has numerous residual effects as well.

Annual Reports:

1. Communicate stability, professionalism, breadth of activities, and progress.

2. Suggest an openness and integrity with regard to financial management via individual program and the organizational audits.

3. Encapsulate the year's progress in one document, making it suitable for dissemination to any and all organizations that may be unfamiliar with SACCAR or with SACCAR's accomplishments.

4. Communicate a sense of accountability to constituents by reporting key events, accomplishments, financial status, member state involvement and representation, staff and departmental achievements, and objectives for the future.

The production of an annual report, in theory, should not begin with the coming new year. Rather, suitable material for inclusion should be filed electronically on diskette throughout the year as significant projects are completed, publications are released, conferences and workshops are conducted and decisions are reached during SACCAR board meetings. As a start, SACCAR's Information Unit may wish to begin to file material for an annual report, either revising or rewriting it as material is collected, or with the understanding that most material for a first annual report will be culled or essentially "cut and pasted" from existing documents and publications. Annual reports are time consuming to produce, but can be handled fairly easily if planned out early in the year.

Potential Components to the Annual Report

1. Letters from the Executive Director and the President of the Board of Directors, highlighting the Year in Review and regional goals for the coming year.

2. SACCAR headquarters Program Reports (Research and Training, Information, Impact Assessment) highlighting major initiatives, and activities.

3. SACCAR Country Reports, focusing on research and extension activities, and national initiatives. The collection of Country Reports will take effort with regard to soliciting appropriate material, communicating guidelines for submitting material, follow-up with the NARS that are missing the deadline, and editing the material for content and length. This activity may begin early in the sense that countries should be warned that they will be asked to submit materials, but the actual submission

deadline should be late in the year and close to the dates of production (i.e. After the November SACCAR board meeting, which may also serve as an opportunity to call for national submissions). In general, the material submitted should not be lengthy, and so the burden for most of the selection of content and editing should remain with the member states.

4. Special mention of sectors or Sector Reports focusing on all of the SACCAR areas of emphasis (FANR) should be included.

5. Photographs illustrating member country research and extension efforts should be included. Graphs illustrating research results or quantifiable SACCAR accomplishments are desireable.

6. A Financial Statement and Audit Reports are to be included.

7. Staff lists, SADC information or organizational chart, the year's publications, grants awarded, and organizational contact information should be included.

Electronic Communication

SACCAR's headquarters is Internet accessible, and is on its way to strengthening and exploiting the Internet as a means of communication. The computer hardware in the office is new and of high quality, but there are too few modems and therefore staff must juggle them and this results in certain staff or offices being off-line at any given time. Staff level of comfort with the technology seems to vary. Some support staff may require additional training, as it was reported that when the Senior Information Officer is traveling, email is not accessed and this is a frustration to senior staff.

The real challenge, however, is the networking with other member states, although SACCAR through another USAID funded project is making strides here too. As of March 1997, the Information Unit reported that 33 of 48 proposed sites were set-up with Internet capability. Some countries, of course, will lag behind others dependent upon constraints or limitations to their in-country telecommunications infrastructure.

The Information Unit is slowly developing a website for SACCAR, but this is not near completion. A host of design, editorial content, and organizational issues will need to be faced by the Unit when the entire process of linking member states electronically comes closer to fruition. Many of the recommendations included in this report will apply as well to the dissemination of electronic communication. Writing, editing, management, and design skills must be adapted to the medium. Most likely, an additional staff member should be hired to assist not only with the management of content, but with hardware and system difficulties as well.

RECOMMENDATIONS (Immediate impact)

1. Frequent references should be made regarding SACCAR's Internet accessibility and the progress of its efforts to transfer the technology to the region. Newsletter announcements should call

for submissions by email, or simply for messages to let SACCAR know which organizations, NGOs, etc. within the region are internet accessible.

2. An email contact list, sortable by country, sector, or type of organization should be started and added to as organizations become Internet accessible. The mailing list represents an inexpensive way to broadcast calls for articles, SACCAR news releases, or announcement of local workshops, conferences or meetings.

(Long-range planning and impact)

Detailed recommendations for home page development or other advances in the use of technology are premature for this report and SACCAR is moving ahead at its own pace, as time and resources allow. However, it should be noted that the move toward full integration of regional electronic networks and advanced Internet technology will require a high degree of onsite technical capability, which SACCAR does not have at this time. The current Information Unit should either be expanded to include expertise in new technologies, or a separate unit should be developed to manage information systems and technology.

Zimbabwe Journal of Agricultural Research (ZJAR)

The Zimbabwe Journal of Agricultural Research (ZJAR) was founded in the 1960s as the Rhodesia Journal of Agricultural Research. Since SACCAR's inception in 1984, it has funded the Journal, which is listed as the "designated Journal of SACCAR." SACCAR funds the stipends of the Editor and Assistant Editor, all production costs, and travel and expenses related to the annual editorial board meeting. In principle, the costs for mailing and distribution of the Journal have been the responsibility of the Zimbabwe government (Department of Research and Special Services), but this has resulted in yet another serious problem of dissemination for SACCAR. DRSS appears to lack both the funds and the coordinating capacity for the dissemination of the Journal. As of the end of March 1997, the Journal's 1995 issue had not been mailed.

The designation of ZJAR as the Journal of SACCAR is incongruous. There is little or no regional representation of contributors from the 12 member states. In the most recent (mailed) ZJAR, all 9 authors represented Zimbabwe institutions.

Affiliations of Primary Authors: ZJAR, 1994 issue

1. Trinidad Industries, Harare (SACCAR staff person- author)
2. Agronomy Institute, Harare
3. Agronomy Institute, Harare
4. University of Zimbabwe, Harare
5. Grasslands Research Station, Marondera, Zimbabwe
6. Grasslands Research Station, Marondera, Zimbabwe
7. Matopos Research Station, Bulawayo, Zimbabwe

8. Makoholi Experiment Station, Masvingo, Zimbabwe
9. Henderson Research Station, Mazowe, Zimbabwe

Apart from the perception that the Journal is local and not international, there is evidence of the waning credibility of the Journal. A number of authors already reviewed and accepted for publication pulled their articles when it was deemed at the university level that publishing in ZJAR is not rigorous enough to influence tenure decisions.

The Zimbabwe government has conceded to the recruitment of member state representatives to the editorial board of the Journal, but remains hesitant to remove "Zimbabwe" from the title of the Journal. At this time, the SACCAR Director has charged the Deans Committee of SACCAR to propose a slate of names for appointment to a new editorial board comprising representatives from each of the member states. The Committee will report on their progress during the next SACCAR board meeting in May 1997. There remains the concern of costs associated with recruiting regional representatives for the editorial board. The editorial board meets in principle once annually. SACCAR will need to provide travel costs and lodging for board members traveling to editorial meetings.

The mailing list of the Journal needs to be reviewed, updated, and expanded. SACCAR itself has had great difficulty obtaining copies of the Journal. The Senior Information Officer has requested updated mailing lists, but this request has taken up to 6 months to fullfill.

Under normal circumstances, the SACCAR Information unit would develop materials to market the availability of subscriptions to the Journal, but in this case, SACCAR should decide whether or not it should expend extra staff time marketing a product of questionable quality, that is recognized as a Zimbabwe Journal, and that includes subscription fees that do not benefit SACCAR.

Conclusion

Essentially, SACCAR itself does not have its own Journal, but subsidizes completely the Journal of the government of Zimbabwe. The crisis in distribution of the Journal once it is printed, combined with its narrow representation and waning credibility and prestige essentially means that SACCAR is spending its allocation of US $12,000 a year to subsidize a Journal that does not adequately represent SACCAR or its constiuency. The Journal, in its present state, does not represent an asset of international scientific significance, nor does it represent a strong marketing tool for SACCAR.

SACCAR cannot effectively market the Journal until fundamental understandings are reached concerning the administration of the Journal, the adequate representation of the agricultural research conducted throughout the region, and academic rigor. Recruitment of top scientists either as authors or for the editorial board may be difficult without first reaching an understanding about the future role of the Journal. Preliminary recommendations and potential long-term scenarios are presented here.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Create a task force to assess the current state of the Journal, and adopt or develop scenarios to chart a future course for the Journal. The Deans Committee or a sub-committee would represent an appropriate task force.

2. Develop a questionnaire to assess the need or desireability within the SADC member states for a regional scientific journal. In the interests of time, the brief questionnaires should be administered by the Deans Committee (the Task Force) by phone or in small focus groups on campuses rather than mailed. Potential areas of emphasis include:

   a. An assessment of the academic prestige of the Journal as it now exists.

   b. An assessment of the level of official acceptance within academic departments to acknowledge publishing in ZJAR as academically rigorous.

   c. An assessment of the level of acceptance of ZJAR as either a SACCAR publication or a regional publication.

   d. Recommendations, suggestions, or a "vote" for proposed scenarios.

Providing that the following expected outcomes are true, Stage 2 Recommendations should be implemented.

Focus group expected outcomes:

   a. Member states find value in a SACCAR regional scientific journal.

   b. Sufficient criticisms of the present health of the Journal exist and should force change.

   c. The Deans Committee recommends a slate of new editorial board members.

STAGE 2 RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The SACCAR Information Unit will develop a communications strategy to publicize the 'rebirth' of the Journal of Agriculture, stressing the new regional composition of the editorial board, its strengthened potential to represent the agricultural and natural resources science of the region, and the results and recommendations of the review (questionnaire) by the Deans Committee.

2. The SACCAR Information Unit will enlist the continued support of the Deans of agriculture to publicize the Journal on campuses.

3. The SACCAR Information Unit will provide funds take over the direct supervision of printing and mailing, similar to that of the newsletter.

4. The Information Unit will upgrade the marketing of subscriptions and opportunities to publish through the following:

a. Journal ads in the newsletter

b. Direct mail ad or solicitation to a targeted list (compiled from existing lists, workshop and training participants, academic faculty, NGOs, etc.)

c. Copies of the Journal, with subscription cards displayed at SACCAR and SADC conferences and meetings.

Essentially, once the future administration of the Journal is decided, most of the components of the marketing strategy for the newsletter can and should be implemented for the Journal as well.

Additionally, the following activities are recommended:

1. Photocopies of the Journal's Author's Guidelines (currently published in the back of the Journal) should be made available at meetings and conferences, and mailed to academic departments (agriculture, natural resources, environmental studies, etc) with a joint cover letter from the Editor of the Journal and the SACCAR Executive Director.

2. Press releases announcing the publication of a new issue of the Journal should be sent to all contacts on the press list (including university newspapers). The press release should include the issue's Table of Contents, and stress that SACCAR's Information Unit will fax articles of interest to the press.

SCENARIOS FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE JOURNAL

Scenario 1

1. The name "Zimbabwe Journal of Agricultural Research" is retained.
2. The ZJAR remains the "designated Journal of SACCAR."
3. An editorial board comprising representatives of all member states is instituted.
4. SACCAR continues to fund Zimbabwe's Department of Research & Special Services for all editorial functions.
5. SACCAR takes over funding and oversight of printing and distribution of the Journal.

Rationale for Scenario 1

The primary rationale for this scenario is that it avoids the issue of the government of Zimbabwe's sensitivity to having the Journal renamed.

Limitations of Scenario 1

It is reasonable to assume that in time, an editorial body comprising representatives from the SADC region may question the Journal's name as it does not reflect the contributions of 11 of the 12 member states.

Marketing of the Journal to countries or regions outside of SADC will be exceedingly difficult if the Journal continues to state on its cover that it is a Zimbabwe journal. With this approach, the Journal can only be viewed externally as a local endeavor with little international impact or significance. This scenario represents little change, and therefore does little to reverse the crises of quality, reputation, or reach of the Journal.

Scenario 2

1. The Journal is renamed the "Southern African Journal of Agricultural Research" (or another similar approach), and acknowledges on its cover, "the designated Journal of the Ministry of Agriculture of the government of Zimbabwe," or "founded by the government of Zimbabwe."

2. An editorial board comprising representatives of all member states is instituted.

3. SACCAR takes over funding and oversight of the editorial process (as a liaison to the editorial board), printing, and distribution of the Journal.

Or: 3a. SACCAR continues to fund Zimbabwe's Department of Research & Special Services for editorial functions if the Zimbabwe DRSS agrees.

Rationale for Scenario 2

The government of Zimbabwe's history of contributions to the Journal is acknowledged on the front cover of the Journal. The argument that the name (ZJAR) should be retained because it was founded by Zimbabwe is not compelling due to the fact that SACCAR subsidizes its publication completely.

Limitations to Scenario 2

The SACCAR Information Unit will need to allocate time to the management of the Journal, but only to the extent that is already becoming necessary. At this time, the Journal is not managed sufficiently, and intervention is called for immediately. The editorial burden (the primary burden) will remain with the Editor and the Assistant Editor.

Scenario 3

1. The name "Zimbabwe Journal of Agricultural Research" is released for the sole use of the government of Zimbabwe and not SACCAR. The Journal is renamed to reflect its representation of the region.

2. The funds supporting the Journal are reallocated to SACCAR's Information Unit. The unit becomes the primary liaison to the Journal's editorial board, and oversees the publishing and distribution of the Journal in Gaborone.

Rationale for Scenario 3

This scenario acknowledges regional perspectives and logical arguments that are already beginning to force change.

SACCAR can begin to implement a marketing strategy that is built on the foundation that SACCAR does indeed publish a regional journal.

Limitations to Scenario 3

The Department of Research & Special Services of Zimbabwe is displeased with the decision to rename the Journal. The situation is a sensitive one for SACCAR, and is not taken lightly, but at present, the current management and representation of the Journal is unfair to other member states, is inefficient and wasteful of SACCAR resources, and hampers the ability of SACCAR to effectively market the Journal to the region and elsewhere.

The Role of the Managing Editor

The future construct and administration of the SACCAR Journal is the subject of evaluation and debate at the present time. One issue seems clear, however; SACCAR needs to take some

management responsibility for the Journal. At the same time, the Journal appears to need SACCAR to do the same. The potential scenarios for the Journal, outlined in this report, lay out some of the options for the Journal's future. Under all of the scenarios, the primary burden of time and effort remains with the Editor and the Assistant Editor who are responsible for the receipt, review, selection, and editing of manuscripts. However, the current administrative home of the Journal lacks the time or capacity to manage the production and distribution of the Journal once selected articles are ready for publication. SACCAR's Senior Information Officer should, therefore, assume the position of Managing Editor to oversee the production schedule, subscriber database, budget, distribution and marketing.

DISSEMINATION OF PUBLIC RELATIONS AND PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS

Press and Public Relations Database

At this time, the Information Unit has a general press list, but no relationship with local, national or regional press. The Senior Information Officer acknowledged the need to use the local press as a 'guinea pig,' for the placement of occasional stories, announcements, or letters to the editor. A press list can take the form of a standard list, an electronic database, or a detailed rolodex. Specifically, contact information is needed for SACCAR-friendly, or issue-friendly contacts across sectors and including a variety of media.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Information Unit support staff should begin the process of reviewing newspapers, newsletters, scientific magazines or other publications for information on Editor's, reporters, and special sections of publications that write about FANR issues. This begins the development of distribution lists for press releases or alerts, submission of articles, letters, or editorials. The list should be organized by country and by sector of interest. Other forms of media, such as radio and eventually, online publications, should also be reviewed. Sample (ix), an ad placed in the SACCAR newsletter, illustrates another method for collecting samples of regional publications.

2. The Senior Information Officer should review some newspapers (local and regional) for current issues of interest to the FANR sectors. It may be appropriate for SACCAR to respond to some articles or editorials. For example, an article in a prominent newspaper that is cynical toward the future of agricultural research in the SADC region, should prompt a rebuttal or Letter to the Editor from the SACCAR Executive Director. An article that is cynical toward the quality of legume research in a particular SADC country should prompt either a response from the SACCAR Executive Director, or the Senior Information Officer might contact an appropriate expert from the NARS of that country and assist that office with an appropriate response.

Media Relations

Generally missing from the Information Unit is the attitude that what SACCAR does is news. Regional meetings like the March 1997 Stakeholders Meeting in Gaborone, the results or impact of research throughout the region, and the impact of research training may or may not make it into the newsletter, but are rarely considered for broader and more timely distribution. The unit does have a print media list for the southern African region, but this has not generally been used for outreach or media relations.

A first exercise undertaken immediately after the Stakeholders meeting was the wide dissemination of a press release highlighting the progress of member states' long-term strategic planning for

economic growth and financial sustainability in the food, agriculture and natural resource sectors. The Unit and consultant also discussed the need for several 'boilerplates,' standard paragraphs that remain on file representing SACCAR, SADC, and SACCAR/SADC combined. The appropriate boilerplate should be added at the end of press releases, media alerts, or other appropriate publications.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The press or news release (see sample x) should become a standard communications activity when SACCAR conducts important workshops, sponsors national or international conferences, or when new research results and impact studies become available. The distribution should be selective. Some news items will be appropriate for local or national media, but not necessarily for a large circulation newspaper in South Africa. Similarly, news releases should not be sent to the general fax number for newspapers. Appropriate contact names and fax numbers for editors or writers is critically important. Over time, with the development of a stronger media contacts database, press releases will begin to show more return.

For certain targeted releases (for instance if the news item appears that it will be a 'good fit' for a certain publication) the Assistant Information Officer or the Unit Secretary should call ahead to ask who the appropriate contact might be. In some cases, it may be appropriate to send news releases only to the SACCAR constituency (NARS, universities, etc. For example, certain news items or decisions from board meetings or special meetings may warrant a quick means of communicating with member states, but not necessarily with external media.

2. Media Advisories or Media Alerts are similar to News Releases, but do not report on issues or read like news stories. Instead, they function as alerts for upcoming meetings (such as the Stakeholders meeting) that local press may wish to cover. The media alerts should remain only one page in length and should act as an invitation for media to cover an interesting event. Appropriate content would include the basics:

Who is meeting?
Why? and *what* are they doing? (the proposed agenda)
When is it?
*W*here is it?

3. The Senior Information Officer should make some follow-up phone calls to key targets when press releases or media alerts are faxed. This is impractical for a large distribution list, so the targets should be selective. At this time, the SIO should have additional information readily available to back up the information outlined in the press release.

4. The Information Unit should develop a fairly standard press kit or information kit for selective distribution. The kit should be housed in an attractive folder and should include a variety of standard

material (SACCAR brochure, one or two Reports-in-Brief, the most recent newsletter, an attractively printed Table of Contents for the most recent Journal) and more topical information (current press releases or the results of cutting edge research sponsored by SACCAR, or a list of selected publications). In some cases, information kits may be disseminated at small meetings, or may be sent to media when the media requests more background or information. The business card of the Senior Information Officer, or the Executive Director should also be included.

The best press kits are housed in folders that have the organization's logo on it, or large stickers are printed for plain folders. However, the Information Unit should wait to see if press kits or information kits are needed in numbers sufficient to justify additional printing expenses.

Sample ix. database and mail list ex

DO YOU PUBLISH A NEWSLETTER?

SACCAR IS BUILDING A COMPREHENSIVE MEDIA DATABASE FOR THE FOOD, AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES SECTORS. IF YOU WOULD LIKE YOUR PUBLICATION LISTED, PLEASE SEND A COPY (WITH SUBMISSION GUIDELINES, IF AVAILABLE) TO:

MR. C. LUNGU
SENIOR INFORMATION OFFICER
SACCAR
P/BAG 00108
GABORONE, BOTSWANA

ATTN: MEDIA DATABASE

Yes, I would like to be added to the SACCAR News mailing list. My address is:

Name_____
Organisation_____
Address_____
_____
_____
tel_____ fax_____
email_____

☐ New subscription ☐ Change/correction of address

Please mail or fax to:
SACCAR, P/bag 00108,
Gaborone, Botswana
fax: (267) 328806
email: 100075.2511@compuserve.com

Sample X. news release

News Release

For Immediate Release
March 18, 1997

Contact: Mr. Christopher Lungu
Tel: +267 328847

SACCAR Stakeholders Meet

Member States chart long-term strategy for economic growth and sustainability in food, agriculture and natural resources

Representatives from all twelve member states met in Gaborone, Botswana during the week of March 10 - March 14 to chart a long-term strategy and build consensus among the various sectors of the Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources (FANR) community.

As the support for agricultural research declines nationally, regionally, and internationally, the need for dialogue and strategic planning for institutional and financial sustainability has become critical in order to maximize the investment in agriculture and natural resources. Sustainability has become one of the factors SACCAR and stakeholders use as criteria in developing regional programmes and projects in the region.

A diverse body of SACCAR stakeholders reviewed, and in some cases, revised Agricultural and Natural Resources Research and Human Resources Development priorities, as well as the vision, mission, and mandate of SACCAR. The current structure and modalities of operation of the organization was discussed with the objective of enhancing future organizational and financial sustainability.

The meeting opened on Monday, March 10 with a keynote address by the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Agriculture, Mr. Thomas Taukobong, who remarked upon the diversity of SACCAR stakeholders. In his address Dr. B. J. Ndunguru, the Director of SACCAR remarked that the diversity of SACCAR stakeholders attending the meeting was a testimony that development of regional research and natural resources research initiatives requires an input from all partners from the entire agricultural sector in order to formulate programmes based on priorities that are sustainable and form part of the agenda of the international agricultural research centres.

SACCAR coordinates agricultural and natural resources research and training activities throughout the southern African region in association with International Agricultural Research

Continued

Centres, Universities and donors. All sectors took part in the process of developing a long-term strategy for SACCAR, and endorsed that its mandate should be to coordinate research and promote training in Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources and promote cooperation in these fields among SADC member states. SACCAR's primary responsibilities will continue to include the promotion and coordination of regional research in FANR, promotion and coordination of information exchange and training, monitoring and evaluation (including the impacts) of regional research projects, mobilization of

funds to support regional research and training, and communicating the importance of agricultural research. The meeting resolved that the vision and mission of SACCAR lies within the overall objective of SADC, "achieving development and economic growth, alleviating poverty, enhancing the standard and quality of life of the people of southern Africa."

The Southern African Centre for Cooperation in Agricultural & Natural Resources Research & Training (SACCAR) which represents the 12 member states of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) was established in 1984 by Heads of State and Government of SADC. SACCAR coordinates agricultural and natural resources research and promotes professional training in food, agriculture and natural resources.

The Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC) was established in 1980 by the majority ruled independent states of Southern Africa comprising Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. On 17th August, 1992, the Union was formalized into the Southern African Development Community (SADC). South Africa following the formation of a government of national unity formally joined SADC in 1994. The republic of Mauritius acceded to the SADC treaty in August, 1995.

For more information about SACCAR, please contact the following

Dr. B.J. Ndunguru
Director,
SACCAR
Private Bag 00108,
Gaborone
Botswana

Tel: +267 328847
Fax: +267 328806
Email:100075.2511@Compuserve.com

# # #

SACCAR AND THE SUSTAINABLE FINANCING INITIATIVE (SFI)

The approach and subsequent recommendations outlined in this report have been designed to fit into the greater philosophy of the Sustainable Financing Initiative as presented to the SACCAR leadership and stakeholders in March 1997. Specifically, an emphasis on strategic thinking is intended to encourage managers and staff "to look outward, to identify and link with key stakeholders, to develop a customer focus, to be market- and product-oriented, and to be proactive rather than reactive."

SACCAR and SFI Common Goals and Expected Results

Shared goals and expected results include: an "enhanced capacity to analyze priorities, choose program strategies, and independently seek funding (local funding, in particular) for core operations and programs," and the identification of "necessary reforms to be implemented into institutions' administrative systems, in research priority-setting and management, and in client outreach (Presentation by N. Kulibaba, March 11, 1997, see Annex II)."

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Develop a boiler plate paragraph or paragraphs for repeated inclusion in appropriate press releases, articles, or documents that address: the future structure, management, or sustainability of SACCAR, the changing (and shrinking) international donor community, the rationalization of the current SACCAR structure and strategies for institutional streamlining, greater efficiency and cost-effectiveness, and financial sustainability, etc.

2. Target key receptive audiences with communications that emphasize SFI, including; policy makers, business and financial media, economic development media, SADC governments, and the donor community.

SACCAR's Continued Role in SFI

With direction from the office of the Executive Director and the Board of Directors of SACCAR, the Information Unit should maximize the momentum and the public relations opportunity provided by the Stakeholders meeting in March. As a first step, the Unit included references to sustainable financing in its News Release following the meeting, and has planned a newsletter article on SFI for the March issue. The May Board of Directors meeting should also provide an opportunity for feedback on Stakeholders' perspectives and SFI from the SACCAR leadership.

SFI's core messages offer great potential for an effective and "coalition-building" communications strategy. In the case of SACCAR, a network exists, but member states are awaiting smoother and more immediate transfer of information, and a set of shared objectives, messages, and strategies. The approach and recommendations included in this report were developed to complement the philosophy of the Sustainable Financing Initiative.

SACCAR Communications Workshop/Debriefing

March 27, 1997
2:00 - 4:30 p.m.

Agenda

I. Introduction to the task (Bruno Ndunguru and Chris Lungu)

II. Role of the Information Unit at SACCAR

a. Projecting SACCAR's image
b. Internal and external relations/communications
c. Collaboration with SACCAR program offices

III. Marketing and Publication Strategies

a. SACCAR Newsletter (including survey results)
b. Zimbabwe Journal of Agricultural Research
c. Impact Assessments
d. General marketing tools (brochures)

IV. New Marketing Products

a. Reports-in-Brief
b. Annual Report/Year in Review
c. Press Releases/Media Relations

V. Electronic Communication

ANNEX

STAKEHOLDER PERSPECTIVES

14TH MARCH, 1997

OVER THE LAST FOUR DAYS THE STAKEHOLDERS OF SACCAR REVIEWED THE REVISED AGRICULTURAL AND NATURAL RESOURCES RESEARCH AND HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT (HRD) PRIORITIES AS WELL AS THE VISION, MISSION, MANDATE, ROLES, STRUCTURE, MODALITIES OF OPERATION AND FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY OF SACCAR, AS PART OF THE PROCESS OF DEVELOPING A LONG TERM STRATEGY FOR SACCAR.

THE GROUP ALSO IDENTIFIED THE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE VARIOUS STAKEHOLDERS SUCH AS NGOS, THE PRIVATE SECTOR, IARCs, UNIVERSITIES AND OTHER TRAINING INSTITUTIONS, DONORS AND OTHERS IN ACHIEVING THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES OF SACCAR.

AGRICUTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES (ANR) RESEARCH AND HRD PRIORITIES

THE PARTICIPANTS REVIEWED THE PRIORITIES IDENTIFIED BY THE CONSULTANTS, IDENTIFIED GAPS, AND OFFERED SEVERAL SUGGESTIONS TO IMPROVE THE ANALYSIS AND FINAL OUTCOME OF THIS EXERCISE. SACCAR SECRETARIAT, IN CONSULTATION WITH SOME RESOURCE PERSONS FROM THE VARIOUS SECTORS WILL INCORPORATE THE COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS MADE BY STAKEHOLDERS AND DEVELOP A SYNTHESIS DOCUMENT REFLECTING THE CONSENSUS OF THE GROUP. THIS DOCUMENT WILL BE USED AS A GUIDE IN DEVELOPING FUTURE REGIONAL RESEARCH AND HRD NETWORK PROJECTS AND TO MOBILISE DONOR SUPPORT FOR REGIONAL INITIATIVES.

VISION AND MISSION OF SACCAR

THE GROUP CONCURRED THAT A MAJOR OBJECTIVE OF SADC IS TO "ACHIEVE DEVELOPMENT AND ECONOMIC GROWTH, ALLEVIATE POVERTY, ENHANCE THE STANDARD AND QUALITY OF LIFE OF THE PEOPLE OF SOUTHERN AFRICA"; ENDORSED THAT PRODUCTIVE, PROFITABLE AND SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE IS ESSENTIAL TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, POVERTY ALLEVIATION, AND NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT IN THE REGION AND IS A MAJOR CONTRIBUTOR TO SADC'S OBJECTIVES; EFFECTIVE FANR RESEARCH AND HRD UNDERPINS CURRENT AND FUTURE DEVELOPMENT. TO ACHIEVE GREATER EFFICIENCY, SUCH RESEARCH AND HRD IS BEST ACCOMPLISHED THROUGH REGIONAL COOPERATION AND INTEGRATION. THE GROUP UNANIMOUSLY AGREED THAT A COORDINATING BODY LIKE SACCAR IS VITAL FOR RESEARCH COORDINATION AND CAPACITY BUILDING IN THE SADC REGION.

MANDATE OF SACCAR

TO COORDINATE RESEARCH AND PROMOTE TRAINING IN FOOD, AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES AND PROMOTE COOPERATION IN THESE FIELDS AMONG SADC MEMBER STATES.

OBJECTIVES OF SACCAR

1. PROMOTION AND DISSEMINATION OF AVAILABLE AND APPROPRIATE FANR TECHNOLOGIES AMONG SADC COUNTRIES.

42

2. CO-ORDINATION, DIALOGUE AND IMPLEMENTATION OF STUDIES ON RESEARCH POLICIES, PRIORITIES AND CONSTRAINTS COMMON TO MEMBER STATES AND TO INITIATE AND FACILITATE COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH PROJECTS.

3. CO-ORDINATION OF REGIONAL RESEARCH IN NATURAL RESOURCES UTILIZATION AND CONSERVATION AND ESTABLISHMENT OF MECHANISMS FOR INTEGRATED RESEARCH IN FANR DISCIPLINES.

4. FACILITATE THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF REGIONAL COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH PROJECTS TO GENERATE SUSTAINABLE TECHNOLOGIES NEEDED TO RAISE PRODUCTION AND PRODUCTIVITY AS WELL AS NATURAL RESOURCE MAINTENANCE.

5. STRENGTHEN THE CAPACITY OF NATIONAL FANR SYSTEMS (INCLUDING LONG AND SHORT TERM TRAINING) AND TO IMPROVE LINKAGES BETWEEN THE KEY ROLE PLAYERS.

6. PROMOTION OF RAPID AND CONTINUOUS PROVISION, INTERCHANGE AND UTILIZATION OF SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL INFORMATION BY CREATING AND MAINTAINING INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION NETWORKS.

7. PROMOTE AND CO-ORDINATE HRD, IN FANR AND FACILITATE PROVISION OF SUCH EXPERTISE AS MAY BE NEEDED BY INDIVIDUAL NARS AND REGIONAL INSTITUTIONS.

8. PROVIDE EFFECTIVE LIAISON WITH THE NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY IN MATTERS OF REGIONAL FANR RESEARCH AND PRIORITIES.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

BASED ON THE REVISED OBJECTIVES THE GROUP IDENTIFIED THE FOLLOWING TO BE THE MAJOR ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF SACCAR.

- PROMOTION AND COORDINATION OF REGIONAL RESEARCH IN FANR
- PROMOTION AND COORDINATION OF INFORMATION EXCHANGE AND TRAINING
- MONITORING AND EVALUATION (INCLUDING THE IMPACTS) OF REGIONAL RESEARCH PROJECTS
- MOBILIZATION OF FUNDS TO SUPPORT REGIONAL RESEARCH AND TRAINING
- MARKETING OF THE IMPORTANCE OF AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH AND IMPACT OF TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT AND TRANSFER (TDT).

GIVEN THESE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES THE GROUP ALSO REVISITED THE FUNCTIONS OF THE VARIOUS UNITS OF SACCAR AND THE ISSUES AND CHALLENGES CONFRONTING SACCAR IN EACH OF THESE AREAS (SUMMARISED IN ANNEXES).

STRUCTURE OF SACCAR

THE GROUP CONSIDERED THE FUNCTIONS OF SACCAR IN DETERMINING THE STRUCTURE AND THE HUMAN CAPITAL REQUIREMENT OF THE SECRETARIAT. THE IDENTIFIED KEY FUNCTIONS ARE:-

44

- COORDINATION OF RESEARCH TRAINING AND INFORMATION
- MOBILIZATION OF RESOURCES
- LINKAGES WITH STAKEHOLDERS
  - OPERATIONAL LEVEL
  - DECISION MAKING LEVEL
- MONITORING, EVALUATION AND IMPACT ASSESSMENT

THE GROUP RECOGNISED THE EXPANDED MANDATE OF SACCAR DEMANDS ADDITIONAL SKILLS (NOT NECESSARILY PEOPLE) IN NATURAL RESOURCES, RESEARCH AND MANAGEMENT.

NOTED THAT THE FOUR LEVEL HIERARCHY MAY NOT ENHANCE EFFICIENCY AND COST EFFECTIVENESS.

GROUP RECOGNISED THE IMPORTANCE OF COST EFFECTIVENESS IN THE OPERATION AND SUGGESTED THAT WHERE POSSIBLE FUNDING FOR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE SHOULD BE SOUGHT TO FULFIL CERTAIN ROLES WITHIN SACCAR.

POSSIBILITY OF NETWORKING, CONTRACTING RESEARCH AND IN-SERVICE TRAINING WERE ALSO CONSIDERED AS POSSIBILITIES TO HAVE A LEAN STRUCTURE-ALTERNATIVE SOURCES FOR SERVICES.

IN THE LIGHT OF THE ABOVE THE GROUP RECOMMENDED THE REVIEW/RATIONALISATION OF THE JOB DESCRIPTION AND STRUCTURE OF SACCAR.

GOVERNANCE OF SACCAR

45

THE GROUP NOTED THAT THE NON AGRICULTURAL SECTORS ARE UNDER REPRESENTED IN THE COMPOSITION OF THE SACCAR BOARD

- EMPHASISED THE NEED FOR BALANCE.
  - NOTED THAT THE VARIOUS COMMITTEES ARE NOT REPRESENTATIVE THUS THERE IS A NEED TO INCLUDE ADDITIONAL MEMBERS REPRESENTING PRIVATE SECTOR, NGOS AND FARMER ORGANISATIONS ON A ROTATIONAL BASIS.
  - NOTED THAT PARALLEL STRUCTURE EXISTS FOR THE APPROVAL OF AGRICULTURAL AND NATURAL RESOURCES RESEARCH AND TRAINING PROJECTS AND THIS SHOULD BE RECTIFIED, OTHERWISE THE EXPANDED MANDATE OF SACCAR BECOMES REDUNDANT.
  - NOTED THAT THE CURRENT ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF FANR AFFECTS THE LEGALITY OF DECISIONS MADE BY THE SACCAR BOARD AND ARE NOT CONDUCIVE TO ACHIEVING SACCAR'S GOALS AND OBJECTIVES.

RECOMMENDED THAT THERE IS A NEED TO REVIEW THE MODE OF OPERATION OF REGIONAL STEERING COMMITTEES.

FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY OF SACCAR

NOTED THAT SACCAR IN ITS PRESENT FORM AS A CO-ORDINATING BODY IS NOT SUSTAINABLE AND HENCE THERE IS A NEED FOR ESTABLISHING VIABLE ALTERNATIVE FUNDING MECHANISM.

46

SEVERAL SUGGESTIONS WERE MADE TO IMPROVE THE FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY OF SACCAR. THESE INCLUDED:

- RATIONALISATION OF STRUCTURE AND MODALITIES OF OPERATION

- IMPROVE/STREAMLINE OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES WITH A VIEW TO REDUCING COSTS

- BECOME AGRESSIVE IN FUND RAISING FOR PROJECTS AND CHARGE OVERHEAD COSTS. THE GROUP IDENTIFIED FOUR SOURCES OF FUNDING: MEMBER STATES, DONORS, THE PRIVATE SECTOR AND NGOS

- INVESTIGATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR SELLING ITS SERVICES (E.G.) CONSULTANCIES AND INFORMATION) TO GENERATE INCOME

- DELEGATION OF SOME RESPONSIBILITIES TO OTHER ORGANISATIONS

- DEMONSTRATE RETURNS TO INVESTMENT TO ITS STAKEHOLDERS

- COMMUNICATE THE IMPACT OF RESEARCH TO VARIOUS STAKEHOLDERS

- EXPLORE THE SUSTAINABLE FINANCING INITIATIVE

47

- EXPLORING OPTION FOR ALTERNATIVES FOR HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT POLICIES AND PRACTICES IN SACCAR.

THE GROUP ALSO CAUTIONED SACCAR THAT COSTS SHOULD NOT BE REDUCED AT THE EXPENSE OF EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS.

COMMUNICATION OF RESEARCH IMPACTS IS CONSIDERED TO BE CRUCIAL TO THE CONTINUED HIGH PERFORMANCE OF SACCAR. THEREFORE, IMPACT ASSESSMENT INITIATIVES SHOULD BE INTENSIFIED. TO THIS END,

- IMPACT ASSESSMENT SHOULD BE INSTITUTIONALISED AS A MANAGEMENT TOOL IN SACCAR'S OVERALL PROGRAMMING

- SACCAR SHOULD FACILITATE THE INSTITUTIONALISATION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT AS A MANAGEMENT TOOL IN THE NARS.

SACCAR AS A COMMISSION OR A SECTOR COORDINATING UNIT

THE GROUP UNANIMOUSLY ENDORSED THAT FOR EFFECTIVE FUNCTIONING AS A REGIONAL ORGANISATION, SACCAR SHOULD REMAIN AS A COMMISSION BUT SHOULD BE RATIONALISED WITHIN THE CURRENT SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS OF THE REGION. SEVERAL REASONS WERE ADVANCED FOR THIS RECOMMENDATION:

⇒ FULL TIME STAFF DEVOTED TO REGIONAL ACTIVITIES

⇒ OWNERSHIP BY MEMBER STATES

48

⇒ DONOR CONTRIBUTION TIED TO MEMBER COUNTRIES CONTRIBUTION TO SACCAR

⇒ THE CURRENT TREND IN THE DONOR COMMUNITY IS TO SUPPORT REGIONAL ORGANISATIONS

⇒ SACCAR HAS ESTABLISHED EFFECTIVE LINKAGES WITH KEY ORGANISATIONS SUCH AS (ASARECA, CORAF, FARA), IARCS, AND ADVANCED RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS.

⇒ SACCAR AS A REGIONAL ORGANISATION IN ITS CURRENT FORM ENJOYS THE TRUST AND SUPPORT FROM DONORS AND VARIOUS OTHER ORGANISATIONS.

THE GROUP NOTED THAT THE DECISION TO CONVERT SACCAR INTO A SECTOR COORDINATING UNIT WAS LARGELY BASED ON FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS FOR THE MEMBER STATES AND THE HIGH RECURRENT COST. IT REGRETTABLY ALSO NOTED THAT THERE WAS NO WIDER CONSULTATION WITH THE DIRECT STAKEHOLDERS OF SACCAR BEFORE THE RECOMMENDATION WAS MADE BY THE CONSULTANTS, I.E. THEIR REPORT WAS THE RESULT OF INSUFFICIENT CONSULTATION.

THE GROUP RECOMMENDED THAT WHILE APPEALING TO THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS TO RECONSIDER ITS PREVIOUS DECISION, SACCAR SHOULD COME UP WITH A REVISED FINANCIAL PLAN (REFLECTING THE RATIONALISED STRUCTURE, FUNCTIONS AND MODALITIES OF OPERATION) INCLUDING COST CUTTING MEASURES AND ALTERNATIVE FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS, TO CONVINCE COUNCIL THAT THE FINANCIAL BURDEN TO MEMBER STATES WILL BE SUBSTANTIALLY REDUCED AND

THAT THE BENEFIT TO THE STAKEHOLDERS THROUGH REGIONAL COOPERATION ARE SUBSTANTIAL.

AN INCREASED CONTRIBUTION BY THE GOVERNMENT OF BOTSWANA, I.E. COST SHARING IN ADDITION TO ITS ANNUAL CONTRIBUTION, WAS ALSO SUGGESTED AS A MECHANISM TO REDUCE THE FINANCIAL BURDEN OF THE MEMBER STATES.

60

ANNEX II

THE SUSTAINABLE FINANCING INITIATIVE (SFI)

SPONSORED BY THE:

SPECIAL PROGRAM FOR AFRICAN AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH
(WORLD BANK/SPAAR)

MULTI-DONOR SECRETARIAT
(MDS)

U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
(USAID)

Presentation by
Nicolas Kulibaba
Abt Associates Inc.

WHAT IS SFI?

- SFI is a multi-donor, multi-AR/NRM institution activity designed to consolidate effort in support of strengthening the financial base of African AR/NRM institutions.

- SFI seeks to decrease African AR/NRM institutions' dependency upon external donor funding by diversifying sources of support, with an emphasis on identifying and tapping into **local** sources.

- SFI helps African AR/NRM institutions to:

  * develop and implement workplans that promote the transition to new, diversified sources of financing;

  * learn what works and what doesn't;

  * build capacity to manage in a new funding environment.

WHY SFI?

- Traditional sources of funding from the international donor community and from national public sector budgets are declining.

- African economies, which depend significantly upon agriculture and natural resources, need high quality and effective agricultural technology R&D to facilitate economic growth and well-being for their citizens.

- African agricultural research and natural resources management (AR/NRM) institutions need a firm financial base to support their core and program operations.

CURRENT SFI PARTNERS

- Southern Africa Center for Cooperation in Agricultural Research and Training (SACCAR), Gaborone, Botswana

- Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), Accra, Ghana

- Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa (ASARECA), Entebbe, Uganda

- Network for Environment and Sustainable Development in Africa (NESDA), Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire

- Agricultural Research Council (ARC), Harare, Zimbabwe

SFI POLICY ISSUES

- Inherent value of agricultural research: demonstrating pay-offs, attributing cause and effect, measuring impacts, etc.

- Trade-offs between agricultural research as a public or private good: limits of privatization, distribution of benefits/costs, ability of users to pay, timeframe, etc.

- Commercialization strategies: sustainable financing for core research functions vs. "dead end" cost recovery, public-private partnerships and deal-making.

- Endowments and trust funds: dreams vs. realities.

HOW DOES SFI WORK?

- SFI is **strategic**. It encourages AR/NRM institution managers and staff to look outward, to identify and link with key stakeholders, to develop a customer focus, to be market- and product-oriented, and to be proactive rather than reactive.

- SFI is **integrated**. It recognizes that financing issues cannot be addressed in isolation from concerns about institutional capacity and management, or from the larger set of policies that have an impact on AR/NRM institutions.

- SFI is **experimental**. No single solution to the financing problem fits all situations; there are multiple ways to achieve financial sustainability. Thus SFI seeks to discover what works best through testing and learning, sharing lessons along the way and building on successful innovation.

- SFI is **collaborative.** It promotes a partnership for joint action among donors, African AR/NRM institutions, and consultants. The SFI process is participatory and teamwork-based.

WHAT ARE THE EXPECTED RESULTS OF SFI?

- African AR/NRM institutions develop enhanced capacity to analyze priorities, choose program strategies, and independently seek funding (in particular local funding) for their core operations and programs.

- Necessary reforms are identified and implemented in AR/NRM institutions' administrative systems, in research priority-setting and management, and in client outreach.

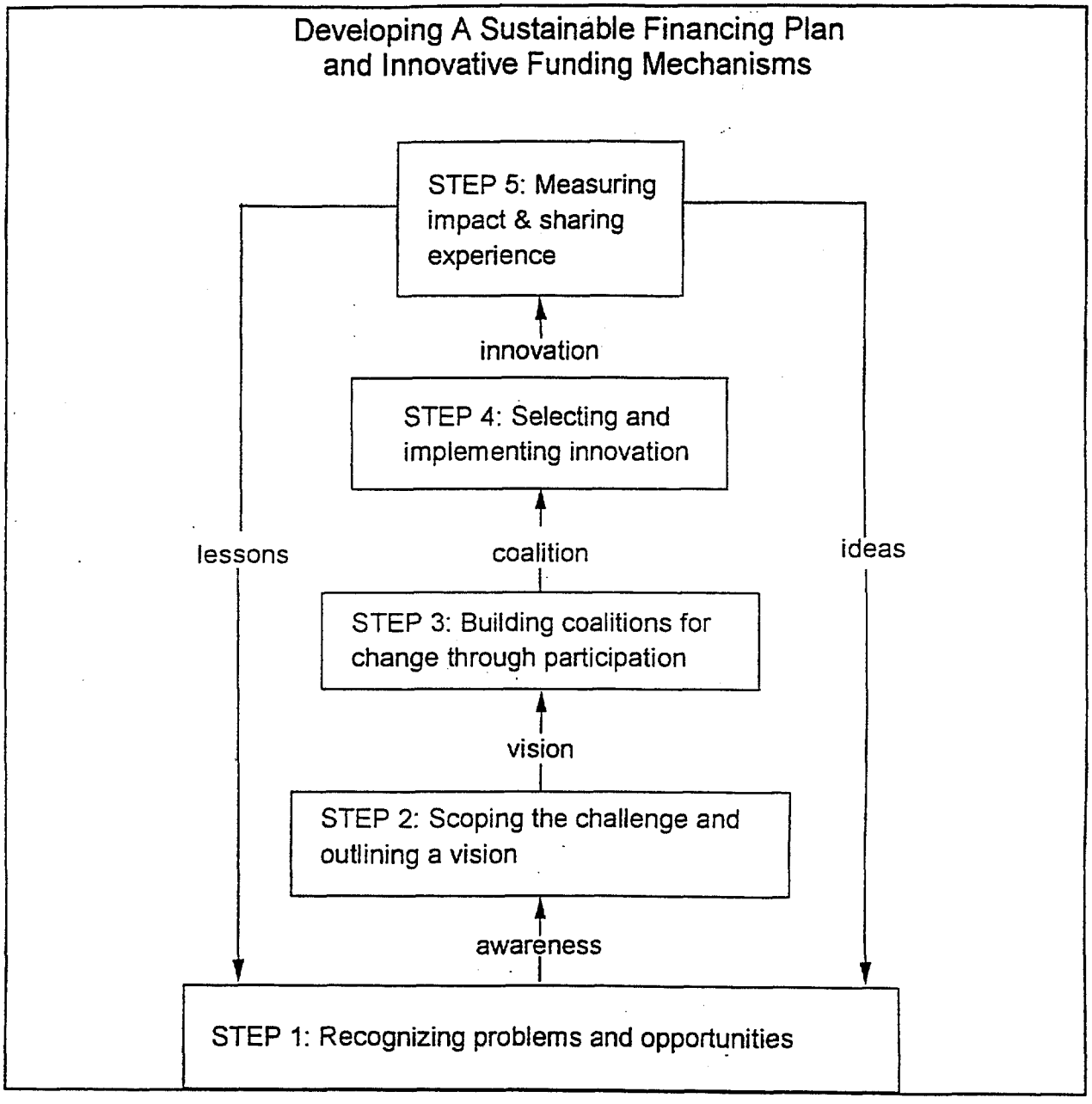
- AR/NRM institutions test and apply a mix of innovative financing mechanisms to expand their resource base.

- More stakeholders and funders are committed to support regional and country AR/NRM institutions.

- AR/NRM institutions receive more funding, especially from local sources, in support of their operations and programs.

- Lessons learned from SFI are collected, analyzed, and disseminated through workshops, seminars, and publications.

WHAT ARE THE STEPS FOR AN SFI INTERVENTION?



SFI INSTITUTIONAL LESSONS

- Links between short- and long-term financial sustainability: timeframe for transition, shift to different funding sources, shift in stakeholders, need for phased approach.

- SFI involves change in organizational culture: ingrained systemic issues (civil service, ministries, etc.), lack of experience with the private/NGO sectors, shift from supply- to demand-driven research, new stakeholders, strategic focus.

- SFI depends upon core management capacity (program management, budgeting/accounting, human resources, etc.); weak prospects for SFI without ability to fulfill core management functions.

- SFI for regional institutions is more complex than for national ones: diffuse objectives, difficult political issues, less potential for mobilizing non-donor support, harder to demonstrate private sector payback.

ANNEX III.
Job descriptions

(1)

SADCC

J O B D E S C R I P T I O N

JOB TITLE: SENIOR PROGRAMMES OFFICER (INFORMATION SCIENCES) INSTITUTION: SACCAR

ORGANIZATION: SADCC DEPT/OFFICE INFORMATION J/C NO.
DEPT/OFFICE:

JOB HOLDER: LOCATION: SEBELE BOTSWANA
LOCATION:
CONTROLLING

CONTROLLING OFFICER:
PRINCIPAL PROGRAMMES OFFICER

1. JOB PURPOSE: (STATE CONCISELY YOUR JOBS OVERALL OBJECTIVE)
   - Promoting continuous and rapid interchange and use of scientific information in the region.
   - Responsible for supervision of information section staff.

2. PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTABILITIES/DUTIES:

(State Responsibilities ~~concisely in~~ numbered statements what you do and why you carry out the given statements)	Performance Indicator(Meas Criteria)
* Prepare annual workplan and budget of the section.	Work plans and budgets approved
* Monitor and evaluate department performance against workplan and budget throughout the year.	Timely number of publications and programs.
Design appropriate databases for both bibliographic and non bibliographic information needed by management.	Functioning databases designed, and publisized.
* Plan and maintain agricultural research resource assessment, and current agricultural research ~~in SADCC databases~~. agricultural and research policies.	Information made available to enhance to promote exchange.
* Produce and disseminate information about SACCAR to scientists and other	Number of suitable material produced and distributed.

Responsibilities

* Advise users and SACCAR management on uses and capabilities of computer databases.	Operating database meeting user needs.
* Consult SACCAR personnel and other potential users of databases on their information needs and to use existing data bases.	Fewer complaints about availabity
* Collect and record key documents on agricultural research, feasibility.	Number of documents acquired and processed.
* Assess ~~and~~ the strengths and weaknesses of regional agricultural information services.	Number of programmes developed.
* Formulate and prepare strategies related ~~related to~~ regional information ~~network~~ needs.	Functioning network that meets the needs of agricultural researc
* Conduct surveys on information needs, problems and seek possible solutions to meet information requirements of research managers, donors ~~and consultants~~ ~~etc~~. and other potential users.	No of strategies developed and comprehensive data compiled and circulated.
* Write, edit and distribute SACCAR Newsletter, proceedings of workshops and occasional publications.	Number of newsletters produced.
* Ensure consistent quality level in technical presentations, layout and printing.	No of quality publications prepared.
* Enhance technical skills of information managers and researchers in the region through short courses and networking.	No of training workshops .
* ~~Oversee~~ Participate in the preparation and publication of the regional agricultural research journal.	No of volumes of the Zimbabwe Journal of Agricultural Research produced and distributed.
* Represent and advise management on regional information activities.	No of meetings attended and accep recommendations made
* ~~Maintain information on agricultural research policies of SADCC member countries.~~	Number of documents acquired and distributed and numbe publications produced.

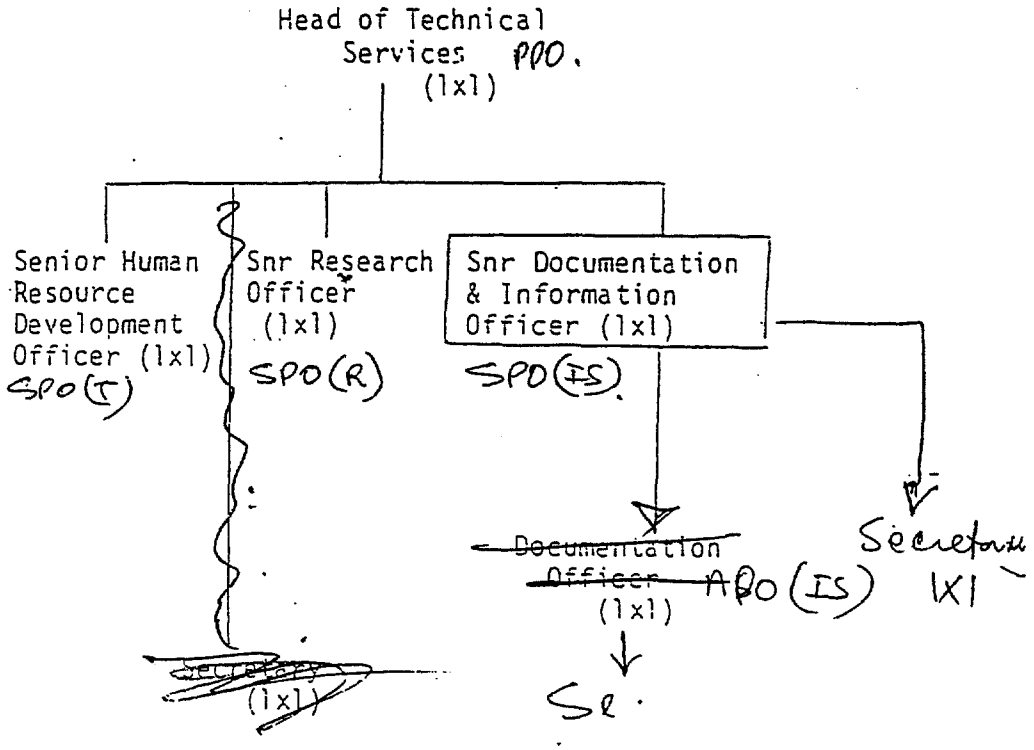
Action Plan.

Career Prospects for Information

61

3. ORGANISATIONAL CHART: (Show by job title your immediate superior, other jobs reporting to the same superior and all other jobs reporting directly to you)

Grade	No.
803	1
SD4	3
SD5	1
Junior Scale	1
TOTAL	6



4.. JOB NATURE AND SCOPE; (
(Describe briefly the role of your job in relation to the nature of the environment in which it operates)

Agricultural and natural resources research and training mandates of SACCAR are essentially information gathering, management and dissemination activities and are important in the quest for improved agricultural production and natural resources management.

It is a big challenge to collect organize, manage and disseminate information in support of planning, priority setting and monitoring ~~of research~~. and evaluation of research.

5. REPORTS TO: (Position you report to)

The ~~Director of SACCAR~~. Principal Programmes Officer.

6. ALSO REPORTING: (Other positions reporting to the same superior

~~The Programmes Officer~~ SPO (R)
~~Manpower and Training Officer~~ SPO (T)
~~Finance and Administration Officer~~

7. NUMBER AND LEVEL OF IMMEDIATE SUBORDINATES: (List by job title and level of subordinate positions reporting directly to you).

~~Assistant Documentation Officer~~ APO (IS).
Secretary
Occasional Consultants in infornmation

8. DIMENSIONS: (List (
DIRECT INCOME EXPENDITURE FOR SACCAR

About US$200, 000

9. CONTACT / INTERACTION: (List by job title jobs inside or outside the organization which you have significant working relationship with and indicate briefly the nature of contacts)

1. All Agricultural and Natural Resources Librarians, Documentalists, Information Officers in the Region.
2. All Directors of Agricultural Research, Deans of Faculties of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Veterinary Medicine to whom most information is sent.
3. Collaborating institutions like CTA, FAO, IDRC, SPAAR, ISNAR, SADC Secretariat, CABI, and others.

10. ANALYTICAL REQUIREMENTS/PROBLEM SOLVING: (Describe briefly the most challenging aspects of your job and indicate by example the most complex problems you have to solve).

1. Dealing with donors and collaborating institutions who have to understand the philosophy of SADCC.

2. Dealing with Agricultural and Natural Resources Research/Managers convincing them about the role of information ~~in~~ and training their work and the need to support information activities.

3. Ability to survey, gather, process and disseminate information for use by the scientists.

4. Ability to understand the complexity of agricultural information, the dependency of agriculture and natural resource on other sciences and the nature of the publication patterns in agriculture and importance of grey literature in the provision of agricultural and natural resources information.

5. To establish a need based data management system to assist in strategic planning and priority setting at SACCAR and NARS.

11. KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENT: (Identify the required minimum educational, professional qualification and experience in years needed to perform at fully acceptable level)

- Masters degree in agricultural information/information technology. The ~~Documentation/Information~~ Senior Programmes Information Officer must have as much if not more experience than other information managers in the region.
- Ideally the ~~Documentation/Information~~ Senior Programmes Information Officer (FS) must have worked in an agricultural and natural resources research/training environment for at least seven years with considerable experience in data management systems.

12. OTHER REQUIREMENTS: (Indicate any special skills demanded by the job ie computation, communication and manual dexterity etc)

- He/she should be familiar with internationally recognized computer languages particularly those used in agricultural and natural resources documentation/information work.
- He/she should have published in international and local media.
- He/she should have participated in international an local conferences.
- He/she should have editorial skills.

13. ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURES: (Indicate nature of adverse conditions under which the job is performed i.e. physical strain, hazards involved)

* Frequent use of computer may affect eyesight.
* Frequent travel exposes one to ~~road/air accidents~~ various hazards.

SADCC

J O B D E S C R I P T I O

JOB TITLE ASSISTANT PROGRAMS OFFICER (INFORMATION SCIENCES)

INSTITUTION: SACCAR

J/C. NO.

ORGANISATION: SADCC

DEPT/OFFICE: INFORMATION

CONTROLLING OFFICER: SENIOR PROGRA OFFICER(IS)

1. JOB PURPOSE: (STATE CONCISELY YOUR JOBS OVERALL OBJECTIVE)

To develp and maintain information services in support of SACCAR 's efforts of promoting the dissemination of available technology and promoting rapid and continuous provision, interchange and use of scientific information.

2. PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTABILITIES/DUTIES: State concisely in numbered statements what you do and why you carry out the given statements)

	INDICATOR(Measurable Criteria)
* Collect, organize and and maintain upto date data relating to the resources in research, training and extension institutions.	Effective database that is responsive to the need of SACCAR personnel, donor community and the SADCC research managers.
* Prepare user and system manuals for databases.	Acceptable and legible manuals prepared.
* Design report format and and screen display format for databases.	Easy to use data bases maintained
* Maintain mailing list for SACCAR publications.	Up to date mailing list prepared and circulated.
* Collect regional agricultural documents.	Number of documents collected.
* Prepare and circulate list of publications received.	Number of publications and lists circulated.
* Assist and cooperate with other departments in obtaining essential Up to date data that is	Documents Acquired

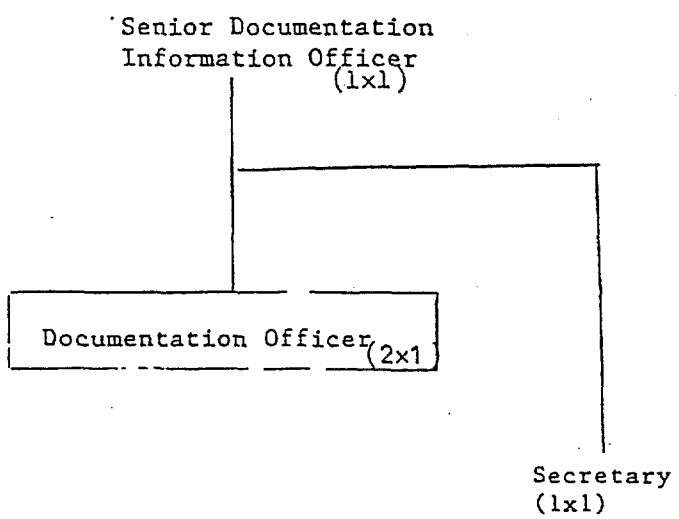
* Prepare and dispatch orders for material needed.	Publications ordered and documents received.
* Participate in technical meetings.	No of meetings attended.
* Cooperate with institutions in the SADCC region and with donors, consultants and international organizations for obtaining statistics, reports.	No of useful data, documents and reports acquired.
* Index material received using bibliographical indexing tools.	Easily accessibly documents.
* Assist in editing, production and distribution of publication.	No of publications produced and distributed.
* Propose and secure articles from Heads of departments and others.	No articles published in SACCAR Newsletter.

2. PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTABILITIES: CONTD...

	Performance (Measurable Indicator criteria)

3. ORGANISATIONAL CHART: (Show by job title your immediate superior, other jobs reporting to the same superior and all other jobs reporting directly to you)

Grade	No.
SD4	1
SD5	2
Junior Scales	1



4. Job Nature and Scope(Describe briefly the role of your job in relation to the nature of the environment in which it operates i.e economical, political, technical considerations)

Informatiom is vital to agricultural research and training

5. REPORTS TO: (Position you report to)

Documentation/Information Officer

6. ALSO REPORTING: (Other positions reporting to the same superior named in 5 above).

Secretary

8. DIMENSIONS: (List (a)Annual income / expenditure amounts directly

Value of document collection and data bases

9. CONTACT / INTERACTION: (List by job title jobs inside or outside the organisation which you have significant working relationship with and indicate briefly the nature of contacts)

All section heads of SACCAR
Collaborating institutions
Information managers in SADCC' agricultural research sector
Computer dealers
Agricultural Scientists and trainers

10. ANALYTICAL REQUIREMENTS/PROBLEM SOLVING: (Describe briefly the most challenging aspects of your job and indicate by example the most complex problem you solve)

Ability to analyse management information requirements and to develop databases that are appropriate and user responsive.

Ability to analyse and index documents and create user tools

11. KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENT: (Identify the required minimum educational, professional qualification and experience in years needed to perform to at fully acceptable level)
science

Degree in information science with at least 5 years experience.

Experience in application softwares like lotus, dbase, cds/isis
oracle

Communication and technical writing skills.

12. OTHER REQUIREMENTS: (Indicate any special skills demanded by the job i.e computational, communication and manual dexterity etc)

Must be computer literate
Must be able to produce various documents including user manuals. Good communication skills.

13. ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURES: (Indicate nature of adverse)

There is also a lot of travelling to meetings, workshops, informations related seminars which expose one to road/air traffic hazards

JOB DESCRIPTION

SECRETARY - INFORMATION SCIENCES

1. Compose and type routine correspondence and prepare mail for despatch.
2. Bring files up to required standard (letters, papers and records)
3. Ensure orderly movement of files between offices.
4. Open, sort and bring to attension of officers all incoming mail.
5. Attend and screen official visitors and telephone calls.
6. Attend to office procedures including scheduling appointments, processing of mail, ordering supplies.
7. Attend to some meetings, seminars to take notes and ensure smooth functioning of the meeting.
8. Ensure that the offices are tidy and clean.
9. Ensure that outrays are empty.
10. Ensure that equipment is in good working order.
11. Arrange travel bookings and hotel accommodation in liaison with administration assistant.
12. Maintain a "day file" of outgoing mail from section.
13. Ensure newsletters and other documents are swiftly despatched.
14. Keep a record of what is borrowed from section.

ANNEX IV.
Newsletter Survey, 1996

YOUR DETAILS

Surname: MOSINYI Other Name: GRACE

Organisation: FORUM ON SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE [FONSAG]

Address: P/BAG BO 136 GABORONE

Tel: 301961 Fax: 307506

E-mail: — Tlx: —

(1) Are we sending the SACCAR newsletter to the right person: ☑ Y or ☐ N

(2) If no, please give details. Name: —

Position: INFORMATION, EDUCATION & COMMUNICATION OFFICER

(3) Which of these best describes you and your organisation (tick as appropriate)

- ☐ research organisation
- ☐ government
- ☐ training institution/academic
- ☑ journalist
- ☐ Private
- ☐ Diplomatic organisation
- ☑ NGO
- ☐ inter-government institution
- ☐ Donor

(4) Do you have access to the internet at your workplace? ☐ Y or ☑ N

(5) What do you do with the SACCAR Newsletter after receiving it?

- ☑ file for reference
- ☑ pass on (to whom) TO OUR readership through our quarterly newsletter
- ☐ throw it away
- ☐ other (describe)

(6) Which part of the SACCAR Newsletter do you read first?

- ☑ research articles
- ☐ contacts
- ☐ announcements
- ☐ news pages

(7) Which part of the SACCAR Newsletter do you find interesting?

- ☑ research articles
- ☐ contacts
- ☐ announcements
- ☐ news pages

(8) How do you find the level of detail in the Newsletter

- [x] too detailed
- [ ] not detailed enough
- [ ] ideal

(9) How do you use the SACCAR Newsletter (tick as many as possible)

- [x] source of ideas
- [x] training material
- [x] source of news
- [x] educational material
- [ ] for speeches
- [x] contacts/networking
- [x] for facts and figures
- [ ] other (describe) for reference purposes

(10) Is the SACCAR newsletter your primary source of information on a topic.

- [ ] regularly
- [ ] rarely
- [x] sometimes
- [ ] never

(11) Do you ever use quotes that you find in the SACCAR Newsletter for articles? [x] Y or [ ] N (& credit is awarded)

(12) How do you think SACCAR Newsletter could be improved?

SACCAR Newsletter should find out (if it is within its mandate) what ~~other~~ NGOs are doing in relation to research & give them coverage. This will enable your readers to have access to ~~[illegible]~~ balanced information.

13. Give your general overview of the SACCAR Newsletter

SACCAR newsletter, in my view represents only the views of government(s), for which it should. But it should also take into account the views of different people, NGOs, individuals etc.