



Namibia National Farmers Union



AGRICULTURAL FARMERS ASSOCIATIONS AND COOPERATIVES CONFERENCE



8th NOVEMBER- 10th NOVEMBER 2017
OTJIWARONGO, OTJOZONDJUPA REGION - NAMIBIA

Conference facilitated by:

Namibia Development Trust

Table of Contents (manual)

Acknowledgements.....	3
Acronyms.....	4
Executive Summary.....	5
Challenges and Opportunities identified.....	6
Recommendations.....	7
Main Outcome.....	9
Welcoming remarks (by Hon. Governor of Otjozondjupa, Mr. Otto Ipinge).....	10
Guest Speakers	
Introductory Remarks (By Mr. Heiner Naumann, Res. Rep FES).....	10
Opening Statement (BY Mr. Jason Emvula, President, NNFU.....	13
Perspective of HACCIADEP, (Mr. Persy Misika, PS, MAWF.....	13
Keynote Address: (By Minister of Agric. Hon. John Mutorwa.....	15
Vote of Thanks (By Mr. Oiva Mahina, Vice President NNFU.....	17
Participants' Expectations.....	18
Presentations	
1. Lessons from an international perspective (Mr. Jurgen Schwettmann, consultant FES).....	19
2. Regional perspective (Mr. L. Banda, Head of Cooperative Development. MUSCCO, Malawi.....	20
3. More insights on HACCIADEP (Mr. Persy Misika, PS, MAWF).....	23
4. Overview of Cooperative Policy (Mr. Isaak Ruben, Directorate of Cooperative Development, MAWF).....	23
5. Supporting Agricultural Cooperatives and Farmers Union in Unlocking Potentials)Mr. Tino Hess, GIZ-CLDP- Advisory Services project.....	24
6. Onghalulu Farmers(Mr. Lisius Nghimbwasha, Chairperson).....	30
7. Likwama Farmers Cooperative(Mr. Alfred Chilunda, Chairperson).....	30
8. Panel Discussion (Mr. Ronny Dempers NDT and MS Daisy Manungo NFU).....	32
9. Challenges and Opportunities (Mr. Ronny Dempers).....	35
10. Summary of Conference Proceedings (Mr. R. Dempers).....	37
Annexes	
1. Schedules and programs of the conference.....	41
2. Images of the conference.....	44
3. Attendance lists.....	47



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NNFU and FES are particularly grateful to the Minister and the Permanent Secretary of Agriculture, Water and Forestry, the Resident Representative of FES, President of NNFU and Representative of the Governor of Otjozondjupa for blessing the conference. Particular gratitude goes to the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) for initiating and excellent implementation of the conference.

The participation, representation and support provided by all of you made the conference on agricultural cooperatives and farmers associations a resounding success.

Acronyms

AMTA	Agro-Marketing and Trading Agency
CAB	Cooperative Advisory Board
CAN	Conservation Agriculture in Namibia
CLDP	Communal Land Development Programme
DCDR	Division of Cooperative Development and Regulation
FES	Friedrich Ebert Stiftung
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
HACCIADEP	Harambee Comprehensively Coordinated and Integrated Agricultural Development Program
GRN	Government of the Republic of Namibia
MAWF	Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry
MUSCCO	Malawi Union of Savings and Credit Cooperatives
NamPol	Namibian Police Force
NCA	Northern Communal Areas
NDT	Namibia Development Trust
NNFU	Namibia National Farmers Union
PCLD	Programme for Communal Land Development
PPP	Public and Private Partnership

Brief background about NFFU, 'The Voice of Namibian Farmers'

NNFU is a national federation of regional farmers unions. It was established in June 1992 to serve as a mouthpiece for Namibian communal and emerging farmers. It aims to increase food production for household security, enhance marketing of farming products to increase household income, increase participation and recognition of women in farming, contribute to environmental protection and sustainable utilization of natural resources. NNFU, generally, aims to protect and advance the interests of communal as well as commercial farmers, to promote the development of a viable farming industry in order to improve rural community's standard of living; to enhance rural farming, liaise with international farmers organizations and promote networking, cooperation and representation of farmers' interests at international level. It aims also to promote sympathetic understanding amongst farmers as well as the formation of Farmers' Organizations throughout Namibia as a means for Farmers' collective bargaining powerbase.

It further aims to create conducive environment from which to consider, discuss, provide, advice and articulate the farmers' needs, desires, aspirations, problems and views on issues such as pricing policy formulation, provision of marketing facilities for both inputs and produce, provision of adequate and affordable transport of farm produce, provision of road network, provision of water for human consumption, livestock and for irrigation, land reform policy and distribution, provision of credit facilities, setting up of conditions of employment and wages for farm labour, formulation of compensation policies for improvement and disturbances and establishment of taxation levels, and generally, to improve the welfare of agricultural farming community in Namibia.

As part of its mandate and responsibility towards farmers, and in partnership with the Friedrich Ebert Foundation and in conjunction with the Division of Cooperative Development and Regulations of the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry, NNFU organised the conference on unlimiting agricultural potentials with aim of identifying factors that can contribute towards eliminating existing constraints to vibrant agricultural growth in crop and livestock development. The emphasis of the conference was drawn to growth of agriculture in communal areas of Namibia as the vanguard of equitable social and economic development of the rural economy.

Drawing from lessons of documented local, regional and international examples in cooperative development, the findings of the conference were based on consented participatory analysis of current growth trends in local agriculture, their constraints on development, and the role to be played by existing and emerging opportunities and their perceived impact on vibrant expansion and growth of agriculture. The outcomes of such analysis were viewed in the way they impact on livelihoods in marginalised communities and their contribution towards social and economic emancipation of ordinary Namibians through shared effects of multiplier and benefit streams.

The conference was organised under the theme 'Unlocking the potential of agriculture through agricultural associations and cooperatives', and served as a catalyst in removing obstacles to agricultural development, including those placed by past colonial legacies, which have led to deplorable social and economic standing of the communal areas. The emphasis of the conference was placed on how to move towards a vibrant and organised agricultural production which is the centre-pin for economic development of the communal establishments in Namibia. The conference's energies were therefore directed towards strengthening social, economic, logistical, technological and legislative constraints that inhibit improved agricultural production and how such constraints stand in the way of improved livelihood in terms of income and employment creation, and wealth creation in communal areas.

As it turned out, the conference provided a platform for addressing gaps in governance and inadequate organisational and business capacity both in cooperatives and agricultural associations in which leaders

are not accountable to members and where cooperative business is not based on viable business plans. It also addressed circumstances where, because of poor products from poorly managed production, there is always limited access to markets because the products are not competitive enough which leads to narrow marketing linkages. The conference further addressed lack of harmonised mechanisms for approaching agricultural development together between agricultural farmers and cooperatives since they both have competing and conflicting interests, based on anticipated gain. It also addressed lack of shared strategy for educating farmers, for increasing awareness around credit and how to access it based on informed decisions. It addressed the need to generally increasing awareness creation around shared information platforms, availability and use of technical skills, media platforms, organisational abilities, collaborative research in improved sources of water, improved capital base, increased understanding of the cooperative concept and its contributions and implications to communal livelihoods, and more.

1.1 Key challenges identified

The following amongst other things stood out as key challenges facing agricultural associations and cooperatives in general, as highlighted during the conference proceedings:

- Lack of adequate capital base to kick-start projects and initiatives.
- Increasing resilience in the face of increasing climatic unpredictability and rainfall unreliability
- Diminishing soil fertility as a result of cross-cutting social, economic and ecological factors on land (land degradation, deforestation and desertification).
- Deficiencies in governance and leadership of cooperatives (and farmers associations) as a result of low levels of motivation, skills, and knowledge dispensation.
- Lack of regular mentorship and follow-ups on training, evaluation and monitoring of programs
- Lack of adequate knowledge and awareness creation on crucial and relevant policies/ legislation on cooperatives.
- Lack of harmonised relationships between agricultural cooperatives and associations which leads to competing interests and source of social disharmony.
- Lack of interest by the youth to active participation, due low levels of motivation and exclusionist policies from the veteran members.
- Lack of sustainability and benefit sharing mechanism in available funding support
- Lack of necessary capacity to meet requirements for profitable entry into and access to existing and emerging product markets (innovation, value adding, orienting production to market demand, etc)
- Unfounded fears based on unknown factors regarding whether the well intended HACCIADep initiative has benefits to offer to marginalised communities.
- Competing and conflicting interests between agricultural associations and cooperatives regarding available funding and resource opportunities.
- Conflicting interests and roles of traditional authorities in memberships and management roles of agricultural associations and cooperatives.
- Limited organisational and business capacity, skills training and technical know-how on managing agricultural undertakings as viable and profitable enterprises, as well as low levels of awareness on credit availability, source of information on markets, credit, weather patterns, disease and natural disaster outbreaks and their control.

1.2 Key opportunities identified

In general, the conference was able to identify opportunities which agricultural associations in general can use to break down barriers that impede improved and sustainable agricultural development, which include:

1. Opportunities offered by the Harambee Comprehensively Coordinated Initiative for Agricultural Development Program (HACCIADep) which is an agricultural program implementation link-pin of the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry. HACCIADep offers a variety of well coordinated agricultural linkages in capacity building, production and processing of agro-related processes, market linkages, financial and asset leverages, as well as inter-networking mechanisms between

the various agricultural undertakings, all of which are aimed to lessen the burden on the producer (and the communal producer) and to offer a profitable exit for everybody involved in agricultural production.

2. Exploring possibilities in indigenous and drought-resistant crops that can withstand changes in climate, which have capacity to strengthen farmers' resilience to impacts and vulnerabilities from climate change. Such crops include Sorghum and improved varieties of Mahangu (Pearl Millet).
3. Integrating ways in which agricultural associations and cooperatives approach management of communal resources, and harmonising working relationships through an integrated cooperatives/farmers association management system.
4. Advantages created by the Revised Cooperative Policy and the way it clarifies issues of governance, support, credit securing, etc
5. Identification of strategies and initiatives that benefit members and how to increase benefits streams
6. Accessing available funding and other stakeholder support to the associations and cooperatives.
7. Understanding of similarities, roles and cross-cutting issues between agricultural associations and cooperatives and how areas of cooperation can be enhanced for the benefit of both.
8. Increasing capital base through Private-Public Partnerships
9. Empowering leaderships through education and training and intensified awareness creation on key aspects of agricultural enterprises.
10. Adventuring into value adding and value chain development in the various aspects of crop farming so as to raise the price value and competitiveness of the products and avoid underpricing because of price value undercuts. Farmers can also venture into juice and jam production from crops like Mahangu, and indigenous natural products to increase the uses of and markets for communal products which may impact considerably on farmers' incomes.
11. Increasing initiatives around alternative sources of water.
12. Opportunities available through Communal Land Development Program on organisation and Cooperation in which farmers can be organised in common interest groups and be able to maximise leverage and profit (food producer organisations / farmer-based organisations / cooperatives) and to enjoy economies of scale, i.e., promotion of local sales to institutions, restaurants, hotels and on national market, received tenure security and mobilised investments, organised events (e.g. auctions), bulk purchase/retail of farm inputs benefitting members (e.g. vaccines), shared information, advice, and coordinated production process and assured consistency in supply and quality.
13. Opportunities offered through cooperation at regional and international level with organisations and institutions in African and other countries worldwide which include learning from lessons and experiences in governance, training and skills enhancement, organised production and marketing linkages, agro processing, value-adding and benefit realisation.

1.3 Recommendations in terms of how the cooperative sector can be strengthened:

The challenges identified were clustered under ensuring improved agricultural production (increased and stimulating) and ensuring a more organised agriculture (getting all aspects of agriculture organised and competitive).

The recommendations were based on consented responses to the following questions:

- a) What are the main obstacles to improved and organised crop and livestock farming?
- b) What practical options do farmers associations and cooperatives have in the shortest possible time to increase/stimulate crop/livestock farming?
- c) What practical options does Government have to stimulate crop and livestock farming and support agricultural associations?
- d) What options and opportunities does the HACCIADep offer to agricultural associations and cooperatives to strengthen their business operations and unlock potentials?
- e) What characterises relationships between farmers associations and cooperatives
- g). How can such relationships be improved to their benefit?

- h). what is the current role of key players and support organisations and how can such role be improved/coordinated for the better benefit of agricultural organisations?

Responses to the above led to the recommendations below, which were generally adopted using a consented and democratic process:

1.3.1 Ensuring improved Agricultural Production, it was recommended that:

- a) Government increases support to farmers through subsidies and through availability of tractor services, at affordable prices for effective land preparatory purposes.
- b) There is need for enhancing ways in which information is disseminated among farmers on policies and regulations, on available training and skills enhancement opportunities, on available credit opportunities, market linkages processing and value adding, etc.
- c) Farmers should embrace opportunities offered by the HACCIADep initiative and the linkages it offers as a way around constraints to improved agricultural production.
- d) There is need to intensify management of human and wildlife conflicts to address current compensation rates paid to victims in the event of loss of crops and livestock.
- e) There is need to intensify mechanisms and processes for identifying and mitigating common diseases to crops and livestock.
- f) There is need to increase initiatives around alternative sources of water in drought-prone communal areas as numbers of farmers increase against available sources.
- g) There is need to intensify ways of fighting stock theft with harsh and punitive measures and deliberate laws to criminalise offenders.
- h) Increased collaboration between Farmers Associations, Conservancies and Cooperatives aimed to reap benefits of large scale organisation in production, agro-processing, marketing and transport.
- i) There is need for more initiatives and commitment towards improved rangeland management (managing stocking and carrying capacity, improved grazing and stock quality)
- j) There is need for enhanced collaboration with MET on enhanced wildlife and human conflict management in protected wildlife areas.
- k) There is need for harmonisation and integration of management approach to farmers associations and cooperatives on issues of common interest (capital formation, funding access and resource dispensation, training, production, marketing, processing, common grazing areas, skills management and capacity building, as well as market linkages and access to markets).
- l) There is need to harmonise policies and conditions on accessing credit and financial resources, as well as terms for repayment.
- m) There is need to master techniques for enhanced breeding in crops and livestock production to increase market competitiveness.
- n) There is need for instilling discipline among members and leadership and to stay relevant to the cause and expectations of the associations.
- o) There is need for enhancing mechanisms and processes involved in monitoring and evaluation of programs and activities carried out by and with farmers.

1.3.2 On Ensuring More Organised Agriculture (for both crop and livestock production) it was recommended that:

- a) Issues around good governance and compliance be emphasised, as without organised leadership there is no organised agriculture. Leadership should be pro members, accountable, flexible to members wants, should be willing to quit leadership positions after certain period of agreed time.
- b) There is need to strengthen organisational and business capacity of individuals and agricultural associations in order to enhance management efficiency so as to reduce unnecessary expenditure, losses and delays, and to orient production to market demand so as to improve access to profitable existing and emerging product markets.

1.3.3 On Harmonising relationships between farmers associations, cooperatives and support institutions, it was recommended that:

- a) There is urgent need to increase awareness around crucial roles and responsibilities played by each in spearheading economic emancipation of marginalised groups of the society, and their interdependent nature, to harmonise laws and regulations regarding their operations (Integrated approach).
- b) There is need to streamline information flow (nature, content, timing, etc) to ensure that it is clear and void of ambiguities that lead to misinterpretations and misconceptions, and the frequency.
- c) There is need for harmonising incentives, compensations and commissions in case of loss of property and life in each agricultural set up and to balance interests based on harmonised policies.
- d) There is need for each entity to improve their lot, i.e., what they are worth, what they can offer to members and how they can improve their members' livelihoods, based on mutually planned business plans and actions.
- e) There is need for improved environment for planning, capacity building, business management, marketing, advocacy, etc in order to strengthen linkages with key players.
- f) Cooperatives should aim to benefit members by initiating programs that promote sustainability and from which members are able to derive benefits. The youth have potential to bring innovative ideas in management and leadership and there is therefore need to prepare them youth for leadership roles by involving them and empowering them to be responsible members.
- g) There is urgent need for apex representational/coordination unit that can move farmers' interests ahead.
- h) There is need for harmonised positions regarding ownership and utilization of assets and facilities operated by agricultural associations whether jointly or separately.
- i) There is need to introduce and intensify farmer training on vaccinating of livestock as well as medical subsidies, in order for farmers to be aware of simple 'fast aid' procedures on livestock while they wait for extension officials to arrive.
- j) There is need for intensifying extension of water pipelines and boreholes as the numbers of farmers, crop fields and livestock increase.
- k) There is need to venture into other sources of water, including harvesting rain water.
- l) Stiff sentences and no bail for stock theft were recommended, together with intensified use of mobilised men and women networks in tracking down stock thefts.

1.4 *Main outcome of the Conference and the next steps*

The conference has resolved to work towards more organised agriculture and stimulated /increased production in both livestock and crop farming. Organisation and increased production can only be achieved through adherence to policy regulations, transparency in leadership, accountability, pro-member attitude, willingness to share opportunities and resources, as well as motivating others to be active. Other outcomes include the need to work towards harmonising relationship between farmers associations and cooperatives as a first important step towards enabling them to serve the interests of their members more effectively. The conference also welcomed the most recent initiatives by government through the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry, to launch the HACIADEP initiative which is geared towards enhancing local production through elimination of common bottlenecks. Farmers have called on Government to increase awareness creation around HACIADEP initiative so as to enhance their understanding of the initiative and the way it will enable them to maximise benefits from it. It further addressed development of common strategies in approaching climatic unpredictabilities, increasing costs of crop and livestock production in drought-prone areas, limited access to markets, low levels of awareness creation, provision of targeted farmer training, improved information dissemination, improved monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, as well as improved accountability.

AGRICULTURAL FARMERS ASSOCIATIONS AND COOPERATIVES CONFERENCE
*Unlocking the potential of agriculture through agricultural farmers associations
and cooperatives*

08th November – 10th November 2017, Out of Africa Hotel, Otjiwarongo

Workshop Proceedings

1. Background

The conference on unlocking potentials in agriculture through agricultural farmers associations and cooperatives was organised in Otjiwarongo, Otjozondjupa Region on 08th and 10th of November 2017 by Namibia National Farmers Union NNFU in partnership with the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung FES. It was organized under the theme 'Unlocking the potential of agriculture through agricultural associations and cooperatives' and was aimed at identifying growth potential, challenges and opportunities for agricultural cooperatives in Namibia. It drew lessons from best local, regional and international examples in agricultural cooperatives.

At local level, the conference drew lessons from the Namibian cooperatives which have shown commitment in governance and accountability towards members, commitment to identification of member-friendly and viable business plans, together with their sustainability, and improved relations with members, stakeholders and service providers, as well as improved capital base. Regional perspectives were taken from examples in Malawi, Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda which have made commendable progress in unlocking opportunities offered by cooperative development. Specific regional experiences were taken from examples in Malawi which were represented at the conference by Mr. Leroy Banda, head of Cooperatives Development and Projects – Malawi Union of Savings and Credit Cooperatives.

The conference was focused on agricultural sustainability and strengthening agricultural associations. It served as a catalyst in awakening the potential in agricultural associations and cooperatives, putting emphasis on factors that address lifting of bottlenecks that impede on increased crop and livestock production in communal areas, together with the way they impact on livelihoods. These include strengthening of governance and organisational capacity, harmonised production and marketing linkages, improved stakeholder relationships as well as developing common strategies on education, awareness creation, and information and knowledge dispensation. Others include development of common approaches to climatic unpredictability, shifting costs of crop and livestock production in drought-prone areas, addressing limited access to markets, low levels of awareness, providing of targeted farmer training, improved information dissemination, improved monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, as well as improved accountability.

It was officially opened by the Minister of Agriculture, Water and Forestry Honourable John Mutorwa, who narrated the historical link between colonial legacy and its impacts on agricultural development in communal areas in Namibia, on the one hand, and how the Government of the Republic of Namibia is addressing the impacts created by colonial legacy through improved governance and legislation, improved sustainable and inclusive resource dispensation, development of green schemes, mobile abattoir services, increasing education to farmers so as to improve competitiveness and access to markets for products from communal areas.

Other guests included Mr. Moses Chikulwa, Special Advisor to the Governor of Otjozondjupa Region who represented the Governor Mr. Otto Ipinge, the Resident Representative of Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Mr. Heiner Naumann, the President of Namibia National Union, Mr. Jason Emvula, and the Permanent Secretary Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry, Mr. Persy Misika.

As it turned out, the conference created a platform for increasing awareness on the revised National Cooperative Policy that was launched by the Minister of Agriculture, Water and Forestry in August, a platform for enhancing sharing and networking amongst main players in the development of agricultural cooperatives, regarding sustaining cooperative business as viable businesses; and a platform for exploring opportunities and constraints to cooperative development in Namibia. It was a platform for amicable dialogue among agricultural associations, Government and support institutions on issues relevant to agricultural development through sharing of ideas, best practices and lessons learnt.

It was attended by representatives from more than 22 cooperatives from all the 14 regions of Namibia at various management levels. It was also attended by representatives from the Division of Cooperative Development and Regulation of the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry, Namibia National Farmers Union, Friedrich Ebert Foundation, Conservation Agriculture Namibia (CAN), GIZ-Communal Land Development Programme – Advisory Services (CLDP), ILO, MUSCO of Malawi, Agribank, Meatco Foundation, and KIAT.

The conference took cognisance of the important role cooperatives have played since independence in bringing together the previously disadvantaged groups in communal Namibia into the formal economy through pooling together resources. It further recognised the ability of agricultural associations to integrate less privileged members of the society such as the marginalised and vulnerable, disabled groups, women and youth into the market economy through helping them to help themselves.

Agricultural associations are provided for in the Namibian Constitution through Article 98 Section 2, and are an integral part of the Namibian strategic planning, as reflected in NDP5 (about harmonious living of peoples while pooling resources together), Vision2030 (about people-centred economic development), and the Harambee Prosperity Plan (pooling together to fight hunger, poverty and unemployment), and where 'one Namibian dying of hunger is too many to bear'.

Day 1, Wednesday 8th of November 2017: Official opening of the Conference

Motivational Remarks (By Mr. Mushokabanji Mwilima, Executive Director, NNFU)

Introductory remarks were made by Mr. Mushokabandji Mwilima, Executive Director of NNFU, who called on co-operators and farmers to pay keen attention to deliberations of the conference and shop around ideas from persons and organisations that 'have been there' in terms of experience and what it takes to be organised and productive. He welcomed Mr. Moses Chikulwa, Special Advisor to the Governor of Otjozondjupa, to give welcoming remarks on behalf of the Governor, Mr. Otto Ipinge.

PART I: GUEST SPEAKERS

Guest speaker 1): Welcoming Remarks By the Governor Otjozondjupa, Mr. Otto Ipinge (*Read on His Behalf By Mr. Moses Chikulwa, Special Advisor to The Governor*)

In the remarks, Mr. Ipinge stressed how cooperatives are bringing together people by pooling resources and skills, just the way the 'Harambee Prosperity' concept is inclusive and pools together people and resources, especially of the marginalised groups. He was optimistic that agricultural associations have the potential to bring about sustainable development of the informal sector, and the promotion of responsible governance which is accountable to members.

He was optimistic that Namibian agricultural associations would benefit greatly from experiences and lessons from regional and international perspectives as showcased at the conference. He welcomed all the guests and participants to the conference to Otjozondjupa region and wished them fruitful deliberations.

Guest Speaker ii). Introductory Remarks (*By Mr. Heiner Naumann, Resident Representative, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung*)

In his introductory remarks Mr. Naumann, congratulated the cooperative movement in Namibia for the achievements so far, especially considering that the number of cooperatives and membership have since increased. He concurred with the notion that the cooperative movement can be a better tool for social, economic and democratic organisation in communal areas, and it being one of the largest social, economic and democratic movements in the world. In encouraging the agricultural associations, Mr. Naumann narrated how at the time he grew up in the cooperative environment in Europe every aspect of life had a cooperative attachment, and that cooperatives served the role of the current modern governments, where universities at the time studied all aspects of cooperatives, including production, marketing and consumer behaviours.

He further stressed the enormous benefits that agricultural associations would get by venturing into value chain development in agro-related ventures, which as he said, improves the quality and competitiveness of the products, thus increasing (doubling) the income from the products. This would entail getting expertise on agro-processing and improved marketing linkages. He maintained that it is only possible under organised governance with leaderships that have respect for and are accountable to members. He

gave an example of his favourable internet search engine, Firefox, which is a cooperative undertaking and how it has grown from strength to profit.

He elaborated on some of the notable achievements made by cooperatives which include small scale energy producers in which about 300 producers have shown commitment and have potential to support small scale farmers with alternative source of energy. He also touched on the ownership and marketing of such technologies by agricultural associations, which he said was recommendable.

In conclusion, Mr. Naumann challenged the conference to find answers to the following concerns:

- What potential agricultural associations do have
- What are the major conditions necessary for the success of agricultural associations?
- In what way does organised governance and internal organisation help the associations?
- Of what significance is gender balance and involvement/participation in cooperative activities?
- What role do agricultural associations play in improving livelihoods in informal sector of Namibia?

As a remark, he reminded agricultural cooperatives that too much fertiliser in the soil is a wasteful exercise and concluded by wishing participants good deliberations.

Guest Speaker iii). Opening Statement by Mr. Jason Emvula, President of Namibia National Farmers Union NNFU *(Read on his behalf by Ms Dona Amunyera, NNFU Board Member).*

In his statement, Mr. Emvula expressed gratitude to organizers for the visionary gesture taken in organizing the conference, and personal appreciation to guests and participants for the spirit expressed through numbers and enthusiasm evident at the start of the conference. He stressed the importance of the role of agricultural cooperatives in spearheading economic emancipation of communal areas, and called on agricultural associations to take advantage of the current changing times and conditions, including technology as well as the conducive environment facilitated by the Government.

On a note of courage, Mr. Emvula called on agricultural associations to invest sufficiently in their own success through strengthening agricultural associations in identifying innovative ideas under which to organize farmers and agricultural production. He applauded Government's willingness to support, and that it is only when farmers are organized that they can be a formidable force to negotiate with government and be able to influence better change - better policies, better prices and better living conditions. Mr. Emvula further pointed out that agricultural associations are very instrumental when it comes to ending exportation and loss of jobs which thousands of Namibians need, and that they should aim to meet requirements for improved access to better and profitable product markets for agricultural products, as well as share information on weather patterns, on technical innovations, and diseases and how to control them. He concluded by emphasizing 'organized agriculture in order to raise the voice of the farmers.

Guest Speaker IV). Perspective on the Harambee Comprehensively Coordinated Initiative for agricultural Development Program (HACCIADep) *(By Mr. Persy Misika, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry).*

Mr. Misika said that his perspectives on the HACCIADep initiative of MAWF were mainly as a result of increasing anxiety and passion raised by farmers on opportunities and prospects offered by HACCIADep initiative, especially regarding its role in strengthening agricultural entities in the informal sector. He said that it also follows his own desire to find out what role organized farmer associations and cooperatives can play in the HACCIADep initiative, which is a two-way complementary initiative. He concurred with the meaning carried by the theme of the conference, i.e., 'unlocking the potential of agriculture through

agricultural associations and cooperatives', which he said was the right cord at the right timing, and that he looked forward to the outcomes which he said were highly anticipated.

Mr. Misika cited the Cooperatives Act in stressing the importance of both independence and autonomous nature of the cooperatives and agricultural associations, and called on them to convene regularly to enhance their business potential and organizational functionality, strengthen resource base and maximize synergies and economies of scale in order for them to remain relevant.

He referred to HACCIADEP as a 'catalyst' in the equation of 'cooperative development' in that it is meant to accelerate vibrant agricultural development through transforming some of the bottlenecks into opportunities for farmers. He stressed the role that HACCIADEP is expected to play and how it links with other national policies on agriculture, local and rural development, as well as national economic development. He further stressed the importance of and resource package involved in implementation of HACCIADEP schemes. He outlined the initiative and schemes content together with how cooperatives and agricultural associations are factored in HACCIADEP through interlinked production, marketing and facilitating interfaces (end-user) points in form of schemes. The schemes, he noted, are aimed to offer maximum benefit to beneficiary groups at particular point of the HACCIADEP chain, including enhanced employment and income opportunities.

The schemes include enhancing water availability, food production and processing and enhancing marketing linkages aimed to create a pull/demand-effect by Namibian institutions; rural mechanization with its benefit streaming at rural level, horticultural, poultry and cereal production, milk production, as well as debushing and reduction in bush encroachment and seeds productions. Details of the schemes are contained in the project programming framework of HACCIADEP which is available from regional offices of MAWF.

Mr. Misika maintained however, that HACCIADEP cannot succeed without participation of organized farmers and cooperatives. He also stressed Government's role and plan, through the HACCIADEP initiative, to help farmers acquire assets and property through well linked processes of value adding and price-raising on farmers' products. He said this goes with carefully handled incentives at each value adding stage so that in the end, the farmers can use their products as mortgage for eliminating financial and other economic hurdles and use the gain to improve production, which becomes a cycle of improvements and benefits. This is planned through linkages between agro producer and processor groups (farmers associations and cooperatives), marketing units, buyers, financial institutions, and AMTA as the transactional coordinating agency on behalf of Government.

Mr. Misika further stressed the urgent need for producers and line functionaries to get organized through value chain development initiatives of agro processing aimed to increase the market value of communal products in order to gain more profitable access to product markets and that such efforts can be rewarded through HACCIADEP's organized and well linked marketing units, as farmers will be highly motivated to produce more and take advantage of the market produced as a result of the linkages. It was against this anticipated expectation of benefits counter benefits that Mr. Misika said the timing of the conference couldn't have been better, and that he saw HACCIADEP addressing the very core objective and existence of the agricultural organizations. He concluded by inviting the Hon. Minister of Agriculture to give a keynote address for the conference.

Guest Speaker v): Keynote Address to the Conference: (By Hon. John Mutorwa, MP and Minister of Agriculture, Water and Forestry)

In his keynote address to the conference on agricultural cooperatives and farmers association held in Otjiwarongo on 8th -10th of November, 2017, Hon. Mutorwa applauded the level of support and leadership exhibited in agricultural cooperatives and farmers unions, and equally the support and level of organisation demonstrated through the conference preparations. He expressed personal gratitude to all institutions involved in cooperatives and farmers unions, and those specifically involved in the convening of the conference - particularly the Namibia National Farmers Union (NNFU), Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) and the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry (MAWF).

He started by highlighting Government's continued support to the agricultural sector in general, and to communal farmers in particular, where the number of active membership of farmers unions and cooperatives is the largest. Hon. Mutorwa hailed the timing and selection of the conference theme, *'Unlocking potentials of agriculture through agricultural farmers unions and cooperatives'* as timely and appropriate, especially at a time when the Government of Namibia is working hard to 'undo' the effects of colonial legacies of pre-independence era and their impacts on communal areas of Namibia. He pointed out that the theme was well fitting to the conference and time of the day as it addresses typical challenges facing the agricultural sector in Namibia, especially the subsistence and rural sector. He expressed a lot of optimism in the resolutions to be made and outcomes from the conference to which everybody anxiously looked.

Hon. Mutorwa elaborated how the conference is believed to have the good powers to 'unchain' the valuables and qualities that were 'chained' by Namibia's past history. Using historical narratives and illustrations, he explained the impact of the apartheid legacy on the history of communal areas in Namibia as regrettable, and impact has made a lasting bite on the livelihoods of the communities. He further elaborated how communal areas at the time were regarded as labour reserves for cheap labour to work on mines, agricultural and industrial establishments with marginal benefits, and which explains why communal areas have been marginalised and left to survive on the fringes of life, socially and economically. He pointed out how cooperatives have shown potential to spearhead economic emancipation for the underprivileged members of the society especially in communal areas, through bringing them together and pooling together their resources for the common benefit. He further pointed out that as a result, cooperatives have become the rallying point and vanguard for bringing hope to the economically disempowered in communal Namibia. He also pointed out how, surprisingly, cooperatives have turned out to show ability to reorganise economic order; contribute towards tourism development, job and income creation and other significant contributions, which are a positive sign.

Hon. Mutorwa highlighted the crucial roles the Government of Namibia is mandated with, together institutions that are supporting the development of cooperatives and farmers unions to realise their objectives. He gave example of how through the elections mandate of more than 89%, Government is using the mandate to provide responsible and inclusive governance, legislative frameworks on which institutions like cooperatives and farmers associations operate, as well as provision of conducive environment that offers secure conditions for community-based organisations to conduct business, including farmers of both crops and livestock, agro- processors and marketers of agricultural products. He further pointed out how Government is using money received in form of taxes from its citizens, to dispense financial resources into social developments in form of social investments, including investments and improvements in communal lands, through budgetary planning,

Hon. Mutorwa highlighted some of the examples of Government's achievements in this regard, including investing in green schemes, citing how Northern Communal Areas (NCA) share the big rivers of Cunene, Kavango and Zambezi and shouldn't see how they should go hungry and poor when they use the rivers to support the green schemes. He further highlighted more examples of Government achievements in

agricultural area, including construction of produce storage facilities, (silos) and the fresh produce hubs, rain-fed agricultural programs, assisting farmers with fertilisers and subsidies, livestock marketing and mobile abattoirs, etc, all of which are aimed to stimulate local production and ease product market access.

Other examples of Government investments in communal areas include efforts to do away with the red line which limits movement of livestock products from NCAs to areas south of the Red line. The Minister indicated how the idea is still being viewed with caution as rushing it through may end up harming the target areas the idea is meant to help, by flooding the small market available with products from the opposite side.

The Minister however expressed dissatisfaction with the way some Government bureaucracy is slowing down implementation of well intended Government plans, citing examples of delayed implementation of the Outapi and Katima abattoirs. He was able to inform the conference how the advertising for the operation of the Oshakati abattoir, for example, has been done, and is awaiting the signing of the agreement with the new operators in the names of Oshakati Kiati for Oshakati and NAMCO for Katima Mulilo. He invited NNFU leadership to witness the signing of the agreement on dates to be communicated. He was not happy that Government is acting within the required pace of things and instead, the operators and facilitators are bogging down the efforts. He pointed out that the role of Government in such regard is to get equipment and systems in place and the relevant authorities have the obligation to get implementation moving, which is not happening.

Hon. Mutorwa further pointed out how the Bukalo (Zambezi region) and Rundu (Okavango East) abattoirs will ease the problem of access to markets by livestock farmers in the respective areas. He however invited the concerned farmers to make use of the facilities, and that institutions like schools and others are waiting for products, while facilities are not being utilised to produce such products. He also challenged conference participants not to be so academic and theoretical, but rather concentrate on discussing issues that have practical implementability and solutions that are relevant, while avoiding 'hanging and competing statements' which cannot be organized, communicated or coordinated.

The Minister commended the manner in which support organizations including NNFU are organizing the farmers and cooperatives, which is in line with the Article 98 subsection (e) of the Namibian Constitution on Human Rights relating to the Principles of the economic order. He cited the revision of the Cooperative Policy which was adopted in February 2017 which gives the legal framework for cooperatives to conduct business. He reaffirmed HACIADEP's role in strengthening agricultural development as being that of actualizing agricultural plans as it is the facilitator of the implementation of existing agricultural plans. He however, emphasized that regardless of the good intention of HACIADEP and other initiatives, still good leadership in cooperatives and farmers associations is an important condition for the success of HACIADEP. There is need for leadership to be elected and not imposed, and to be democratic, as well as need for accountability, honesty and transparency on resource use and other crucial aspects of the associations. He was thus hopeful that the cooperatives and farmers associations will continue being guided by laws, and that they will aim to promote growth and not stagnation.

Hon. Mutorwa concluded by highlighting the need for strengthened partnerships with Private and Public entrepreneurs, which is catered for in the revised Procurement Act of the Ministry of Finance, and aims to streamline the way Government does business. He stressed the need for working together, pulling together and belonging together as in the Harambee Prosperity concept and officially declared the conference open.

Vote of Thanks (By Mr. Oiva Mahina, - Vice President – NNFU)

In his vote of thanks, the Vice President of NNFU, Mr. Mahina thanked organisations that are rendering support to cooperatives and farmers associations, as well as the organisers of the conference, specifically, for the job well done. He challenged farmers from both agricultural associations and cooperatives to conduct cooperative work and farming as a business and not a hobby.

Close down of Day 1

In closing remarks to day 1, Mr. Mushokabanji Mwilima, Executive Director NNFU summarised the day's speeches by highlighting historical origins of cooperatives and agricultural associations in Namibia, their current state, how they are preparing to take off into the future, and that the take off requires more organisation and strength which only can be realised through sustained discipline and commitment. He concurred with the Hon Minister's speech and of the other guest speakers and called on cooperatives and farmers associations to heed the pieces of advice from the conference. The day was crowned with a braai to which all participants were invited.

DAY 2: 9th November 2017

Motivating activities of day 2 (by Mr. Mushokabanji Mwilima, Executive Director, NNFU)

Mr. Mushokabanji Mwilima motivated the day by calling on participants not to regard themselves as experts, but rather to aim at empowering the farmers in their various mandates and responsibilities through sharing with them the expertise that they (participants) have. He pointed out that this would entail sharing with farmers' ideas and ways around constraints to improved and competitive entry into product markets, which is the essence of coming together. He emphasised the need for civil dialogue in which the winners are also prepared to be losers. He reminded participants about the need to focus on organised agriculture in both cooperatives and farmers associations as key condition. He concluded by introducing the conference facilitators, Namibia Development Trust NDT, represented by its Executive Director, Mr. Ronny Dempers.

Introductions and Setting the Agenda for Work-shopping (by Mr. Ronny Dempers, Executive Director, NDT, and Acting Chairperson, Cooperative Advisory Board CAB)

Mr. Dempers started by acknowledging the protocol and appreciating the level of organisation exhibited by the organisers, but also the supporting spirit presented by all involved, including support organisations, guests representing regional and international perspectives, together with the Government representatives, and the cooperating farmers themselves. He led farmer introductions regional representation. The representation was commendable. He called on participants to set for themselves rules to follow during the conference and observe respect for each other's opinion even when they do not agree, to be active, practical and solution-oriented, and avoid anything in word and action that would spoil the good mood of the conference. He expressed high optimism in the outcomes and results of the conference.

He presented the objectives of the stakeholder workshop and introduced the programme schedule for two-day. He highlighted the objectives of the workshop as:

1. Identifying factors that limit increased and stimulated production in livestock and crop production among cooperatives and agricultural associations in Namibia, together with ways of removing or

reducing them to increase sustainable growth through improved access to profitable product markets. This would entail identifying growth potential and existing challenges.

2. Identifying available opportunities for agricultural cooperatives and farmers associations in Namibia including HACCIADEP and how to make the best profitable use of them.
3. Identifying common interests between farmers associations and cooperatives and common strategies for harmonising interests and enhancing benefit from the interests.
4. Identifying factors that can strengthen the organisational bases of farmers associations and cooperatives to enable them stronger voice in negotiating and influencing price and policies at regional and national level.
5. Identifying factors that can strengthen the associations' financial and capital base, as well as improve the welfare and livelihood of the members and the communities.
6. Identifying innovative aspects around improving agriculture to make it competitive, including venturing into value adding, collaborative research and innovation on crop and livestock breeding, disease control, rangeland management, etc, with view to raising value and price of agricultural products.
7. Using comparative examples of lessons and experiences from other local, regional and international perspectives to raise and motivate farmers' aspirations and compare progress made on local fronts so far by agricultural cooperatives and farmers associations.
8. Providing update on status of cooperatives and agricultural associations in Namibia, i.e., current occupation and mandate in agro production/processing, levels of interaction with the others and stakeholders, available support and utilization, governance and performance, capacity and training, available opportunities and challenges, adherence to rules and regulations of the business as well as forecasts for future development.
9. Enhancing the capacity of service providers and support institutions to network, share and commit resources, information, and time for the benefit of cooperatives.
10. Developing recommendations that can lead to achievement of the stated objectives and desired goals.

Participant Expectations

With the help of cards, participants were able to point out a number of expectations from the conference which included that the conference would provide:

- An assessment of what potentials agricultural cooperatives and farmers associations do have
- An assessment of what the main preconditions for success are.
- An assessment of what way improved governance and internal organisation can help agricultural cooperatives and farmers associations.
- To address issues around gender participation in agricultural and cooperative business
- An assessment as to whether cooperatives and farmers associations have the ability to improve livelihoods in the informal sector.
- Ways of unchaining the value and mandates of agriculture in the informal sector, which was chained by past circumstances that can be improved upon through working together.

1. **Lessons from an International Perspective: A Contribution to the Agricultural Farmers Associations & Co-operatives Conference** *(by Mr. Jürgen Schwettmann, FES Consultant)*

With experience spanning over 30 years of consultancy in various aspects of cooperative development in international arena and in Africa, Mr. Jürgen Schwettmann's presentation was structured according to include global perspective on cooperative development with examples from outside Africa, a historical perspective of Cooperatives in Africa, and perspective on current status of cooperatives (Africa in particular), together with perspectives on the environment in which they (and agricultural associations) operate which includes policy, legislative, institutional, colleges, and the wider social economic relevance and challenges ahead.

He started by emphasising the autonomous nature of agricultural associations, that agricultural cooperatives do not belong to the state and are not owned by an individual, but rather, 'an autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly owned and democratically controlled enterprise'. He pointed out how agricultural associations have to maintain the democratic nature, transparency and be accountable to members in order to maintain their autonomous nature. He further pointed out how there are 2.6 million cooperative entities worldwide with one billion cooperative members, producing 250 million jobs that depend on cooperatives and produce close to 2.2 trillion US-\$ turnover which is more than the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of Mexico (according to International Cooperative Alliance ICA). He also pointed out the principles that agricultural associations are founded on which include Voluntary and open membership, Democratic member control, Member's economic participation, Autonomy and independence, Education, training, and information, Cooperation among cooperatives and Concern for community.

Mr. Schwettmann was quick to point out that agricultural associations were not invented in Europe; that they are rather very vibrant in every human society including Namibia. He pointed out that in Europe agricultural associations found more support through organised membership and applicability which gave them strong capital and functionality bases that led them into rapid expansion. He was able to point out further about the existence of rather vibrant cooperatives in Eastern Africa because of more strengthened state support and emphasis, and integrating them into main economic machinations of the state, for example, having an entire Government ministry solely responsible for the running of cooperative affairs in some cases.

On a historical note, Mr. Schwettmann pointed out how in the past agricultural associations started as massive movements for organising workers, which was not the case with Namibia because of the past policies but rather that Namibia can also learn from how other countries have started, and progress in the same endeavour. He pointed out how traditionally people organised themselves in land clearing, harvesting, house construction, management of local commonages, burial societies and mutual assistance groups. Others included group membership usually small and confined to a common bond derived from ethnic origin, social class, income levels, or common occupation, and that more recently informal economy associations started forming. He maintained that in some cases traditional forms of cooperation co-exist with modern types. Mr. Schwettmann highlighted five traditions upon which colonialists built cooperatives mainly between 1910 and 1960, which included:

- The British model: one size fits all, indirect rule
- The French model: the State knows best, direct intervention
- The Belgian model: liberal, yet paternalistic, strongly influenced by the Catholic church

- The Portuguese model: cooperatives for the settlers, controlled by the State
- The home-grown model: Ethiopia, South Africa, Namibia

In all cases: they were important foreign models/tools for the colonialist, whether they were fit for Africa or not. And that after independence most of African countries (1960-89) cooperatives were seen as a third way between capitalism and communism, or an instrument to promote African socialism; Several countries started massive coming together as a way of spearheading economic emancipation, but also to assert their economic independence from the colonialists. Algeria, Egypt, Ethiopia, Cameroon, Ghana, Madagascar, Zambia, Sudan, Tanzania, Kenya, spearheaded the development.

He went on to say that as a result of show of state sympathy, there was massive state support, marketing and development of supply monopolies, subsidies and privileges; But equally, there developed massive state control and interference as a way of state takeover of means of wealth creation in some countries that lacked democratic dispensation, consequently expanding cooperative departments. He further pointed out how Kenya is one of the very few countries that have a developed policy on cooperatives, which makes it a shining example in the region. He also touched the UN Development Goals which have replaced the Millennium Development Goals, and pointed out how despite their complex nature, cooperatives play a very useful role in each of the goals.

Regarding existing challenges facing cooperatives, Mr. Schewettman indicated how the role of state in African cooperative business is still not yet reaffirmed, as he pointed, cooperatives should not receive anything less what is given to other enterprises as cooperatives (and farmers associations) are capable of making commendable contribution to the national development. He further pointed out that in normal circumstances there should be no need for state interference in cooperative affairs other than playing a facilitatory role. Regarding optimal size of a cooperative or farmers association, he pointed out that too small sizes of membership won't be viable, while too large sizes do not offer conducive space for members' active participation.

He talked about the problem of rapid urbanisation, where everybody is dreaming of turning his/her neighbourhood into a town and leaving no space for agricultural activity. Agriculture has thus been left to the elderly and the economically disempowered. He suggested that this is the right spot where cooperatives (and farmers associations) can come in to fill the gap left by fast urbanisation, and proving their social and economic worth in holding back rural-to-urban migration. He further pointed out how disasters and natural catastrophes are a big challenge to the development of cooperatives as each time disasters occur there is massive loss of crops and livestock.

2. Cooperatives: Challenges and Opportunities, Lessons and Experiences from a Regional Perspective: (By Mr. Leroy .D. Banda, Head, Cooperatives Development and Projects at the Malawi Union of Savings and Credit Cooperative, MUSCCO)

Mr. Banda's presentation was based on the theme 'Cooperatives as a driver of economic growth' in which Co-operatives are a highly successful business model in the global business environment and is relevant for Sub Saharan Africa. He quoted some of the international statistics where the revenue of the world's top 300 co-operatives exceeds US\$ 1 Trillion, and is equal to the world's 10th largest economy and pointed out that International Co-operative Movements represent 800 million members, more than the total population of the entire European continent. Referring to some of the earlier sections in previous presentations Mr. Banda pointed out how he thinks the role of the support institutions should be clearly streamlined through policy guidelines. He also called on cooperative board members not to run cooperative business as a hobby, but rather as a winning and profitable business for owners (members) to realize benefit.

Using some of the slogans commonly used to inspire cooperatives in Malawi, Mr. Banda had the same view as Hon Mutorwa on key conditions in unlocking potentials of agricultural associations, most important of which is organized agriculture. The slogans include: '...the future belongs to the organizations....', '...nothing for us, without us...' and '...Africa resides in rural areas...' all of which are

tools for mobilizing and rallying cooperative membership. He emphasized that forsaking agriculture the economy will not grow, and echoed Mr. Mwilima Mushokabanji's cautionary statement that conference participants are not necessarily experts in cooperatives, but individuals who are coming together to share ideas on what has worked elsewhere and how it can work in the Namibian context.

Mr. Banda spoke of how bad or lack of proper governance is a cancer to a cooperative undertaking and singled out the 'founder-syndrome' and how cooperative leaders are not willing to give way to new minds and ideas. Consequently the cooperative becomes the same old bad ways of governance that do not deliver any development. He reminded cooperative leadership that they are running enterprises which need to account on what they have delivered, how they have improved the benefits for members, relationships, new initiatives brought on board, etc., and which does not require sweet talkers that offer less practical aspects. He was quick to lament how Africa is stuck socially, economically, culturally and ecologically because there is a lot of sweet talk accompanied by very little doing in terms of implementation. He pointed out the dangers and syndrome of organization leaders not planning beyond today in Africa and the effects it has on future generations. He also pointed out that while in Africa we are busy cooperating in funeral undertakings and weddings, our counterparts in developed countries are busy manufacturing wealth which they come and sell to us at very exorbitant prices. He noted that our ability to create and increase wealth through agricultural initiatives is still locked and needs unlocking.

Mr. Banda cited phases that cooperatives in Malawi went through, starting with the pre-independence era, when cooperatives were promoted because they were one of the ways through which masses could be rallied against British colonialists at the time. Many people joined cooperative movements, but after independence (during Dr. Kamuzu Banda's era), cooperatives were clamped down after they were seen as popular and democratic tools for organizing and rallying people against undemocratic rule. He further pointed out that during the multi-party era in Malawi, cooperatives were bulldozed again and reduced to a mere department in the Ministry of Trade, and not in the Ministry of Agriculture where they are supposed to belong.

He emphasized the need for farmers to orient their production to market demand, i.e., produce for the market, by aiming to satisfy market requirements. He further wondered why it should be that the buyer should determine the price when the buyer does not participate in the production of the product, and does not know what much is involved in the production of such products. He pointed out that communal agricultural producers sell at loss when they are desperate, and instigated farmers to aim at being price-setters than price takers. He cited an earlier concern by Hon Mutorwa regarding whether cooperatives should be formed by a catalyst or agent. He observed that since participation in cooperative business is voluntary, so should joining and there should be no need for a mediator/catalyst. He also noted how cooperatives are currently run as projects (with expiry date) and not as business (self sustaining and continuous).

He further emphasized how cooperatives are built by continuous education and training to upgrade skills and venture into research and innovation. He also pointed out the need for an integrated approach to managing cooperatives and farmers associations as they each play a complementary role to the other and in most cases do operate in similar social economic landscapes. He concluded by calling on Government officials to resist falling in both traps of being facilitators and actors at the same time in cooperative and farming business, for, as he pointed out, one cannot be a referee and an effective player in the same game he is a referee for.

Observations from Mr. Banda's Presentation

- **Clarity:** Regarding *how true and founded the statement is that 'Cooperatives do not work in Africa'*, Mr. Banda, citing statements from Mr. Jurgen Schwettman, said that such statement may have been based on unconcluded and biased study and facts of some old time where farmers by them had not learnt about what cooperatives are and can offer, also how to use modern methods

of agriculture and of organizing and rallying farmers. He insisted that such a statement would not fit the modern day description of a cooperative business and has no audience in today's cooperative vocabulary.

In support to Mr. Banda, Mr. Schwettman held that the statement was based on a rather out-of-date report and cannot be used as basis for argument's sake. He maintained that there are evidently many countries and cooperative organizations that have proved to be self sustaining and have created commendable benefit stream to members and communities, which completely refutes the basis of the statement.

- **Clarity:** Regarding *where challenges to organized cooperatives/farmers associations and improved agricultural production have been diagnosed but there seem to be no cure in place*, Mr. Banda pointed out how both the doctor (Government and support institutions) and the patient (cooperatives and farmers associations) have a role to play. While it is the role of Government and support institutions to help in pointing out where problems are in cooperatives (assisting), it is the duty of the concerned cooperatives and farmers associations to heal such areas by implementing recommendations and findings, which in some cases has not been the case. Recommendations have emphasized regular change of leadership, for example, to allow change of ideas and plans, but cooperatives end up ignoring such recommendations, based on 'founder syndrome', etc. Mr. Banda highlighted the 'No Response' syndrome in cooperatives as their HIV, and insisted that cooperatives should be empowered to know that it is their business and decisions made have bearing on them as a group.
- **Clarity:** Regarding *Unions which have no constituencies*, Mr. Banda cited the Malawi Federation of Cooperatives (MAFECO) and wondered who owns it and who its members are, as it was formed by the state to cater for state interests in cooperative business. Cooperatives must be formed by members and cooperative unions must be formed by coming together of primary cooperatives to form regional grouping of cooperatives.
- **Clarity:** On *who makes cooperative laws in Malawi*, Mr. Banda pointed out how laws in Malawi (regarding cooperatives) are a product of consultative processes involving cooperatives, members, regional cooperatives and processes go up to parliament. It is not a duty of one individual cooperative or body of Government somewhere to dictate laws or wish them removed, he said.
- **Clarity:** On *how Malawi has reduced laziness*, Mr. Banda indicated how, because of relatively fertile soils, Malawi is more of agricultural country than industrialized or dependent on mining. People have been oriented towards 'extracting' livelihood from working on land and not expecting riches from elsewhere. Education and awareness creation around riches from land have been instrumental in making Malawians agro-oriented, and therefore not lazy.
- **Clarity:** On *reduced alcohol consumption in Malawi*, it goes with working on land, and laws that have been put in place to punish law breakers (alcoholics) especially if one is found drunk during working time, when one is supposed to be working on land.
- **Clarity:** On *integrating the youth into cooperative and farmers association business*, Mr. Banda pointed out that it is difficult for agricultural associations in Malawi to ignore the youth who form the biggest portion of the active population and leave them out of the cooperative business. They come with new and constructive ideas; they breathe new blood into the flesh of cooperatives, he said. He pointed out how there are deliberate laws aimed to integrate the youth, and called on cooperatives and farmers associations in Namibia to encourage and practically include the youth in their business if they want to realize change.

3. Responses to Observations Raised following Mr. Persy Misika's presentation on the Harambee Comprehensively Coordinated Initiative for Agricultural Development Program (HACCIADep) Presented the Previous day (By Mr. Persy Misika, Permanent Secretary, MAWF)

In a summarized form of response, The PS MAWF Mr. Persy Misika responded to issues raised from his previous presentation on HACCIADep and noted that in addition to the many benefits HACCIADep initiative is envisaged to bring about, it is expected to bridge (if not solve entirely in the long run) issues to do with food insecurity and be very helpful in disaster management (drought relief), in catering for organized institutions (hospitals, army, schools, etc) whose food supplies are currently imported from South Africa. The money currently used to import food items for Government institutions will go into strengthening farmer organizations, including cooperatives and farmers associations, as well as market linkages which will create tremendous multiplier effect and benefit streams along the production value chain.

In support of the farmers, Mr. Misika wondered where the farmers should sell/market their products if the local institutions in Namibia (hospitals, police, army, schools, etc) continue buying agro products from outside the country? He insisted that there is no reasonable justification for continued importing of products that can be produced locally, unless where the quantity requirements cannot be met locally, but still, the import should be aimed at meeting the supply deficit, not entirely whole item imports of items that can be locally available at home. Mr. Misika pointed out how HACCIADep is about organizing and facilitating processes that are believed to remove or reduce obstacles to improved agricultural production and will be done through planned linkages between production, processing and value adding, marketing, facilitated financial management through arrangements with AMTA. Arrangements with AMTA will provide 'administrative' services for handling the timing of buying produce, determining quantity and quality requirements, giving feedbacks to all groups involved in the production arrangement, as well as settlement of outstanding payments for all parties involved.

Within the HACCIADep arrangement, agricultural associations will enter into supply agreements so that they are assured of the market for their products. Payments will be effected through AMTA. He stressed how this arrangement seeks to reward hard work especially targeting small scale agro producers, of which advantage agricultural associations should take. He concluded by stressing the need to eliminate the role of the middleman syndrome at AMTA in the name of agents. Agents inflate product prices and make products unnecessarily expensive and end up losing market because of the inflated price effect.

4. Overview of the Cooperative Policy (By Mr. Isaak Ruben, DCDR)

An overview of the Cooperative Policy was provided by Mr. Isak Ruben, Chief Cooperative Business Analyst in the Division of Cooperative Development and Regulation. Accordingly, Article 98 of the Namibian Constitution (Principles of Economic Order) outlines the different forms of ownership on which the Namibian economy should be based, which include private, public, co-operative, joint public-private, co-ownership, and Small Scale family. He highlighted that Namibia formulated and approved its first National Co-operative Policy in 1992, whose objective was to create an economic, legal and institutional environment for the development and growth of all types of co-operatives in Namibia, and that for the efficient regulation of the co-operative sector, the Co-operatives Act, 1996 (Act 23 of 1996) was promulgated. The National Co-operative Policy has undergone a revision and was approved by the cabinet in February 2017 which resulted in Namibia Co-operative Policy and was launched a week before the holding of the stakeholders workshop in August 2017.

He further pointed out that the main objective of the revised Namibia Co-operative Policy was to facilitate co-operative development in Namibia by providing scope for regulatory framework that allows for public-private partnership in co-operative development, while maintaining the independence of co-operatives as

private entities that are member-led. The specific objectives of the policy include provision of the scope for regulatory framework on co-operative development with different roles for Government, co-operatives and other stakeholders; facilitating the formation of National Apex organization for co-operatives for advocacy purposes; and improvement of networking between co-operatives, government and other stakeholders in co-operative development.

In furtherance of the policy, a 5 year Co-operative Strategic Plan or (Policy Implementation Plan) will be developed by the Office of the Registrar of Co-operatives in conjunction with Co-operative Advisory Board and other key players, including the National Planning Commission with the guidance of the Directorate of Planning and Business Development of the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry. The policy further talks about the role of Officers, Ministries and Agencies (OMAs) that will be represented on the Co-operative Advisory Board, and that OMAs whose regulatory or other activities affect co-operative development will develop activities to facilitate such co-operatives.

The Policy highlights the important role that Development Partners play in co-operative development especially in providing technical and financial services as well as support towards improved networking and capacity building of the co-operative movement. It further talks about the role of the Co-operative Development Agency to be established, which will coordinate capacity building activities of co-operatives in collaboration with other public-private institutions. Its regulatory framework will be established as well as its role in the establishment and administration of a Co-operative Development Fund. Establishment of the National Co-operative Apex body to facilitate communication and co-ordination of all cooperative activities nationally regionally and internationally is also talked about, and that currently in the absence of the apex body, Namibia is an associate member of the International Co-operative Alliance (ICA) and is represented in international fora through the Co-operatives Advisory Board (CAB).

Mr. Ruben pointed out further that regarding capacity building of co-operatives, the Office of the Registrar and the Co-operative Development Agency may, directly or in collaboration with other stakeholders, provide or facilitate trainings, appropriate manuals and communication tools, develop curricula on co-operative training, keep up-to-date co-operative database, and facilitate feasibility studies and M&E. He also pointed out that a co-operative communication strategy will be developed to create awareness and disseminate information to the movement and the public at large. In addition, Co-operative Formation Information Meetings will be up scaled for communities and will attend to requests from groups who wish to form co-operatives.

In conclusion, Mr. Ruben pointed out how the revised Namibia Co-operative Policy provides an opportunity for a public private collaboration for co-operatives, and aims to create a conducive environment for the development and growth of all types of co-operatives. He stressed however, that the success of the Co-operative Movement lies in the effective, efficient and most importantly, collaborative implementation of the Namibia Co-operative Policy by all stakeholders.

5. “Supporting Agricultural farmers and Cooperatives in Unlocking Agricultural Potentials” a presentation By Communal Land Development Programme, CLDP/GIZ - Advisory Services (Presented by Mr. Tino Hess, Project Manager)

Mr. Tino started his presentation by introducing the project staff that offer support to the 4 cooperatives that the Communal Land Development Programme, CLDP Advisory Services is currently supporting. The 4 cooperatives include Amarika Farmers’ Cooperative, Ohama-yongwe Farmers Cooperative, and Otjetjekua farmers’ Cooperative in Omusati, and Onghalulu Farmers’ Cooperative in Ohangwena whose location is illustrated on the map below:

Mr. Tino further pointed out the fact that cooperatives supported through CLDP started on their own initiative with farmers getting together, identifying their needs and how to get them done, and that they only approached the CLDP project for logistical and technical support to help them implement their plans which they had on their own. This is contrary to the perception held, that the cooperatives were invited or asked by CLDP to form groups for purposes of getting donor funding. Thus the project is positively looking forward to opportunities available for such cooperatives supported, together with how their potentials can be unlocked through such and other opportunities. He also acknowledged regional and international perspectives as good sources of inspiration and learning.

- **Potential: Instruments of Advisory Services for Cooperative Support**

Mr. Tino highlighted the importance and use of the following instruments used in supporting cooperative farmers.

- Mentoring – individual/small groups
- Farmer Information Days – Open, informative events
- Short-courses – 2-3 day practical training courses focussing on a particular topic (technical/organisational development), involving external experts
- Excursions – learning from best practices of other farmers (cooperatives)
- Radio Broadcasts – on farming issues; NBC Radio local/national
- Social Media – WhatsApp Groups to mobilize farmers / to share information

- **Potential: Organisation and Cooperation** in which farmers can be organised in common interest groups so as to be able to maximise leverage and profit (food producer organisations / farmer-based organisations / cooperatives) and to enjoy economies of scale, i.e., promotion of local sales to institutions, restaurants, hotels and on national market, received tenure security and mobilised investments, organised events (e.g. auctions), bulk purchase/retail of farm inputs benefitting members (e.g. vaccines), shared information, advice, and coordinated production process and assured consistency in supply and quality.

- **Potential: Diversification of farmer activities and products**

- Minimize dependency on one commodity (resilience to drought/disease and unfavourable market environment)
- Cooperative possesses diversity of skill-sets among its membership that can be put into value (i.e. promoting involvement of youth/women)
- Different aspects of the value chain/production process can be taken on by different members according to interest/skills (livestock, diary production, processing, marketing/selling)
- Wide product range as an asset in marketing efforts to build recognizable 'brand' / reputation
- Opportunity for inclusive development at the community level to ensure no one is left behind

Farmers can diversify into poultry farming which has high demand on local/national market.

- Chicken is imported as demand outweighs production capacity
- Quick turn-around and fast return of investment (4-6 months)

Poultry Production in a Cooperative:

- Bulk purchase of inputs to curb production costs
- Individual production, joint marketing (consistency of supply)
- Complementarity: layer/broiler; local and import/export breeds; div. species
- Development of full value chain

Chicken farming can be free range chicken system or semi commercial system

- Opportunity: Orchard farming, i.e., Mangoes**
 Mr. Hess used illustrated examples (as indicated below) to highlight how, for example, a 4-year old Mango tree producing about 100 kg/year/per tree with potential to produce approx. 280 fruits, in an area where a mango can sell at (N\$5): is able to fetch **N\$ 1,400.00** (N\$4,200.00). Based on this assumption, a farmer with 1 ha of land who is able to plant 400 mangoes, is assured of 1 ha: 400 trees (5x5m) = **N\$ 560,000.00** (100: N\$140,000.00).

Illustrations below show how mangoes can be prepared so as to give high and continuous yield



- Potential: Value Chain Development**

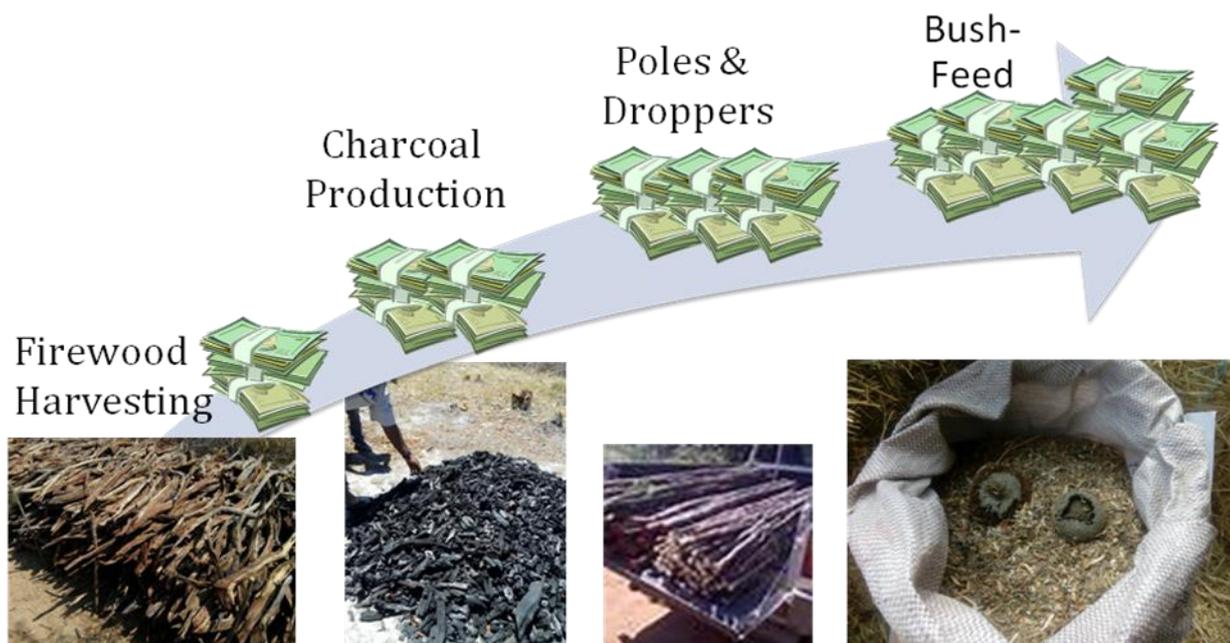
Mr. Tino gave an example of Onghalulu Farmers’ Cooperative as a case-in-point on value-chain-development in Bush Encroachment - where the bush encroachment **curse** has been turned into an opportunity. He highlighted how bush encroachment in the commonage of Onghalulu Farmers’ Cooperative that was suppressing grass growth and significantly reducing the size of rangeland land available for livestock production has been turned into income opportunities through value chains for production and marketing products of bush-thinning, i.e. poles and droppers for fencing, charcoal/firewood and bush-feed. The Benefits include:

- creating employment (especially among youth)
- generating revenue to finance clearing
- securing revenue for the cooperative
- restoring depleted rangeland for cattle production



Example of the value chain development process in Onghalulu Farmers Cooperative (illustrated below):

- Farmers Information Days organised with cooperative membership, including DoF, UNAM, technical experts
- Mentoring with cooperative management
- Radio broadcast and filming episode with NBC Green Horizon
- Cooperative established harvesting groups, pricing system, logo, receipts
- Cooperative acquired permit for harvesting firewood



Above: example of products at different stages of the value chain development (as in Onghalulu Farmers' Cooperative)

The photograph below illustrates positive results after bush clearing. The positive outcomes include clear regrowth of grazing and thatching grass which are both a source of income for farmers.



- **Potential:** Sharing of technical skills, knowledge and information which entails creating platforms from which farmers can gain knowledge and wisdom from those with practical experience on certain aspects on farming. Farmers can also share and obtain information on Farmer Information Days, available short-courses, excursions, Radio broadcasts, and in the Green Horizon TV programme of the Namibian Broadcasting Corporation NBC.



(Above) sharing information sharing on issues of common interest; (below) Hon. Rosalia Nghidinwa sharing her farming skills and experience on vegetable garden with women groups



Illustration of sharing information with farmers through the NBC Green Horizon program

- **Potential: Success Factors for Cooperatives to unlock their potential**
 - Active Management
 - Representative Management Structures (youth, full-time farmers)
 - Vibrant business operations
 - Inclusive and equal engagement of membership
 - Effective member mobilisation
 - Tangible benefits for members (member-orientation)

6. Onghalulu Farmers Cooperative (by Mr. Lusius Nghimbwasha, Chairperson)

As an example of lessons and experiences from a local perspective, the chairperson of Onghalulu Farmers Cooperative, Mr. Lusius Nghimbwasha shared what Onghalulu Cooperative has gone through to be what they currently are. Located in Okongo West Constituency, the cooperative started with 16 members and has now over 600. The cooperative has attained full registration status, has managed to attract large membership and its members have all paid full subscription. It is currently considered one of the few success stories in running of viable cooperative business, based on a business plan and improved, responsible form of governance that is accountable to its members and responds to members' needs.

- **Potential:** The cooperative is engaged in, among others, the value chain development of undesired bush encroachment, which they process into charcoal, bush feed and droppers/poles for selling. Their customers include individuals and groups for reselling.
- **Challenge:** Mr. Nghimbwasha pointed out how current challenges include maintaining motivation among membership in light of the current national economic hardships where there is generally less money in circulation and buyers. He also talked about limited capital resources, limited activity scope and decreased benefit streams. Limited resources limit programs that the cooperative can engage in and which can meaningfully engage its members. Other challenges include limited water resources in case they wanted to engage in agricultural activities.
- **Action:** Diversification of activities outside the current wood-based business. This would include venturing into agriculture and poultry, at a small scale though.

Mr. Nghimbwasha revealed how he and his colleagues in Onghalulu Farmers Cooperative progress have been 'slow, but sure', considering that it has taken them a while of patience to reach thus far. He was thankful of the type of assistance extended to them from the Directorate and from other support organisations and service providers. He was very appreciative of the conference opportunity to showcase what his cooperative has achieved and looked forward to using deliberations from the conference for further unlocking of his cooperative's potentials.

7. Potentials in Likwama Farmers Cooperative (By Chilinda Alfred, Chairperson)

In a repentative way, Mr. Chilinda revealed how despite Likwama Cooperative's name having become famous and synonymous with advocating for farmers' causes, there is a period when the cooperative went through turbulent changes, albeit for better, as members realised where they went wrong and corrected themselves. Despite the cooperative having been originally registered and associated with advocacy, it found itself shifting between 'unformalised' agricultural work of propagating seedlings and selling wood, which brought conflicts of interest as to what the main business was. The name of the cooperative itself was misleading, i.e., Likwama Regional Cooperative Union, which was neither a regional cooperative, nor a union. There was also a conflict of interest between advocacy work and farmers union work all carried out by the same cooperative, which required a redesign of purpose for the cooperative.

- **Challenges:** Mr. Chilinda wondered why only a handful of cooperatives is fully registered out of a 'pool' of so many. He was of the view that mentorship is not sustainable, especially if it is a once-off exercise, as it leaves little impact.

- **Lesson Learnt:** Mr. Chilinda highlighted how Likwama Farmers Cooperative is currently ready for business and has started all over from the start, having learnt some lessons from its earlier mistakes.

Observations From the Presentations

- **On Revised Cooperative Policy:** Tumelo Osifa from Omusati agreed that lack of proper understanding of the policy was a big drawback to cooperative development, as previously each member thought their way of conducting business was the best, which usually resulted in clash of ideas and conflict of interests. Special appreciation was therefore made of what the Government has done so far in creating conducive environment for cooperatives to thrive, and a call was made to cooperatives to play their part.
- **Relationship between Cooperatives and farmers Associations:** A question was raised regarding which of the two should be disbanded and which is more useful than the other.
- **Clarity:** On a point of clarity, the Permanent Secretary, Mr. Persy Misika highlighted his familiarity with the history of Likwama, as himself and Mr. Leonard Sitwara, in capacity of agricultural extension technicians around 1983-84, helped Likwama Cooperative in writing its by-laws. He expressed hope that lessons (to Likwama) should be eye-opener to others. He pointed out how Zambezi as a region is known for creating competing tendencies in many aspects of life, but especially at rudimental and primary levels, which never take off to maturity.
- **Clarity: Role of AMTA,** Mr. Misika pointed out how the establishment of the African Marketing and Trading Association (AMTA) has brought considerable benefits. He cited an example of clearing cross-border imports which was previously done by a South African company but with some gaps. He pointed out how in one year's operation of AMTA more than 200 Million Nam \$ have been collected on behalf of the Government Receiver of Revenue. He further pointed out how AMTA is responsible for monitoring and regulating product supply, availability and price fixing by suppliers to ensure regulations are complied with.
- **Clarity: Role of and Elimination of the Middlemen/Agents,** Mr. Misika stressed how it is Government's desire and intention to do away for good with the agent, but that care is being practised not to leave a gap that is not taken care of, since currently the middleman is standing in to provide limited supply of goods and market linkages which the farmers themselves should do when they are more organised. He stressed how only through organised agriculture will the middleman be automatically eliminated.
- **Clarity:** Mr. Misika corrected an earlier observation by Mr. Colin Nott of Conservation Agriculture regarding fears that **HACCIADep is replacing or undoing other on-going agricultural undertakings.** He (PS) pointed out that HACCIADep is aimed to play facilitatory and link-pin role in agricultural undertakings with view to leveraging grounds for ALL players in agricultural development, especially those needed in transitioning communal farmers from massive poverty to wealth creation and realisation of dreams that were shattered by past colonial injustices.

He further made reference to the Industrial Act 1982 Section 10 subsection 1, Clauses (i) and (ii) that talk about '...the need increase demand of controlled products...' to explain how Meatco, for example, is meant to be representative of producers of controlled products. In a very confidence-building note, Mr. Misika reaffirmed that '...we (all) do not build by destroying, but rather by improving...', which summarises the intentions of Government in HACCIADep and the expected benefits from HACCIADep itself.

- **Point-of Concern:** In a contributory note, Mr. Jason Emvula, President of the Namibia National Farmers Union NNFU, highlighted the need for **targets** in agricultural undertakings to be reached

and outcomes to be **tangibly visible** for everybody to see. He was concerned that we are already approaching 2030 (at 2017) and there is little to account in the drive for Vision2030, which is worrisome, and brings to question the seriousness of current impacts.

PART III: PANEL DISCUSSION

Facilitation By Mr. Ronny Dempers, Executive Director, NDT)

The conference took a short 'commercial break' at 5:00 (1700hrs GMT) in preparation for a Panel Discussion which was to be held at a later hour in the evening. The Panel Discussion was hosted by Mr. Ronny Dempers of NDT and was motivated by Ms Daisy Manungo of NNFU. The panel consisted of Mr. Reagan Mwazi, General Manager, Corporate Services of AgriBank representing funding and collaborating institutions on cooperative finance; Mr. Jurgen Schwettman, a Consultant for the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung FES representing international perspectives in cooperatives development; Mr. Oliver Manungo of GIZ-CLDP Advisory Services project representing support institutions to cooperatives and farmers unions, and Mr. Leroy Banda, Head of Cooperative Development and Projects at the Malawi Union of Savings and Credit Cooperatives representing regional perspectives in cooperative development.

In a motivational speech, MS Daisy Manungo introduced and welcomed the panellists, whom she commended for having 'seen rains come and go' in reference to their experiences each in areas of organising, supporting and advocating for cooperative development at local, regional and international level. She expressed optimism that the rest of the conference, particularly representatives of cooperatives will gain tremendously from the enlisted experiences.

Statements by Mr. Banda: The discussion was opened with statements from Mr. Leroy Banda, who started by question how farmers can be strengthened, enlightened through specialised services, so that people can join cooperatives based on need and not by circumstances. He mentioned the need for co-existence between cooperatives and farmers associations, to compliment each others' existence and not to compete.

Statements by Mr. Oliver Manungo: In his opening statements Mr. Manungo stressed the importance of responsible leadership in strengthening running of cooperative business. He highlighted the real need for leaders to report back to members and be accountable, which calls for visionary leaderships. He also called for harmonised relationships between cooperatives and farmers associations in order to have good 'neighbourly' relationships, while both develop ability to identify opportunities and interests.

Statements by Mr. Regan Mwazi: Mr. Mwazi pointed out the honour accorded him for being part of the panel and called on cooperatives and farmers associations to promote the spirit of being closer and stronger together, sharing resources and experiences for a brighter tomorrow.

Statements by Mr. Jurgen Schwettman: He highlighted the need to strengthen what is existing in cooperatives and farmers associations (referring to locally available resources), so as to be able to lay foundation for developing what is not existing. He also pointed out that agricultural development in cooperatives is not only limited to agriculture (farming crops and livestock) but also processing and other forms of value adding, which are agro-related. He concurred with the need to diversify activities into other areas that are profitable, and used the opportunity to call for stronger and organised rural cooperatives for them to be able to take on the task.

Discussions

Mr. Dempers called on the conference participants to join in the discussion to respond to statements by the panellists, raise observations and issues based on lessons learned from the conference deliberations, or from their own experiences and background on cooperatives, together with how such lessons, experiences and deliberations relate to unlocking potentials of the cooperatives and farmers associations.

Some of the issues commented on ranged from promoting a culture of doing good things among cooperatives and farmers associations, i.e., culture of good leadership, running sustainable and profitable businesses, educating their members on the various aspects of good management, and many others, all aimed to strengthen agro farming business. Other issues included benchmark (criteria) for good management, the role of GIZ in agricultural associations, and conditionalities attached to AgriBank credit facilities to cooperatives.

Response from Mr. Banda: In response to some of the concerns and drawing examples from a regional perspective, Mr. Banda insisted on the need to strengthen mechanisms that foster stronger co-existence between cooperatives and farmers associations. He also talked about cooperatives borrowing and simply giving out loaned money to friends and family, which brings problems to both cooperatives and concerned members. He cautioned that cooperatives should familiarise themselves with policies regarding borrowing and lending to members, as well as the implications involved.

Mr. Banda cited how in Kenya for example, borrowing money from a cooperative requires someone to stand in as 'Guarantor' or mortgage/surety, so that should there be any form of defaulting, the guarantor will be helpful in recovering such funds, and that in such a practice the lending cooperative is protected against careless intentions by the borrower. Such policies are important in instilling financial discipline into borrowing institutions and their members who are supposed to guide the using of borrowed funds.

Regarding good governance, Mr. Banda spent considerable time elaborating on the need to draw distinction between responsibilities of board members and those of management, and therefore what requisites and background experiences should each group have to perform their duties. As stakeholders and policy guides, board members only need to know the vision and mission of the cooperative, which direction it is taking, and how to guide it there, while as implementers, managers are involved in the day-to-day cores of the business which requires technical background and therefore to be professionals.

Mr. Jurgen Schwettman: For his turn, Mr. Schwettman stressed that both roles (Board and management) are equally mandated to be good and responsible, as gaps in one lead to discomfort in the other. He also stressed how the relationship between farmers associations and cooperatives is complementary to one another and therefore the need to strengthen the co-existence is unquestionable. He supported the introduction and promotion of cooperative education in Namibian schools as commendable so that people learn about cooperatives early enough and grow up with the knowledge.

Mr. Regan Mwazi: Mr Mwazi added his voice to the promotion of cooperative education in schools, and also pointed out how there is a credit facility at AgriBank in whose formation the Ministry of Agriculture has collaborated, covering 80%. He indicated how there is no collateral required, other than the conditions that the applicant(s) should have a viable business plan, be registered with the Registrar of Cooperatives (MAWF), and operate within Namibia and within the confines of the Cooperative Policy, receive training from MAWF on how to use the credit facility, and should have registered and recognised directors. There is no limit to the amount that can be borrowed, as long as the business plan details the amount required and how it will be used.

Mr. Mwazi was able to reveal that the facility still stands and has so far helped 100 cooperatives to the tune of N\$100m and there is still N\$40m to be used. He indicated how MAWF is willing to increase in case

it gets depleted. He however cautioned that the money borrowed from AGriBank is not money for distributing to friends and family after securing it; rather should be used to create wealth on 'dollar-to-dollar' basis, otherwise it is loaned, not free money. And that in order to minimise the misuse of the borrowed money, AgriBank has put regulations and laws on how to ensure responsible handling of funds so borrowed.

Regarding training, Mr. Mwazi referred to farmer-identified training needs as done under the Farmer Support Project of the Ministry of Land Reform, and as carried out in collaboration with organisations such as NNFU, MAWF, and MLR. He also cited the 2009 agreement with the Division of Advisory Services, MAWF to transfer knowledge to farmers.

Mr. Oliver Manungo: In his contribution, Mr. Manungo dwelt on the need to strengthen cooperative and farmers' capacity. He highlighted the role of GIZ as only coming in after cooperatives and farmers unions have identified their activity needs. The areas of support (by GIZ) comprise the following:

- Mentorship program/specialist mentor
- Helping leaderships to understand the cooperative concept
- Translation of documents into local languages for ordinary members to understand
- Facilitating exposure visits
- Help in the establishment of full time cooperative management (kick-start)
- Product marketing services (quality improvement, market linkages, etc)
- Facilitation of a farmers forum/cooperative forum where farmers meet and dialogue on issues of common interest
- Stakeholder linkages
- Development of business plans

Conclusion of Panel Discussion and Day 2

Mr. Ronny Dempers thanked panellists and participants for the job well done, and closed day 2 for a group braai.

Proceedings of Day 3: Friday 10th November 2017

Day 3 started with a short prayer from Mr. Oliver Manungo of CLDP project and was followed by presentations that could not be made on day 2. They were later followed by an analysis of challenges and opportunities to improved agricultural production by cooperatives and farmers associations.

Mr. Dempers welcomed participants back, and wished them fruitful deliberations of day 3 and promised the day would be half but full of action and results since it would produce a way forward. This would then see factors that have capacity to strengthen agricultural production identified.

Accordingly, in form of recap and participants prepared for group work, Mr. Dempers pointed out how:

- The first 2 days represented hope; hope that cooperatives and farmers union would be strengthened through well linked agricultural processes that would ultimately benefit the rural communities.
- HACCIADep has potential to benefit cooperatives greatly as it seeks to strengthen the agricultural sector at rural level.
- Day 1 and 2 were well coordinated and represented healthy dialogue.
- Cooperatives and farmers associations need to be strengthened both in terms of leadership and commitment, to have clear plan of action and direction in order to be able to conduct viable and profitable business.

- There is need to understand borrowing and lending conditions in acquiring loans/grants to prepare cooperative members and help them make informed decisions on whether to proceed with such credit or not.
- There is need to strengthen co-existence between farmers associations and cooperatives since their survival complements each other's existence.
- The conference offered freedom to participants to express themselves and interact freely in contributing genuinely to the on-going proceedings of strengthening agricultural production.
- Participants were called upon to help in changing the existing and wrong perception people regarding cooperative concept not working in Africa, which is based on biased assessments and reporting.
- The conference urged to seriously engage farmers in stepping up their efforts and commitment to cooperative development.

Adapting the Way Forward

Analysis of Challenges and Opportunities to Cooperative Development in Namibia

Synthesis Brainstorming on **Strategies and Solutions** was used to arrive at a way forward for increasing and stimulating agricultural production in cooperatives and farmers associations from the existing challenges and available opportunities. Similar to problem brainstorming, the method used is a democratic way for groups to analyse solutions against their perceived strategic contribution to existing problems. It helps to pick both the problems and strategy for addressing them, in a democratic manner. The method was a follow-up on presentations and statements made on days 1 and 2, and outcomes were displayed on large sheets for the conference participants to read and memorise.

Probing cards of different colours were given for participants to continue documenting (green) areas for opportunities and (grey) for challenges. Blue cards represented 'opportunities' while orange cards symbolised 'challenges'.

Strategies for unlocking agricultural potential in agricultural associations were analysed under the following categories:

1. Factors that have potential to lead towards **improved production** (to help in increasing or stimulating production in the agricultural sector), and
2. Factors that have potential to lead towards **organised agriculture** (to help in moving towards an organised agricultural sector)

The factors were simplified into the following questions:

1. What are the factors that limit production in the agricultural sector (livestock and crop production, processing, marketing, value-adding, etc)?
2. What are some of the practical steps that can be taken (by Government and other support institutions) in order to stimulate production (and marketing/processing/value adding etc), and
3. What opportunities do initiatives like HACCIADEP bring?

Challenges Identified

Challenges identified included:

1. Un-harmonised working relationship between agricultural associations and cooperatives as a result of:
 - competing and conflicting interests
 - unspecified roles of each
 - lack of standardised approaches to compensation
 - lack of Apex organisation which can serve as a reference in relationships, and
 - Lack of clear guidelines for utilization and ownership of assets and facilities.

2. Factors limiting improved crop production i.e.:
 - climatic unpredictability due to unreliable rain patterns and changing weather patterns
 - changing patterns in production costs and impacts on production processes and outcomes
 - limited markets and market linkages
 - inadequate knowledge creation and dispensation
 - limited research
 - poor soils
 - Inadequate capacity in improved seed and crop management.
3. Factors limiting improved livestock production, i.e.
 - limited Government subsidies
 - increase in human and wildlife conflict caused by shrinking wildlife habitats by increase in human activity
 - increase in animal disease
 - lack of sufficient water resources for human and livestock consumption due to prolonged droughts and over-drawn sources
 - unpredictable natural disasters like floods, plagues and extended droughts
 - increase in stock theft
 - decrease in common grazing areas due to increase in population density and human activity on crop land
 - shrinking capital base and financial resources against increasing social and economic priorities
 - Inadequate capacity to carry out research, value chain development in agro-processing, marketing and product development, as well as
 - inadequate capacity and skills to improve rangeland management
 - lack of concise knowledge of what exactly is offered by the Harambee Comprehensively Coordinated Initiative for Agricultural Development program (HACCIADep)
 - on-going dialogue around red line and when policies around it change so as to improve access to livestock product markets south of the red line by products from Northern Communal Areas, and
 - prospects by farmers to own shares in (and eventually own) HACCIADep.

Opportunities Identified

Existing opportunities include:

1. Harmonising working relationship between agricultural associations and cooperatives, i.e.,:
 - Harmonising approach to management of resources (integrated approach) which will reduce competition and conflict, as has been done in conservancies and community forests
 - Intensifying awareness creation around roles and responsibilities and commonality of objectives and goals
 - Division of labour and comparative advantage necessary, in that one group can venture in areas where it has better advantage than the other and swerve either as a production or marketing arm of the other.
 - Standardisation of approaches to compensation and commissions
 - Shared utilization of assets and facilities.
2. Factors strengthening crop production i.e.:
 - Increase of supply and availability of subsidized tractor service at community level
 - More training to be available to farmers and private tractor owners and draft animals
 - Intensifying information dissemination around opportunities offered by agro production, processing, marketing, information and technical skills sharing, etc
 - Diversifying into other various forms of agro businesses and profitable form of value chain development in indigenous and drought-tolerant crops, i.e., Sorghum

- Intensifying sector linkage programs in crop production, processing and marketing.
3. Factors that stimulate and increase livestock production, i.e.
- Increase in Government subsidies
 - Collaborative relationship with conservancies and MET on reducing human and wildlife management
 - Venturing in alternative sources of water (rain water) and flood control mechanisms to increase availability of water.
 - increase in disease control techniques to reduce disease spread and impacts
 - Collaborative relationship with the Directorate of Water Supply and Sanitation in order to increase water resource availability for human and livestock consumption
 - Increasing disaster-preparedness management programs and capacity for timely response to disasters.
 - Collaborative approaches to livestock theft with community policing agencies, including NamPol, and increased vigilance and punitive measures against offenders.
 - Increased rangeland management and sharing arrangements on common grazing.
 - Increasing capital base against reduced costs and expenditure, together with increased management efficiency
 - Increased collaborative research, value chain development in agro-processing, marketing and product development
 - Intensifying training on rangeland management
 - Increased awareness around opportunities offered by the Harambee Comprehensively Coordinated Initiative for Agricultural Development program (HACCIADep)
 - Increased vigilance around on-going dialogue on red line.
 - Increase monitoring and evaluation of programs in livestock production on long term basis
 - Increase decentralisation of services and accountability

Summary of conference Proceedings

The summary of the conference proceedings and close down remarks were made by Mr. Ronny Dempers who reviewed progress made during the three days, especially the way such progress related to the objectives of the conference, i.e.,

Accordingly, there was a general consensus that the conference served as a catalyst for awakening the potential in agricultural associations and cooperatives, and focused on factors that address bottlenecks to increased crop and livestock production in communal areas as well as how they impact on communal livelihoods. The conference generally offered opportunity for identifying factors for strengthening governance and organisational capacity, harmonised approach to production, agro processing and marketing linkages of agro products, improved stakeholder relationships as well as developing common strategies on farmer education, awareness creation, and information and knowledge sharing.

Other areas included development of common approaches to climate unpredictabilities, shifting costs of crop and livestock production in drought-prone areas, addressing limited access to markets, low levels of awareness creation, provision of targeted farmer training, improved information dissemination, improved monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, improved accountability, as well as improved knowledge around the HACCIADep initiative by Government.

The level of participation and representation were generally hailed as resounding, which, according to Mr. Dempers and to most participants, was a reflection of enthusiasm and commitment that participants attached to the unlocking of potentials in agriculture through cooperatives and farmers associations.

Remarks on the way forward

Mr. Dempers thanked participants for the vigour and commitment exhibited during the exercise of identifying and analysing challenges and available opportunities, as well as in adapting a way forward in form of suggested actions. He called on the cooperatives and farmers associations to embark on the task of translating the findings into tangible actions for the quick strengthening of beneficiary associations.

Vote of Thanks (By Mr. Jason Emvula, President NNFU)

In a show of appreciation, the President of NNFU Mr. Jason Emvula extended a vote of thanks and appreciation to all workshop participants and stakeholders for dedicating the two days to the cause of healthy cooperative development in Namibia. He was specifically thankful to the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, and others in general, for their valuable contribution and successful implementation of the conference.

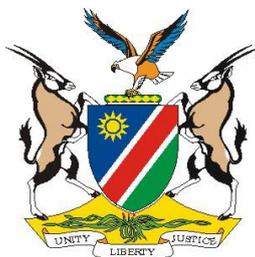
Mr. Oliver Manungo of CLDP offered a closing word of prayer and the conference was closed with an invitation to a closing group dinner.

Workshop Materials and Proceedings

At the end of the conference participants received digital copies of the presentations. The proceedings of the workshop are captured in this report which will be duplicated for all stakeholders to get a copy.

Annexes:

- Images of the Stakeholder Workshop on agricultural cooperatives
- Programme schedule for the workshop proceedings
- List of participants



AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVES AND FARMERS ASSOCIATIONS CONFERENCE, OTJIWARONGO

Programme Schedules for the workshop

Wednesday, 08 November 2017

16:00

Arrival of Participants & Registration

OFFICIAL OPENING

Director of Ceremonies: Mr. Mushokabanji Mwilima, Executive Director - NNFU

18:00 - 20:00

Official Opening Ceremony

Singing of National & AU Anthems

Prayer

Volunteer

Welcoming Remarks

Hon. Governor Mr. Otto Ipinge – Otjozondjupa Region (represented by Mr. Moses Chikulwa, Special Advisor)

Remarks

Mr. Heiner Naumann, Resident Representative - FES

Statement

Mr. Jason Emvula, President – NNFU

Perspective on Harambee Comprehensively Co-ordinated and Integrated Agricultural Development Programme (HACCIADep) and its contribution to the Agricultural Co-operative Sector

Mr. Percy Misika, Permanent Secretary – Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry

Opening & Keynote Address

Hon. John Mutorwa, Minister – Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry

Vote of Thanks

Mr. Oiva Mahina, - Vice President – NNFU

Braai Dinner

Moderator: Mr. Ronny Dempers, Facilitator

08:30 - 10:45	<p>Introductions and Objectives of Conference</p> <p><i>Mr. Mushokabanji Mwilima, Executive Director - NNFU</i></p> <p>Experiences and Lessons from an International Co-operative Movement</p> <p><i>Mr. Jürgen Schwettmann, Independent Consultant – Development Co-operation</i></p> <p>Experiences and Lessons from a Regional Co-operative Movement</p> <p><i>Mr. Leroy Banda, Head of Co-operatives Developments and Projects – Malawi Union of Savings and Credit Co-operatives</i></p>
	Discussions
10:45 - 11:00	BREAK
11:00 - 13:00	<p>Overview on the Namibia Co-operative Policy</p> <p><i>Mr. Isaak Ruben, Chief Cooperative Business Analyst, Division of Cooperative Development and Regulation – Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry</i></p> <p>Case Studies: Experiences from Co-operatives and Regional Farmers Associations</p> <p><i>Mr. Tino Hess, Program Manager – CLDP/GIZ</i></p> <p><i>Mr. Lucias Ngiimbwasha, Treasurer – Onghalulu Farmers Cooperative</i></p> <p><i>Mr. Kapukatua Kuvare, Chairperson – Otjetjekua Small Scale Farmers Cooperative</i></p> <p><i>Mr. Alfred Chilinda, Chairperson - LIKWAMA</i></p>
	Discussions
13:00 -14:00	LUNCH
14:00 - 15:00	<p>How can Co-operatives increase their growth?</p> <p><i>Mr. Colin Nott, Rangeland Expert – Conservation Agriculture Namibia</i></p> <p><i>Mr. Kingsley Kwenani, Executive – Meatco Foundation</i></p>
15:00 – 15:45	Discussions

15:45 - 16:00	BREAK
16:00 – 16:20	Operational Guidelines for Farmers Associations <i>Mr. Furtunato Makuti, Regional Co-ordinator – NNFU</i>
16:20 – 16:40	Discussions
16:40 – 17:00	Introductions of Group Work: <i>Mr. Ronny Dempers, Facilitator</i> Group Work: What limits/constraints production in the agricultural sectors? What must be done by GRN Coop, Farmers Association, Others to help stimulate production? Group to be divided according to different sectors (crop, livestock, other?)

Day 3 : Friday, 10 November 2017

Moderator: Mr. Ronny Dempers, Facilitator

08:00 - 11:00	Group Work continues <i>Feedback from Group Work and Discussions</i>
11:00 - 11:30	BREAK
11:30 – 13:00	Recommendations and Way Forward <i>Mr. Ronny Dempers, Facilitator</i> Closing Remarks <i>Mr. Mushokabanji Mwilima, Executive Director - NNFU</i>
	LUNCH AND DEPARTURE

Images of the Conference



Left: Hon. John Mutorwa, Minister of Agriculture delivers the keynote address to the conference. FES Resident Representative, Heiner Naumann is in the background. Right: Mr. Heiner Naumann (FES), Hon. Mutorwa and PS MAWF, Mr. Persy Misika singing in the National Anthem at the opening of the conference



Left: Friedrich Ebert Foundation Resident Representative, Mr. Heiner Naumann delivers introductory remarks to the conference. Right: MS Dona Amunyera, member of the NNFU Board, delivers Opening Statement on behalf of NNFU President, Mr. Jason Emvula



Left: Mr. Chikulwa Moses, Special Advisor to The Governor of Otjozondjupa, delivers Welcoming Speech on Behalf of the Governor, Mr. Otto Ipinge. Right: Mr. Jason Emvula, President of NNFU responds to an observation raised by a member of the cooperative.



A cross section of the Delegates to the conference as they sing in the National Anthem



Left: Mr. Jürgen Schwettmann, FES Consultant, presents lessons on agricultural cooperatives from an international perspective. Right: Mr. Leroy Banda, Head of the Cooperative Development and Projects at Malawi Union of Savings and Credit Cooperatives (MUSCCO) presents lessons on agricultural cooperatives from a regional perspective.



Members of the discussion panel include: (left to Right) Mr. Leroy Banda, Head of the Cooperative Development and Projects at Malawi Union of Savings and Credit Cooperatives (MUSCCO), Mr. Jürgen Schwettmann, FES Consultant, Mr. Regan Mwazi, General Manager Corporate Services at Agribank, and Mr. Oliver Manungo of CLDP Advisory Services project.



Members and representatives of cooperatives and farmers associations as they listen to conference proceedings

Participant list: Agricultural Farmers Associations and Cooperative Conference

	Name	Position	Institution
1	Heiner Naumann	Resident Representative	FES
2	Juergen Schwettmann	Consultant	ILO
3	John Mutorwa	Minister	MAWF
4	Percy Misika	Permanent Secretary	MAWF
6	Otto Ipinge	Governor	ORC
7	Daisy Manungo	Program Manager	NNFU
8	Sylvia Mundjindi	Project Manager	FES
9	Purity Kutukula	Seminar Assistant	FES
10	Jason Emvula	President	NNFU
11	Oiva Mahina	Vice-President	NNFU
12	Tino Hess	Program Manager	CLDP/GIZ
13	Leroy D. Banda	Head of Cooperatives	MUSCO
14	Vetuundja Kazapua	Regional Coordinator	NNFU
15	Oliver Manungo	Field Lead Advisor	GIZ
16	Regan Mwazi	General Manager	Agri-Bank
17	Colin Nott	Rangeland Expert	CAN
18	Kingsley Kwenani	Executive	Meatco Foundation
19	Kapitukware Kuvare	Chairperson	Otjetjekua Small Scale Cooperative
20	Asser Ujaha	Cooperative	Otjokavare Cooperative
22	Tino Hess	Program Manager	GIZ
23	Virginia Kayimbi	Farmer	Likorere Farmers Co-operative

	Name	Position	Institution
24	Blasius Siyemo	Farmer	Likorere Farmers Co-operative
25	Lisius Nghimbwasha	Treasurer	Onghalulu Farmers Co-operative
26	Alfred Chilinda	Cooperative	Likwama
27	Ricky Lilami	Cooperative	Likwama
28	Vincent Likwala	Cooperative	Likwama
29	Thomas Nyambe	Farmer	KERFU
30	Matheus Kalihonda	Farmer	KERFU
31	Paulus Kamunoko	Farmer	KERFU
32	Tenga Fillipus	Farmer	KWRFU
33	Ben Kapi	Regional Coordinator	NNFU
34	Jochbert Kahambundu	Farmer	RFU
35	Kambuake Kapi	Cooperative	Zakumuka Coop
36	Asser Ujaha	Cooperative	Otjokovare Coop
37	Jolanda Tjipuka	Cooperative	Kunene Livestock Coop
38	Thomas Nambambi	Regional Coordinator	Oshana Regional Farmers Union
39	Fenni P. Amutenya	Regional Coordinator	Oshana Regional Farmers Union
41	Festus Hailonga	Cooperative	Ohangwena RLMC
42	Werner Lenga	Farmer	Oshikoto RFU
43	Paulina Uugwanga	Farmer	Oshikoto RFU
44	Martin Nghiiombo	Farmer	Ohangwena RFU
45	Hileni Shuudifonya	Farmer	Ohangwena RFU
46	Nakisha Shihango	Cooperative	Guinas Cooperative
	Name	Position	Institution
47	Jason Kakoma	Cooperative	Oshana Poultry Cooperative
48	Lusius Nghiiimbwasha	Cooperative	Onghalulu Farmers Cooperative

49	Diina Tjimuhiva	Farmer	Ngatuaane Farmers Union
50	Yolanda Tjipuka	Farmer	Ngatuaane Farmers Union
51	Uhangatenua Kapi	Cooperative	Zakumuka Producer Cooperative
52	Kristian Hango	Farmer	Omusati RFU
53	Tuuliki Uule	Farmer	Omusati RFU
54	Matheus Kanime	Cooperative	Omahene Cooperative
55	Edhiga Fillipus	Cooperative	Amarika Cooperative
56	Johannes Kalenga	Cooperative	Othithiya Cooperative
57	Elizabeth Mukisi	Farmer	KWRFU
58	Ulrich Davids	Regional Coordinator	NNFU
59	Maria Davids	Regional Coordinator	SNAFU
60	Kamukwanyama E	Personal Assistant	MAWF
61	J. Rooi	Farmer & Cooperative	Klein Karas Farmers Cooperative
62	Hulda Kahuika	Farmer & Cooperative	Gainachas Farmers Dvelopment Cooperative
63	John Goliath	Cooperative	Omkhaisen Development Cooperative
64	Willem Motinga	Farmer & Cooperative	Zebra Farmers Cooperative
65	Lelanie Uiras	Farmer & Cooperative	Oanob Hotspring Farmers Cooperative
66	Welmina Boois	Farmer & Cooperative	Aspiring Farmers Cooperative
67	Dorothersa Urikhos	Farmer & Cooperative	United Farmers Development Cooperative
	Name	Position	Institution
68	Asser Ujaha	Cooperative	Otjokovare Cooperative
69	Kapukatua Kuvare	Cooperative	Otjetjekua SSF Cooperative
70	Sofia Johannes Kapala	Farmer & Cooperative	Omusati Regional Farmers Cooperative
71	Max Uutoni	Cooperative	Omusati Regional Livestock

			Cooperative
72	Oliver Manungo	Lead Advisor	GIZ
73	Fortunato Makuti	Regional Coordinator	NNFU
74	Abraham C. Ashikutuwa	Regional Coordinator	NNFU
75	Maria April	Regional Coordinator	SNAFU
76	Oswarb Mwanyengapo	Deputy Director	MAWF
77	George Haufiku	Agricultural Technician	MAWF
79	Enny Namalambo	Deputy Director	MAWF
80	Amon Kapi	Board Member	NNFU
81	K. Hango	Board Member	NNFU
82	Yvonne Howaes	Board Member	NNFU
83	T. Nakanyala	Board Member	NNFU
84	T. Kativa	Board Member	NNFU
85	Abner Shikulo	Cooperative	Oshikoto RLMC
86	David Kandjoze	Mentor	CLDP
87	Patricia Gurubes	Chairperson	SNAFU
88	AnneMarie Kahuva	Exco Secretary	SNAFU
89	Elizabeth Golley	Chairperson	SNAFU
	Name	Position	Institution
90	Susanna Waters	Cooperative	SNAFU
91	Hulda Kahuika	Cooperative	SNAFU
92	U. Kangombe	Farmer	RFU
93	Mushokabanji Mwilima	Executive Director	NNFU
94	Isak Ruben	Chief Cooperative Business Analyst	MAWF
95	Ephraim Matheus	Cooperative Business Analyst	MAWF

96	Sibhekinkosi Sibanda	Farmer	TUCNA
97	Mojao Uandara	Farmer	TUCNA
98	Djiela I. H.	Chairman	ERFU
99	John Jatamunua	Vice Chairman	ERFU
100	Jonathan Kooker	Consultant	FES
101	Oliver Stöppler	Consultant	FES
102	Ramana Mutjavikua	Chairman	OCFU
103	Stanley Njembo	Chairperson	OCF
104	Urika Mujazu	Chairperson	OC
105	Richard Kauta	Cooperative	Pamue Cooperative
106	Waycliffe Nabassa	Support Staff	NDT
107	Emma Shawapala	Cooperative	Oshana Poultry Cooperative
108	Epafras Eshumba	Board Secretary	Amanika Farmers Cooperative
109	Kauandara	Chairperson	ORFU
110	Tutupeni Tjazapi	Mentor	GIZ
	Name	Position	Institution
110	Tjavarekua Tjijahura	Vice Chairperson	OSSC
111	Petrus Petrus	Vice Chairperson	ORFU
112	Sikunawa Negumbo	Director	KIAT
113	Jocelyn Kangombe	Representative	NAB
114	Teresia Amakali	Mentor	CLDP
115	T. I. Hoaëb	Chairperson	KLMC
116	Ueritjiua Tjitemisa	Member	Nguakondja Cooperative
117	Philipus Howosab	Chairperson	KUFAGRI
118	Magreth April	Cooperative	SNAFU
119	Benjamin Gairabeb	Cooperative	KUFAGRI

120	Samuel Tsausab	Vice Chairperson	WRFU
121	Salmon /Useb	Chairperson	WRFU
122	Mose Gariseb	Vice Treasurer	SNAFU