

**The Eastern and Southern African Small Scale
Farmers Forum
(ESAFF)**

Strategic Plan

2008 - 2010

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Historical Background

The Eastern and Southern African Farmers Forum (ESAFF) was officially launched in Morogoro, in 2006 and registered as the non-governmental organisation in Tanzania in 2007.

The creation of ESAFF started in 2002 during the World Summit for Sustainable Development (WSSD) which was held in Johannesburg, Republic of South Africa in which through the support of the Participatory Ecological Land Use Management (PELUM) Association the small scale farmers from the Eastern and Southern African countries participated to express their views on sustainable development.

Since its inception, ESAFF focussed on strengthening the national ESAFF chapters, expanding the membership and processing the legal identity of the regional forum in Tanzania.

This document presents the strategic plan of ESAFF for 3 years, 2008 to 2010. The strategic plan is based on the strategic planning workshop which was held in Dar es Salaam on 28 – 31 January 2008.

1.2 Vision, Mission and Objectives

Broadly, ESAFF aspires to have a common regional forum of small scale farmers in order to address together the challenges, constraints and develop common strategies for the development of small scale farmers in the region.

The vision of ESAFF is to become a strong regional movement that empowers small scale farmers who are involved in sustainable agriculture to speak for themselves and prosper

The mission of ESAFF is to empower small scale farmers in Eastern and Southern Africa to influence development policies and produce more food and market the surplus using sustainable agriculture, gender-sensitive methods to improve their livelihoods through capacity building, research, policy influence and partnerships.

The principles of ESAFF are the following;

1. Facilitate small scale farmers empowerment to articulate their issues for a better socio-political and economic environment in which to live and produce;
2. Food first and food for all: Farmers should produce enough food for the nations and have the necessary resources to do so because it is a basic need;
3. Respect and celebrate farming as a way of life, as a culture;

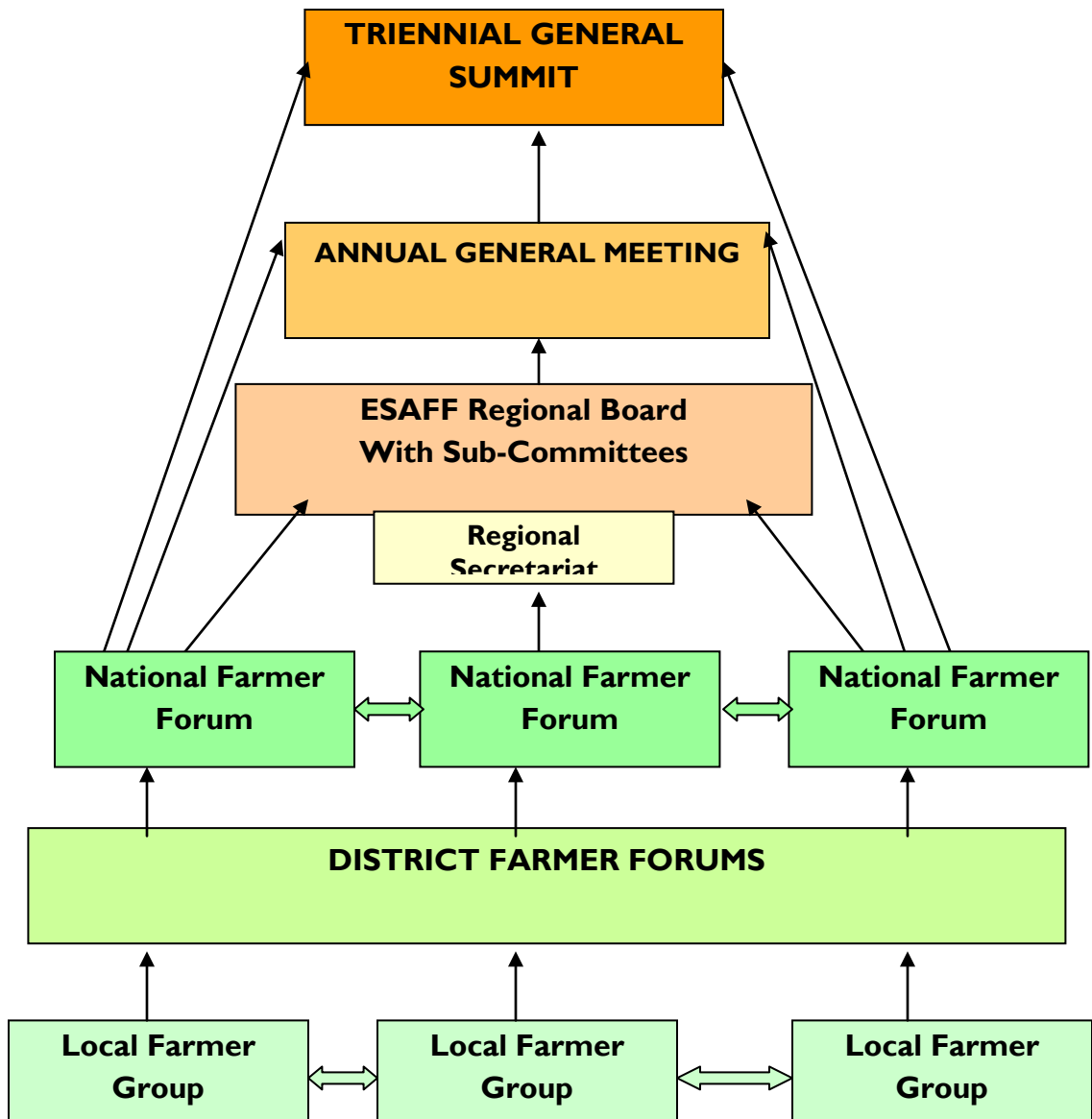
4. Preserve and promote useful culture, indigenous and local knowledge systems for food security and sustainability;
5. Promote low external input and ethical agriculture building on local resources, without undermining biodiversity;
6. Respect for diversity in cultures and contexts in respective countries; and
7. Observe equity and equality in the pursuit of the mission of the forum, between different countries, sexes and other groups of people.

The core values of ESAFF

1. Integrity: To be honest, reliable and upright in our conduct as well as to stand for what we believe;
2. Mutual trust: Cultivate confidence and self reliance among farmers to avoid hurting each other;
3. Equal partnership: Treat every member equally with the same rights irrespective of their country of origin, sex, age or beliefs;
4. Transparency and accountability: Openness and truthfulness in our conduct and being answerable to one another and to others; and
5. Respect: Holding high opinion of each other and of others, valuing each other and nurturing the esteem of fellow farmers as well as keeping our promises.

1.3 The Structure of ESAFF

The structure of ESAFF is built on the national farmers' forums which are themselves membership based, the Board of Directors under which there is a Secretariat the Annual General Meeting and the Triennial meeting. The diagram below presents the organogram of ESAFF.



I.3.1 Triennial General Meeting

- a) Meets once every three years ;
- b) Four delegates from each member country constitutes delegates of the TGM;
- c) Confirms previous minutes ;
- d) Receives and approves chairperson's report ;
- e) Receives and approves a three-year strategic plan;
- f) Elects members of the ESAFF regional Board;
- g) Appoints bankers and auditors ; and
- h) Receive and approve any other business on the agenda.

I.3.2 Annual General Meeting

- a) Is held annually ;
- a) Is attended by 2 members from each member country;
- b) Confirms and received minutes of the previous meeting;
- c) Receives and approves chairperson's report ;
- d) Receives and approves annual plans and budgets;
- e) Fill vacancies that may have occurred in the regional Board; and
- f) Receive, transact, approve and ratify or reject any other business included on the agenda.

I.3.3 ESAFF Regional Board

- a) Is made up of chairpersons or elected persons from member countries;
- b) Should be made up of between nine and 18 members;
- c) Oversees the operations of the organization and the implementation of plans and budgets;
- d) Makes decisions in relation to policy and strategic plans and budgets;
- e) Makes regulations for the proper and efficient management of personnel, administration, facilities and finances of the organization;
- f) Prepares three-year strategic plans for approval by the Triennial General meeting;
- g) Prepares Annual Plans and budgets, which it submits to the AGM for approval;
- h) Establishes and manages a bank account and determines authority levels for withdrawals;
- i) Appoints the Executive Director and staff of the organization and determine their conditions of services;

- j) Establishes sub-committees of the Board; and
- k) Raises the necessary resources for the running of the organization.

1.3.4 Regional Secretariat

It is the implementation arm of the regional Board and is headed by the Regional Coordinator or Executive Director, who reports to the Regional Board.

2.0 Context Analysis

The course of action of the small holder farmers in the region is influenced and indeed determined by the context surrounding the farmers. The major context dimensions are presented below.

2.1 Social

- a. **HIV/AIDS:** The high prevalence of HIV/AIDS in the region decreases the capacity of farmers to do productive work as they have to look after the sick, spending both time and resources. The pandemic is killing the able-bodied further undermining labour. The number of orphans and widows is increasing. Distribution of the property of the dead creates inheritance challenges which tend to disadvantage widows and children. Most governments in the region do not have the capacity to provide the necessary health support. However, in South Africa, senior citizens, the disabled and orphans receive government assistance, while People Living with HIV and AIDS (PLWHA) get free treatment.
- b. **Access to and ownership of land:** Another major social issue is access to land and land tenure systems. In the east African countries, investors are taking over land, some of which gets used for large scale commercial production. This is undermining small holder farmer access to land. Some of the conflicts in the region can be traced back to unequal land distribution, poor land use plans and tenure as well as increased population pressure. Rwanda is developing a Land Bill which provides for private land ownership, while South Africa is involved in Land Restitution and giving the necessary support to new farmers, from credit support to skills development and marketing. In Zimbabwe many more small scale farmers have had access to land and the government has become the major land owner.
- c. **Youth and gender in agriculture:** There is a tendency of discriminating against women farmers even though they are the majority. Men still dominate in families and in institutions. There is a growing awareness about the importance of involving youths and women in development, especially in agriculture. Civil society and governments are appreciating that women can take up positions of leadership that they are capable and that for society to progress optimally both men and women should participate equally in labour, benefit sharing and power. There is concern about the lack of youth interest to take part in agriculture. This is partly because the youths do not get support to do so. However, they remain the backbone of future agriculture.

- d. **Migration:** Intra-regional immigration is a common trend. South Africa is receiving considerable numbers of people from the region, especially from Zimbabwe, looking for better economic opportunities. Uganda and Tanzania are also receiving people from neighbouring countries who are running away for the tribal clashes. This is creating tensions in the host countries as “refugees” compete with locals for the limited land, government services and farmer’s plans.

2.2 Economic

- a. **Loss of markets and land to more powerful forces:** Small scale farmers leaving farming because it is not viable as a result of increased production costs and dumping of imported goods. Dumping is likely to be worsened if the Economic Partnership Agreements are implemented in their current form. The more developed South Africa also dumps some of its products in neighbouring countries. The other threat to family farming, which is based on diverse production systems, is the introduction of bio-fuels to meet industrial needs. There is concern that as more farming land is used for the production of bio-fuels, the incidence of food insecurity will increase and so will poverty levels, especially among farmers. This is a serious concern given that already, the region has among the highest poverty levels in the world.
- b. **Growing importance of regional blocks:** With growing globalization and regionalization, continental groups and economic blocks have become an important site of making decisions that are implemented at national level. Examples are the EPAs, the Abuja Declaration and the Maputo Declaration. Most governments have not yet achieved the Maputo Declaration to allocate 10 % of their budgets to agriculture. Where they have succeeded, in six countries so far, it is not clear how much goes to the small scale farming sector. This means that even civil society, including farmer organizations have to engage government at regional and continental levels. This gives ESAFF and other regional CSOs a good point of entry for dialogue with such institutions as the East Africa Community (EAC), the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the African Union (AU).
- c. **Limited access to appropriate technologies and inputs:** Agricultural production of small scale farmers is undermined by the inability of the private sector and government to develop suitable technologies. More emphasis is put on developing technologies that are more suitable for large scale production. Where there may be good research products with potential to help farmers produce more, responsibly, there has been little interaction between farmers and research institutions. In some countries such as Zimbabwe, it is difficult for farmers to get seed on time and this undermines production. In Lesotho, the price of dairy cows is prohibitive. The cost of inputs is growing while that of agricultural produce is not increasing at the same rate.
- d. **Poor infrastructure and access to information:** Most rural areas in which farmers live and work have poor road network systems which makes it difficult to access markets to sell their produce. Inputs often have to be transported over long distances thus increasing the costs of production. Poor infrastructure has resulted in the exploitation of smallholder farmers by the middleman, the traders. In addition small

scale farmers often do not have access to internet facilities in their rural areas which could enable them to learn about market behaviour. However, some countries are beginning to establish internet facilities in rural areas, often with the assistance of NGOs. The other challenge is concerned with farmer ability to use internet, which should be developed.

2.3 Political

- a. **Exploitation of the small scale farmer by politicians:** During the campaigning period, politicians often turn to farmers for votes but once they get into office they forget about farmers and pursue their own interests, often at the expense of farmers. Some even cheat farmers. From this, farmers should learn to choose leaders from among themselves. Those who get into office should not forget about their roots. In Tanzania and Uganda, some farmers have been elected into political and government positions.
- b. **Corruption of government officials:** There are many government programmes that are designed to address the needs of the small holder farmers. However, because local and national leaders are corrupt, the assistance often ends up benefiting other people. This is the case with some credit schemes, mechanization programmes and input and marketing projects.
- c. **Exclusion of small scale farmers in policy making:** Most governments in the region do not involve farmers on making agriculture and related policies. Nor do they involve them in policy reviews. This results in agricultural and trade policies that are not suitable for farmers. This has resulted in the marginalization of farmers and farmer issues and aspirations. In response, farmers are beginning to organize themselves to assert their rights. The opportunity to make an impact has been presented by the decentralization processes that are taking place in all member countries. This means that farmers can influence budgets and other issues at district and national levels.
- d. **Civil conflicts:** There are many civil conflicts in the region. Many of them have been caused by bad governance and corruption. Others have been caused by land demands. The instability caused by the conflicts takes away energy from productive activities such as farming. This fuels food insecurity in the region and create refugees for other countries.

2.4 Ecological

- a. **Climate change:** The pattern of seasons appears to be changing. The frequency of droughts and floods is increasing and so is their severity. Water tables are falling in many countries. The changes in rainfall patterns are being attributed to human activities such as burning of fossil fuels, which emit greenhouse gases that increase global temperatures.

This has implications on the crops that will be grown successfully and is undermining food production in some countries.

- b. Genetically Modified Organisms and invasive species:** The promotion of GMOs by the transnational companies has ecological and social implications. The modified organisms pollute related plants and can bring about imbalance in the farming and natural ecosystems through pollution. The introduction of GMOs undermines sustainable agriculture and cause environmental pollution, undermines food sovereignty. Countries such as Seychelles, South Africa and Zimbabwe have been battling to get rid of alien plants that undermine indigenous plants and biodiversity. For example, the water hyacinth uses up a lot of water in dams which could be used for irrigation or consumption.

- c. Land degradation:** Poor land policies and agricultural practices cause erosion of top fertile soil which is important for agriculture. This is more pronounced on mountain slopes. This reduces its potential to produce. Deforestation for energy and other needs, is leading to environmental degradation and desertification. The other effect is that lakes and rivers get silted and their capacity to carry water is reduced.

3.0 The Strategic Focus

This strategic plan focus on four priority areas. These areas are the following;

1. **Organizational and Institutional Development** to ensure that ESAFF's capacity to fulfill its mandate is developed and is adequate.
2. **Improvement of Food Security** to support smallholder farmers to contribute more meaningfully to food security in the region through improved access to the necessary resources, better government policies and sustainable agricultural practices
3. **Trade and Marketing** to empower smallholder farmers to understand, access and influence markets of agricultural produce.
4. **Gender, HIV/AIDS and Youth** to ensure that gender, HIV/AIDS and youth issues are mainstreamed in the actions of farmers and ESAFF at all levels.

I. Organizational and institutional development

Objective: To develop the effective capacity of ESAFF to fulfill its mission and meet its objectives.

Objective	ACTIVITIES	Year 1 USD	Year 2	Year 3
I.1 Establish a functional regional secretariat	a. Recruit and employ a Regional Coordinator	3,200 X 13 = 41,600	3,520 X 13 = 45,760	3,872 X 13 = 50,336
	b. Recruit an Accountant/Administrative Assistant	1,200X13=15,600	1,320X13=17,160	1,452X13=18,876
	c. Acquire office space	500 X 12=6,000	600 X 12 =7,200	700 X 12 =8,400
	d. Acquire furniture and office equipment and maintenance.	1,200	500	500
	e. Office maintenance and utility	500 X 12=6,000	600X12=7,200	700X12=8,400
	f. Develop financial and personnel policies.	2,500		-
	g. Procurement of car	-	80,000	
I.2 Develop the ESAFF Board and leadership	a. Conduct Board meetings	8,000 x 2 =16,000	8,000 x 2=16,000	8,000 x 2=16,000
	b. Conduct AGM	-	50,000	50,000
	c. Conduct TGM meetings	-	-	75,000
I.3 Establish functional information and communication systems	a. Develop and maintain a Website	3,000	1,000	1,000
I.4 Develop fundraising capacity of ESAFF	a. Conduct fundraising training	30,000	-	-
	b. Develop fundraising strategy	3,000	-	-
I.5 Monitoring and evaluation	• Develop monitoring and evaluation tools and systems	6,000	-	-
	• Conduct strategic reflection workshop (includes evaluation of 3 years plan of action)	-	-	30,000
	Subtotal I	130,900	224,820	258,512

2. Food security

Goal: To support smallholder farmers to contribute more meaningfully to food security in the region through improved access to the necessary resources, better government policies and sustainable agricultural practices

Objective	ACTIVITIES	Budget		
		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
2.1 Capacity building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Conduct training to leaders of farmers on campaigning advocacy and lobbying. b. Conduct training workshop (TOT) on gender, youth, HIV/AIDS and agriculture. c. Develop the regional lobbying and advocacy strategy of ESAFF d. Conduct training to enable farmers participate in budget making and review processes at regional level and support national and local level engagement 	30,000	5,000	30,000
2.2 Conduct policy research, research for influencing policy decisions on food security in the region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Research on the impact of selected agricultural policies on food security. b. Participate in agricultural policy making and review processes at regional level c. Lobby against agricultural technologies that undermine farmers' welfare. 	- 6,000 10,000	- 6,000 10,000	20,000 6,000 10,000
2.3 Accessing and influencing research agenda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Conduct research on the access to agricultural research by small holder farmers b. Conduct consultative meetings on regional agricultural research agenda 	- -	- -	10,000 -
	Subtotal	51,000	51,000	76,000

3. Key result area 3: Trade and marketing

Goal: To empower smallholder farmers to understand, access and influence markets of agricultural produce

Objective	ACTIVITIES	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
3.1 Research on trade and marketing	a. Carry out research in trade and marketing in the region and identify issues needing attention and opportunities	6,000		
3.2 Capacity building on trade, marketing and access to credit	a. Carry out training (TOT) on trade and marketing concepts and issues b. Support national chapters to address national and local trade and marketing issues c. Identify, document and share successful micro finance cases such as the experiences in SACCOS.	30,000	15,000	15,000
3.3 Influencing trade and marketing policy	a. Participate in regional and international trade policy processes	6,000	6,000	6,000
	Subtotal	42,000	21,000	21,000

4. Key result area 4: Gender, HIV/AIDS and youth

Goal: To ensure that gender, HIV/AIDS and youth issues are incorporated in the work of ESAFF at all levels

STRATEGIES	ACTIVITIES	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
4.1 Capacity building of ESAFF members on gender, HIV and AIDS	a. Develop a gender and youth and HIV/AIDS policy for ESAFF	6,000	-	-
4.2 Mainstreaming gender and HIV/AIDS in ESAFF	a. Implement the gender, youths and HIV/AIDS policy	-	-	-
	b. Ensure fair representation of women, men and youths in ESAFF leadership	-	-	-
	c. Document and share best practice	-	-	10,000
4.3 Research and policy influence	a. Carry our research on gender, youths and HIV/AIDS in agriculture	-	10,000	-
	b. Conduct campaign, advocacy and lobbying on selected issues	-	-	-
4.4 Monitoring and evaluation	a. Develop appropriate tools to measure impact gender and HIV/AIDS interventions	-	-	-
	b. Carry out monitoring and evaluation	-	-	-
	Sub total	6,000	10,000	10,000
	Grand Total	229,900	306,820	365,512

5. The key success factors and potential risks

Success factors

- a. Living the values of the organization, including transparency and open communication
- b. Clarity about the direction and identity of the organization
- c. Raising necessary resources
- d. Commitment and competence of the ESAFF leaders, members and staff
- e. Ownership of the organization by the farmers
- f. Timeliness of implementation of the strategic plan
- g. Adherence to the constitutional provisions
- h. Strategic plans of national for a in place, with secretariats and activities on the ground;
- i. Focus on objectives and targets; and
- j. More farmers joining ESAFF.

Potential risks

- a. Mistrust arising from poor communication with members;
- b. Dependence on donor funds can risk independence of the organization;
- c. Inadequate and untimely funding;
- d. Disintegration and resistance (some national chapters may become strong and may feel in no need of ESAFF)
- e. Resistance by governments and political instability
- f. Hiring the wrong coordinator
- g. Failure to satisfy the expectations of members
- h. Getting hijacked by other CSOs and competitors or cooption
- i. Farmers dying from HIV/AIDS
- j. Internal power struggle