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INSTITUTIONAL ARCHITECTURE ASSESSMENT 2016 UPDATE AND CONSIDERATION OF A THINK TANK TO IMPROVE EVIDENCED-BASED POLICY ANALYSIS IN MALAWI

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ABBREVIATIONS

ADD	Agricultural Development Division
ADMARC	Agricultural Development and Marketing Cooperation
ASWAp	Agricultural Sector-Wide Approach
DCAFS	Donor Committee on Agriculture and Food Security
CAADP	Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Programme
CARD	Center for Agricultural Research and Development
CISANET	Civil Society Network for Agriculture
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
ECAMA	Economics Association of Malawi
FISP	Farm Input Subsidy Program
FUM	Farmers' Union of Malawi
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute
IHS	International Household Survey
JSR	Joint sector review
MCCI	Malawi Confederation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry
MEJN	Malawi Economic Justice Network
MGDS	Malawi Growth and Development Strategy
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MoAIWD	Ministry of Agriculture Irrigation and Water Development
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MoITPSD	Ministry of Industry and Trade
MVAC	Malawi Vulnerability Assessment Committee
NAP	National Agricultural Policy
NAPAS	New Alliance Policy Acceleration Support
NASFAM	National Small Farmers Association of Malawi
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NSO	National Statistics Office

OPC	Office of the President and Cabinet
PS	Principal Secretary
R&D	Research and Development
SADC	Southern Africa Development Community
SEBAP	Strengthening Evidence-Based Agricultural Policy
SWG	Sector Working Group
TWG	Technical Working Group
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Africa Lead II study team was tasked with updating the 2013 Institutional Architecture Assessment for food security and agriculture policy change in Malawi. The team interviewed 27 stakeholders in government, civil society and the private sector and conducted a thorough literature review on agriculture and food security policy with a focus on changes that have occurred in the past three years. The team used Africa Lead's methodology that identifies six policy elements with associated policy change indicators. Each indicator is assessed as green, yellow, or red. Green indicates that the indicator is satisfied and no additional work is needed. Yellow means that while progress has been made to satisfy this indicator, stakeholders need to continue to work towards further improvement. Red means that little if any progress has been made toward achievement of this indicator.

The policy elements are:

- Guiding Policy Framework
- Policy Development and Coordination
- Inclusivity and Stakeholder consultation
- Evidence-based analysis
- Policy implementation
- Mutual Accountability

The overall results are given below.

Guiding Policy Framework: In general, there is improvement in this policy element when compared with 2013. The improvements in the guiding policy framework is reflected in the New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition Cooperation Framework in which the Government of Malawi, development partners, the private sector and civil society organizations committed to working together. Each of these sectors has its own commitments in the areas of policy for Government, investment commitments for the private sector and funding commitments by Development Partners. Policy commitments focus on four main areas to ensure a strong enabling environment for agriculture and food security investments: (i) competitive environment with consistent and coherent policies; (ii) access to land, water, farm inputs and basic infrastructure; (iii) re-organization of extension services, promotion of agribusiness and cooperative programmes; and (iv) malnutrition.

Among the key policy commitment indicators which the Government are:

- Improved score on Doing Business Index to among top 100 economies;
- Increased dollar value of private sector investment in the agriculture sector and value added agro-processing;

- Increased private investment in commercial production, sale of inputs and produce and value addition.

Progress towards achievement of the above three policy indicators is mixed. In some cases there has been good progress while in other areas it is not. For example the improved score on Doing Business Index to among top 100 economies, the 2016 Doing Business Index ranks Malawi at 115-152 category which means Malawi is not among the top 100 economies on the easiness of doing business.¹ The situation is exacerbated by unpredictable maize policies which in 2016 have seen impounding of maize bought by traders without buying licenses.

The draft National Agriculture Policy (NAP) is a positive achievement. The NAP was developed using a highly participatory process. The private sector and civil society, including farmers, actively participated in the process and contributed to the content of the document. Other policies which have been prioritized for development by the New Alliance include the National Irrigation Policy, National Industrial Policy, National Trade Policy, the Seed Act, Contract Farming Strategy and Nutrition, Education and Communication Strategy. Formulation of these prioritised policies is taking place and they are at various stages of completion.

In the area of increased dollar value of private sector investment in the agriculture sector and value added agro-processing, Malawi is not doing well. Most of its exports are still in its form with no value addition and the same trend applies to the domestic markets. In the area of Increased private investment in commercial production, sale of inputs and produce and value addition, there is some though limited progress, despite a number of private sector companies, including large international companies, making investment commitments in a number of areas for implementation between 2014 and 2018.

Policy Development and Coordination: Policy development and Coordination takes place through the Agriculture Sector Wide approach (ASWAp) which is now under review for revision, the New Alliance Framework, and the NAP. For the ASWAp, the policy development and coordination takes place through Technical Working Groups, Sector Working Groups and Joint Sector Reviews. The New Alliance for Food Security framework is aimed at promoting stronger coordination and mutual accountability of different stakeholders in the agriculture sector. It is coordinated through the Public Private Dialogue, the G8NA Core Team which oversees day-to-day implementation of the New Alliance and is chaired jointly by MoAIWD and the EU, and the High Level Task Force (HLTF) which is co-chaired by the Minister of MoAIWD and the EU Ambassador and provides high-level policy direction. The Core Team and HLTF meet when required and include consistent and high-level representation from across the government, private sector, civil society and development partners. The NAP is on the other hand is also coordinated by a core team and a high level task force.

Policy Development could be initiated at these various policy coordination structures. The line Ministries together with relevant key stakeholders initiate the drafting of policy concepts which once done are passed on to the OPC and the cabinet for approval. Draft laws are submitted to the Minister of Justice for legal consideration, after which it is presented to the legal committee of the

¹ World Bank 2016 Doing Business Report.

Cabinet, and then the full cabinet. Often policy development gets stuck at Ministry of Justice and Cabinet.

Inclusivity and Stakeholder Consultation: CSOs, private sector and government routinely meet to discuss policy issues. This is most apparent by the regular TWGs, SWGs, and the JSR. Private sector and CSO respondents also noted that they have access to MoAIWD officials and parliamentarians to advocate for certain positions.

Evidence-Based Analysis: There is improvement in evidence based analysis as a result of the SEBAP project. The project includes activities to train and build the capacity of economists in the Planning Division of the MoAIWD. However, it is a challenge to retain their services in the MoAIWD. The economists are under economic common service hence they are often transferred to other ministries or get promoted. In view of this challenge, building evidence-based analysis capacity has been problematic.

Availability of reliable data which can easily be accessible to interested parties is another challenge for developing evidence based analysis for the agriculture sector. Statistics whose credibility has been a subject of debate for quite some time are the agriculture production estimates (APES) figures collected by the MoAIWD. There has efforts to use satellite imagery but the technique is expensive and only provides a 4% greater accuracy over the current crop estimates figures. Free market prices are another key data set which is collected from the field whose reliability, timeliness and accessibility is a challenge. The market price data are collected by both the government (MoAIWD) and the private sector such as Agriculture Commodity Exchange for Africa (ACE). The data collected by the Ministry is not widely distributed while market price data collected by the private sector including ACE is distributed to members only. This too creates a challenge for the development of evidence based analysis capacity.

Policy Implementation: Work plans exist for each component of ASWAp, though the actions are not prioritized. The draft NAP has eight priority areas. The MoAIWD main implementation objective is FISP, and it consumes the bulk of the budget and time of Ministry personnel. The MoAID has, together with other line ministries, just started program-based budgeting for fiscal year 2015/16, which makes it possible to trace expenditures to outputs and MGDs. While there may be small improvements, this policy element still requires substantial work for further progress to be made.

Mutual Accountability: The TWGs, SWGs and the JSR provide the fora for mutual accountability. The Donor Committee on Agriculture and Food Security provides a means for donors to develop common positions on important policy. This policy element has shown improvement in the past three years. The media has been more active in exposing corruption than in 2013; however punishment of perpetrators (accountability) is still lacking or not strong.

Overall assessment: The Institutional Architecture for agriculture and food policy in Malawi has improved in the past three years. The country now has a draft National Agriculture Policy, and there is significant participation of civil society and the private sector in policy discussions through various mechanisms such as the New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition, and the ASWAp which is now under review. Data and information are in general more readily available than three years ago, though use of existing evidence in making rational decisions on ways to make FISP and ADMARC more efficient and effective still remains a constraint to good decision making. Marketing data are

almost non-existent and where available it is mostly available to members of private sector organizations. As a result of USAID policy projects as well as efforts from other donor partners, CSOs and the private sector are now more capable of conducting policy analysis and advocating positions.

Yet, in spite of the improvements in the institutional architecture, the policy environment is seriously compromised if government at the highest level, that is parliament and the cabinet, is insufficiently engaged to make decisions. This appears to be the situation in Malawi. The main roadblock to improving the policy environment in Malawi is the lack of action on important laws and policies, even when the parliamentary committee is engaged and supportive of a given law or policy.

Influence of USAID-funded policy programs in Malawi: The four USAID-funded policy related programs, DCAFS, MAPS, NAPAS and SEBAP have succeeded in their objectives of coordinated policy work amongst donors (DCAFS), improving the ability of local stakeholders to advocate for policy change (MAPS), and working with local stakeholders, especially the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Development, to conduct quality policy analysis and present policy findings in both public and private meetings to seek change.

It was clear from Africa Lead's many conversations with stakeholders that there is a high level of demand for good policy analysis, and that is especially true amongst CSOs and private sector organizations who wish to advocate for certain laws or policies. Professionals within the ministries also demand quality data and analysis. It is less apparent however that actual decision makers within government demand quality information. One of the most perplexing features of the policy reform process in Malawi is that the enthusiasm of stakeholders does not translate into actual reforms.

In terms of the future, Africa Lead recommends continued funding of similar programs. While it is easy to be discouraged by the lack of policy change in spite of good efforts from analysts and stakeholders, the argument to continue this work is that change will definitely not occur in the absence of good analysis, but good analysis lays the foundation for change to occur, even if it takes time. One suggested change to the current configuration of projects is to tie IFPRI, or other research program, more closely to one or two dynamic local organizations. It would be advantageous for SEBAP's excellent work to be locally owned, with a local website and local branding.

Consideration of a think tank: The Africa Lead team evaluated the structure, especially funding structures, of several of the best think tanks in Africa. The best think tanks in Africa generally have a broad base of funding, especially unrestricted funding that permits the think tank to build its credibility and strategy direction without pressure from those funding commissioned work.

Using a set of criteria to assess the potential for any of six organizations in Malawi to be a recognized think tank, Africa Lead determined that the Center for Environmental Policy and Advocacy ranks the highest. CEPA has a staff of 15 analysts who work full time on policy and advocacy, and have produced a modest but growing body of work. It has strong networks in and out of government. It also would consider broadening its portfolio to include agriculture marketing and production, in addition to land and water policy.

None the less, before making an investment in a think tank, USAID will need to develop a clear plan, including a terms of reference, to define the way forward.

CHAPTER I: INSTITUTIONAL ARCHITECTURE ASSESSMENT – CAPACITY OF FOOD SECURITY POLICY CHANGE

POLICY ELEMENT I: PREDICTABILITY OF THE GUIDING POLICY FRAMEWORK

- A. **Clearly defined and consistent Policy Framework: The policy framework impacting food security policy-making is clearly defined, and consistently applied and enforced from year to year. Green**

National, regional and international policies and commitments are the foundation for agriculture and food security policy in Malawi. The Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Program (CAADP) of 2003-2013 guides the strategic framework for Malawi's agricultural policy. CAADP's goal is to guide African countries' development efforts and partnerships as the foundation for the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). The most important change to take place in the policy architecture in Malawi in the last three years is the development of the draft National Agriculture Policy, submitted to the cabinet for approval in late 2015.

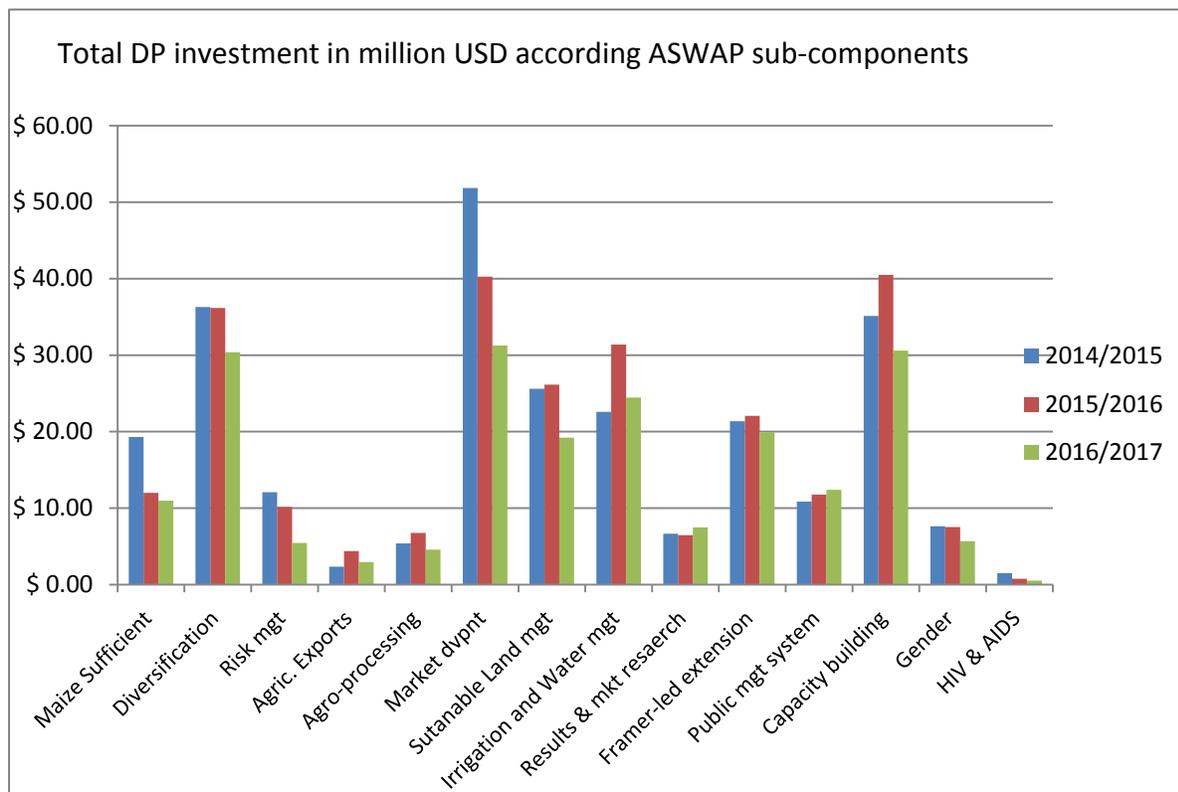
The other guiding strategies and investment plans underpinning the draft NAP are: Vision 2020 framework; Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MDGS); and the Agriculture Sector Wide Approach (ASWAp). The New Alliance Framework is also an important document guiding Malawi's policy work. It commits the Government of Malawi to key policies that should contribute to agriculture development.

The National Agricultural Policy (NAP) of 2016 to 2020 defines the vision for development of the agricultural sector in Malawi over the next five years. Its passage has been delayed, but it is now expected this calendar year. The main objective of the draft NAP is that agriculture in Malawi will move towards profitable commercial farming through specialization of smallholder farm production, output diversification, and value addition. The document also promotes subsector policies to ensure sustainable agricultural production, increased mechanization, investments in irrigation, food processing. These policies will manage risk, improve marketing, and increase exports of a more diverse set of agriculture products including processed products

This policy indicator shows significant improvement over the situation three years ago. According to the 2013 IAA, only FISP was a consistent policy, and was classified as green, while the government was deemed to be insufficiently supportive of other policies or initiatives as embodied in ASWAp or any of the other policy documents existing at that time. FISP absorbed about 80 percent of total Ministry of Agriculture budget leaving few resources available for other initiatives. However when examining the trend in investments in ASWAp's various subcomponents by Malawi's development partners (DPs), it is clear that DPs investments focus on areas other than FISP (seen below as maize

sufficiency), and compensate for the lack of government investment in those areas. According to statistics from DCAFs on ASWAp expenditure and budgets, DPs target the largest portion of their investment funds in market development and capacity building. They invest the least in agricultural exports, agro-processing, and HIV/AIDS. Note that the small amount invested in HIV/AIDS is perplexing since PEPFAR spends considerable funds on HIV/AIDS in Malawi.

FIGURE I: TOTAL DP INVESTMENT ACCORDING TO ASWAP SUB-COMPONENTS



Source: DCAFS

During the period under review, the government has instituted some reforms for FISP especially in 2014/2015. These include increasing the contribution of farmers towards the cost of the FISP inputs, increased private sector participation in the procurement and distribution of FISP fertilizer and random selection of the FISP beneficiaries. It is however not clear if these reforms will be sustainable in the coming years.

In the past three years, Malawi signed on to the New Alliance Framework, which essentially supports the implementation of ASWAp and development of the NAP. An important feature of the New Alliance Framework is that it committed the Ministry to develop a National Agricultural Policy among other important policy documents. With the assistance of NAPAS, the MSU/IFPRI project embedded in the Ministry, a draft National Agricultural Policy was submitted to the cabinet in December 2015. In the meantime, in light of the draft National Agriculture Policy, ASWAp, the investment framework that is tied to CAADP, is undergoing review and is likely to be revised as it expired at the end of 2015. The revision will support the draft NAP.

In 2013, the Ministry did not have a National Agriculture Policy. In that year a draft policy document was submitted to cabinet, but the cabinet rejected it due to its lack of stakeholder involvement and it did not follow the format required for national policy documents. The NAP formulation process incorporated the recommendations and a high level of stakeholder involvement. Because the draft NAP is currently with the cabinet and not yet approved, it is not certain if the policy framework will be consistently applied and enforced from year to year. Still, the expectation of all knowledgeable respondents is that the cabinet will approve NAP.

Other notable policy documents which have been developed recently are the Seed Law and the Land Bill. The seed law is currently under review by the Ministry of Justice, and the Land Law has passed MOJ review and is waiting for a vote in Parliament.

B. Predictability and Transparency of the Policy making Process: The policy development process is transparent in accordance with the rules contained in the country's constitution, basic law, and elsewhere in the formal legal framework. Red

Stakeholders in the policy process in Malawi are much more involved in policy formulation and implementation than in the past, thereby resulting in a more transparent process than three years earlier. At this time, there are at least three laws (seed act, land act, and energy act) that are pending in the Ministry of Justice or parliament, and the draft NAP is pending with the cabinet as is a draft trade policy. These draft documents had significant private sector and CSO input in their formulation.

Starting with the most recent maize season, stakeholders also contributed to the configuration of FISP; that is, they worked with the government in the past year to alter the program to include more private sector involvement in the procurement and distribution of fertilizer, and advised on the amount farmers should contribute towards the value of the inputs. The selection of farmers benefiting from FISP was done on a lottery basis, thereby bypassing the local leaders. While this is progress, FISP remains terribly inefficient as a means of increasing agricultural productivity, in large part due to its poor targeting, late input delivery and limited extension service support to ensure optimal use of the subsidized inputs.

The area in which transparency is serious lacking is in maize marketing. ADMARC, the Agriculture Development and Marketing Corporation, was originally set up in the 1970s as a government parastatal to exert monopoly power in agricultural marketing. ADMARC is now a limited liability company with one percent private ownership; this transformation occurred with the 2013 repeal of the Agriculture Development and Marketing Act of 1971. ADMARC's stated vision is to be "a viable commercial market leader in the marketing of agricultural commodities and products", and its buying and selling in the maize market is supposed to stabilize prices so that farmers will find incentive to produce more maize, and more farmers will participate in the maize market (at present only one in six farmers sell maize). To date, maize prices in Malawi have been much more unstable than in neighboring countries. However, even if the government announces minimum prices, ADMARC's entry into the market to ensure that farmers receive the minimum price is not guaranteed. Indeed, the haphazard nature of ADMARC's market participation creates greater uncertainty for both farmers and traders. Farmers are less likely to produce for sale and traders will charge risk premiums to manage the additional risk generated by ADMARC's arbitrary market decisions. But ADMARC is not the only problem related to marketing policy. The Control of Goods Act empowers the Ministry of Industry and Trade to impose bans unilaterally on exports of maize

and other commodities. This also adds to uncertainty and thus acts as a disincentive to both farmers and traders to engage in marketing of the most critical agricultural products in the country.

The private sector will need to engage at a deeper level to persuade decision makers of the need for reform of ADMARC. Thus far, work in this area has yielded little if any positive impact.

C. *Clear and functional legislative system: There is legislative capacity to deal with food security policy change, and the legislative requirements are clearly defined and predictable.* Yellow

Such organizations as Farmers Union of Malawi (FUM), Civil Society Agriculture Network CISANET, the Seed Trade Association, and the National Smallholder Farmers Association of Malawi (NASFAM) have programs to work with the Parliamentary Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources to advocate certain policy positions, and provide training for parliamentarians in budget analysis. The legislative requirements are clear and well-defined. However, the legislative process is not predictable. The line ministries usually develop a law, and unlike 2013, this is usually a highly consultative process with private sector and civil society contributions. Once the draft is complete, it goes to the Ministry of Justice for legal review. It is at this point that the process becomes highly unpredictable. The Ministry of Justice can sometimes take months, sometimes years before it finishes a review. Often a draft law will be returned to the line ministry for revision, which can lengthen the time period of enactment of a law. Once the MoJ approves the content of a draft law, it goes to the legal affairs cabinet committee for review and once approved at the legal affairs cabinet committee, the draft law goes to the Office of the President and Cabinet, that in turn reviews it and ultimately submits it to the legal affairs committee of Parliament and once approved in that committee it goes to parliament for discussion and presentation for a vote. This too is a highly unpredictable process. The current draft land law for example passed MoJ scrutiny and should be before parliament for a vote. None of the respondents were willing to offer a prediction of when this law may come up for a vote.

D. *Appropriate dispute resolution process/judicial framework: The judicial system is perceived as fair and effective, and there is an appropriate system for dispute resolution where conflicts arise relating to food security policy.* Red

The judicial system is well-defined, and laws are clear. Most respondents noted that the most pressing issue regarding the judicial system is the time and money needed to take a case before the courts. Yet, Malawi is in need of laws and regulations pertaining to systems for warehouse receipts and contract farming. The land law is pending and will require significant attention from the judicial system once it is finally fully adopted.

E. *Clearly defined institutional responsibilities: Institutional responsibilities are clearly defined, consistently applied and predictable from year to year.* Green minus

Institutional responsibilities are better defined than three years ago because of greater involvement of the private sector and civil society in policy development and in implementation of ASWAp and the New Alliance Framework. Private sector organizations, civil society and government ministries routinely meet in the ASWAp Technical Working Groups, the Sector Working Groups and the Joint Sector Reviews. Further, organizations who participate in the TWGs signed commitment agreements within the New Alliance For Food Security and Nutrition.

New Alliance also commits the government and the private sector to certain actions. The government is required to put into place certain policies or laws, for example, New Alliance

committed the government to the development of the draft NAP, while certain private companies signed Letters of Intent which commit them to certain investments in the agricultural sector. The Ministry is also engaging in a core functional analysis, which is a requirement under the World Bank Trust Fund. This will further help to define responsibilities throughout the sector. With respect to donors, the Donor Committee on Agriculture and Food Security functions well. Except for China, all donors participate to coordinate a common position on investments in agriculture and food security.

The 2013 IAA focused on the tendency of the government to reorganize, which shifts certain responsibilities from one ministry to another. This was not a concern of the respondents during this assessment period.

POLICY ELEMENT 2: POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND COORDINATION

A. *Approved Food Security Strategy/Investment plan: There is an approved/official multi-sectoral, multi-year food security plan developed, which specifies priorities and objectives, and addresses the roles of various contributors, including across government, the private sector, and CSOs. The vision and strategy to improve food security is clear. Green*

ASWAp is a well-defined investment plan, and the New Alliance Framework is a document committing the government to certain policies and laws and the private sector to certain investments in agriculture. The draft NAP is also a clear statement of what the sector hopes to achieve in the next five years. The technical and sector working groups and reviews noted above and the commitments of various stakeholders through compacts have helped to define each group's responsibilities.

However, it is still worth mentioning that the Farm Inputs Subsidy Program (FISP) continues to crowd out other equally important food security sub strategies/investment plans, which tend to have long term and sustainable impact. The FISP with its weekly monitoring and coordination meetings continues to consume at least 50 percent² of both the human and financial resources from the Ministry of Agriculture Irrigation and Water Development budget. This high level of funding remains in spite of program changes which were implemented in the 2015/2016 FISP which increased the role of the private sector in fertilizer distribution.

B. *Predictable policy agenda and priorities developed: The policy items required to achieve the national food security strategy have been identified and documented, i.e., specific objectives exist. Yellow*

The draft NAP, ASWAp and New Alliance have clear objectives. Note that the NAP is not yet approved by the cabinet, though final approval should occur soon. Budgeting has also improved in the past year. The Ministry of Finance is phasing in program-based budgeting instead of output-based budgeting, which should provide greater flexibility and transparency to the budgeting process and it should facilitate budget monitoring. The FISP burden however continues to overshadow all

² Dorward, Andrew, et al. Evaluation of the 2012/2013 Farm Input Subsidy Programme, Malawi. Funded by DIFD for the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Development.

other policies and activities designed to achieve food security, and which undermines to some extent the usefulness of making other priorities.

The unpredictable export and import bans which were imposed on various agriculture commodities remain a risk because of the Control of Goods Act. MoAIWD and Ministry of Trade Industry and the Public Private Dialogue Forum meet regularly to update each other on important trade issues and discuss the potential need to use a policy instrument to maintain food security.

C. Work plans: There is an annual work plan that identifies objectives and activities in regard to policy development. Yellow

Work plans for all budgeted items are required by law. MoAIWD has workplans that are presented at Joint Sector Review Meetings, but are not well circulated. There is a need for realistic workplans linked to ASWAp.

D. Coordination process: There is an entity, such as a coordination unit or task force, that has defined membership and meets regularly to discuss, develop and coordinate food security policy development (and oversee cross sector coordination) Green

There are seven technical working groups to oversee the implementation of ASWAp: 1) Food Security and Risk Management; 2) Commercial Agriculture Agro-processing and value addition; 3) Sustainable Land and Water Management; 4) Technology Generation and Dissemination; 5) Institutional Strengthening and Capacity Building; Gender Empowerment, HIV prevention and AIDS impact mitigation; and 7) Monitoring and Evaluation. Government officials in relevant ministries participate as well as CSOs and the private sector. The technical working groups are co-chaired by a Director of the relevant government department and a member from civil society or the private sector. TWGs meet quarterly. They report to the Sector Working Groups.

The Sector Working Groups are co-chaired by the Principal Secretary and the current chair of the donors committee. There are a number of SWGs including agriculture, irrigation and water resources development, access to finance, social protection, nutrition, among others which review the work of the technical working groups. These higher level groups report to the Joint Sector Reviews, which meet biannually. The JSRs are co-chaired by the Minister of the relevant sector and the ambassador of the country that leads the donor committee.

The biannual joint sector review meetings focus on the budget in May and performance of the sector in October. The JSR also takes into consideration the budgetary contributions of CSOs, private sector and donors.

There are weekly meetings on implementation of FISP, which includes government, CSOs and the private sector.

Respondents noted that the participation of civil society organizations on the TWGs and SWGs is strong. Private sector participation is less robust, though improving. Inter-ministerial coordination remains weak, though it too is improving.

In addition to TWGs, SWGs, and JSR, there is an active donor coordination process commonly known as DCAFS (Donor Committee in Agriculture and Food Security). There are 16 members of DCAFS.

- E. Secretariat/Administrative Support Function: There is an adequate staff capability to perform required support processes, including coordination, meeting management, communication, and document management. This may be a stand-alone secretariat, or a responsibility within an existing entity. Green**

There is a stand-alone secretariat for the ASWAp Secretariat which has adequate staffing from Government and also an additional three staff members who have been recruited to offer services to the Secretariat. The ASWAp Secretariat is headed by a Coordinator who is a Civil Servant and reports to the Principal Secretary for the Ministry of Agriculture Irrigation and Water Development. In addition to the ASWAp Secretariat, there is also a Coordinator for the Multi- Donor Trust Fund (MDTF) who is a civil servant and has an assistant who was recruited from the private sector. The Secretariat responds to the needs of the TWGs, while the Multi-trust Fund coordinator is responsible for managing the MDTF. The Coordinator of the Multi- Donor Trust Fund reports to the World Bank which has the overall responsibility of managing the MDTF.

- F. Technical Capacity: There are work groups, or technical committees, that have the authority and capacity to perform the following functions: identify policy and technical challenges/issues, develop sector- or project-specific policies/strategies, consult within the sector and draft funding proposals. There should be active participation of private sector and CSOs on the technical working groups (as appropriate). Red**

As noted under policy indicator D. above, there are ASWAp technical working groups that meet quarterly with the active participation of CSOs and the private sector. Through this mechanism it should be possible for members to identify issues and challenges and discuss specific policies or proposals. Stakeholders from the Validation Workshop on June 2, 2016 determined that this policy indicator is Red and not Green, the original ranking from the Africa Lead Team. Their determination is based on the insufficient quality of the discussion within the TWGs and SWGs.

- G. G. Political Support and Approval: There is a line of authority/participation by high-level decision makers above the ministerial level so as to enable efficient political support for the passage and development of new policies, e.g., involvement of Vice President's office in the case of Malawi, (especially for policies that cut across sectors, e.g., trade and agriculture). Yellow**

While there has been significant improvement in the policy process in Malawi in the past three or four years, obtaining actual reforms in policies or laws from the cabinet or the parliament seldom occurs. Respondents noted that sector level stakeholders work well together to draft policies and laws at the sector level, but once those documents go to the Ministry of Justice or the cabinet they get “stuck”. The most serious challenge to policy reform in Malawi is the lack of action on behalf of decision makers (Members of Parliament), those who vote to permit implementation of a proposed reform. There is a clear need for continued engagement, coordination and capacity building of policy decision makers.

- H. Engagement of Parliament/Legislative Body: There is engagement from the country's legislative entity to consider, debate and engage on food security issues, and to sponsor and advocate for the required legal/policy changes. Yellow**

The private sector and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) routinely engage the Agriculture Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources, especially with reference to the annual budget. The most notable private sector institution to engage the Agriculture Committee is the Farmers

Union of Malawi, while Civil Society Agriculture Network (CISANET) engages the committee on behalf of CSOs. Other stakeholders in the sector also engage in policy discussions with the committee. CSOs and private sector participants are sometimes challenged by the need to pay for the opportunity to meet, as parliamentarians are paid only for the days they meet in parliament. To get around this constraint, one organization (FUM) defined the relationship between it and the parliamentary committee as “a partnership”, and that the purpose of the meeting was capacity building instead of lobbying. Parliamentary committees have no support structures to assist with the technical analyses or evidence to profitably engage in policy discussions. There is little evidence that the parliamentary committees engage in some of the most important issues facing the sector, especially FISP and ADMARC, except as these may be related to the annual budget. Instead those issues are examined in the press and donor reports.

POLICY ELEMENT 3: INCLUSIVITY AND STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION

- A. *Inclusive Participation with the Policy Coordination Management Entity: The main coordination entity has: 1) clear goals and participation from key government ministries (beyond just the Ministry of Agriculture); and b) some representation from non-government entities, particularly from donors. Green***

Government ministries other than Agriculture participate in the ASWAp Technical Working Group (TWGs), Sector Working Groups (SWGs), and the Joint Sector Reviews which are the structures used to foster inclusive participation. This participation is weak, as those attending are technical people and not decision makers. Donors are also well represented in these meetings.

- B. *Outreach and communications: There is a process for interacting with stakeholders and sharing information. This could be regular public forums, as website of key information and other mechanisms. Yellow***

The main process for interacting with stakeholders and sharing information is through the TWGs and the SWGs. Other than regular meetings, such organizations such as CISANET or IFPRI hold events to consider important policy issues and challenges. The Ministry’s website needs to be maintained, and it would be useful to link the work of relevant CSOs and private sector partners to the MoAID website.

- C. *Private Sector Participation – Opportunity/Space: The private sector is provided meaningful opportunity to participate in the policy formulation and strategy discussions. This could be through participation in the management/steering committee, in technical work groups and/or through other forums. Communications and interactions should be two-way, and access to key information should be readily available. Green minus***

As noted several times in this report, the private sector, especially through such organizations as the Farmers’ Union of Malawi (FUM), the National Smallholders Farmers Association of Malawi (NASFAM), the Malawi Confederation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (MCCCI), as well as trade associations routinely participate in policy development and implementation.

In addition to the TWGs and SWGs, the MCCCI hosts the Public Private Dialogue Forum (PPDF) which brings together a number of private sector companies and associations to discuss important policy issues (the World Bank bears the costs of these events) with a cross section of government agencies. The PPDF works closely with the Ministry of Industry and Trade. Most notably, the PPDF

takes credit for an initiative that resulted in a one-stop shop office within the Malawi Trade and Investment Center, an agency under the MOIT.

It is important to note that the private sector is not a homogeneous group of organizations. FUM and NASFAM represent small scale farmers and agricultural entrepreneurs, but small and medium scale private sector companies have a greater challenge to have their views known to the government than larger scale companies. The interests of the private sector are not always in sync also, and sometimes the smaller companies succeed in making their opinions known. For example, small scale seed producers have successfully blocked a provision in the draft seed law that would harmonize Malawi's seed law with SADC requirements, a provision that would benefit large seed producers.

D. Private Sector participation – Capacity to Participate: Some organizations representing the private sector have the capacity to participate in government-led discussions on food policy. This is to say they are able to represent their members, they are able to articulate and communicate policy positions, and they are able to provide some level of evidence-based analysis to support their viewpoints. Yellow plus

Through USAID funded MAPS, the Malawi Agriculture Policy Strengthening Project, private sector organizations have engaged in a capacity building program designed to lead to improved private sector participation in policy formulation and implementation in Malawi. This program has tangibly assisted the private sector to work with other stakeholders, most notably the government and parliament, to formulate, implement and monitor agriculture policy.

While there is improvement from a few years ago, the main weakness within the private sector remains its lack of in-house capability to conduct analysis capable of persuading policy makers on the need for change. Through MAPS and other programs, private sector organizations are able to hire consultants to conduct analyses. For example, the Seed Trade Association of Malawi worked with CISANET and FANRPAN (Food, Agriculture, and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network – CISANET is the FANRPAN node in Malawi) to review and develop the updated seed act, which is currently with the Ministry of Justice. In this process, the STAM also worked with its members and other stakeholders to draft a national seed policy as well as the seed act.

E. Participation of CSOs– Opportunity/Space: The CSO sector, including representation from women's associations and farmers associations is provided meaningful opportunity to participate in the policy formulation and strategy discussions. This could be through participation in the management/steering committee, in technical work groups and/or through other forums. Communications and interactions should be two-way, and access to key information should be readily available. Green

The development of the draft National Agriculture Policy used a highly participatory process. Stakeholders in the CSO sector as well as the women's association were included in process. Over 800 people were consulted, in nearly 60 focus groups. The Ministry even provided an email address so that the public at large could send its comments.

CSOs were at the forefront of this process, and in the development of other policies and laws in the agricultural sector. CISANET is one of the most important players in the CSO community as it is a network of civil society organizations working in the agriculture sector. Its membership is composed of both organizations and individuals with interest in the agriculture sector with most of them actually working in the agriculture sector. Other important civil society organizations which

participated in NAP include the Farmers Union of Malawi (FUM), Seed Traders Association of Malawi and Malawi Fertiliser Association.

- F. Participation of CSOs – Capacity to Participate: Some organizations representing civil society have the capacity to participate in government-led discussions on food policy. This is to say they are able to represent their members, they are able to articulate and communicate policy positions, and they are able to provide some level of evidence-based analysis to support their viewpoints. Green minus**

CSOs participate with good effect in government led discussions on agriculture policy. The organizations, with assistance from donors, are strengthening this capability. While they may not have extensive data collection efforts to provide evidence-based analysis, CSOs provide other useful information such as real-life stories. The civil society organization most active in this area is CISANET and FUM, among others. They participated in the formulation of National Agriculture Policy of 2015 which is now with the Cabinet awaiting approval. CISANET and FUM also participated in the Seed Policy review, FISP policy review and monitoring of FISP activities.

POLICY ELEMENT 4: EVIDENCE-BASED ANALYSIS

- A. Economic and financial analysis completed as a component of planning: National food security priority policy initiatives/investment plans are based on economic and financial analysis, including independent policy analysis. The analysis is available for public review. Yellow**

The study is not aware of any economic or financial analysis used as a foundation for the development of NAP or other important policy documents; if they exist that are not easily available for public review. The lack of financial and economic analyses is a particularly acute problem when government attempts to make investment priorities. Without good economic and financial analysis, decision makers cannot determine where scarce investment resources are best used. The exception to this problem is in the development of irrigation schemes. Recently, the EU funded the Rural Infrastructure Development Program (RIDP II) which conducted detailed feasibility studies for 11 irrigation schemes between 2013 and 2014. But these have yet to be married with land suitability studies that show where certain crops are likely to do well.

These types of analyses are required by law, but the Ministry often lacks the resources to do them without external financial and technical support.

- B. Performance monitoring measures and targets developed: The national food security policies/plans include specific objectives, performance targets, and targets exist to monitor the accomplishments of the objectives. Green**

The draft NAP, ASWAp and New Alliance Framework have well-defined monitoring and evaluation matrices. However, it should be noted that the M&E capacity in the Ministry is inadequate to conduct a monitoring and evaluation program to this level of detail. While this policy indicator warrants a green result, because the monitoring measures and targets are indeed developed, the fact that there is little monitoring at the field level means that the system is not useful to assist the Ministry to adjust or refocus its work and spending to achieve the stated policy objectives. Instead, the Ministry, with the assistance of JICA, reports in 28 high level indicators for the Joint Sector Review.

C and D. Quality data exist for policy monitoring and policy making. Yellow for production data, and Red for marketing data and Green for consumption and household data

Respondents reported the sources of data for agriculture in Malawi as follows:

- Agriculture Production Estimates Survey (APES) from the Ministry. This provides basic crop production data. While there is some concern that the quality of data collection is uneven, most respondents noted that the methodology is acceptable.
- Integrated Household Survey from the National Statistics Office, conducted every five years. These data are considered fairly high quality.
- FEWSNET from USAID. These data provide information on informal and formal trade with Malawi's neighbors.
- Malawi Vulnerability Assessment .
- Price data from the Ministry.

Data on Malawi's agriculture sector have improved over the years, though they remain not easily available. And while there is still some concern about the quality of some of these data, most analysts have fair confidence in the conclusions derived from using APES data. The Ministry and the NSO should however do more to improve the quality of data, and to ensure that it is publicly available. At present, analysts need to go to each agency to retrieve data for analysis as they are not in a central data base, despite having in place the SMP.

IFPRI together with the National Statics Office (NSO) and the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security (MoAFS) have been working together to strengthen agricultural statistics in Malawi. At the national level, the "Support to Agricultural Statistics in Malawi" program (AgStats) helped establish a functional Agricultural Statistics Forum (ASF) that brings together different stakeholders that generate national level agricultural statistics and helped develop a strategic master plan (SMP) for the agricultural statistics sub-sector in 2013. The objective of the SMP was to improve integration, coordination, harmonization, and implementation of agricultural statistics in Malawi. It was anticipated that it will facilitate improvements in the quality, standards, accuracy, reliability, timely release, and accessibility of agricultural statistics minimize the problem of duplication of efforts and improve investment planning. In fact very little or nothing has been done to implement the SMP.

Marketing data, that is data and information in the public domain on commodities flows, storage (both private sector and ADMARC) may exist with various stakeholders, but is not consolidated in a single place for analysts to access easily. These types of data could be accessible on the MOAIWD website, if it were upgraded and kept up to date. The lack of access to information and data on marketing (apart from the routine price data from the Ministry) seriously compromises the potential to develop and ultimately implement good marketing policy, especially in maize marketing.

E. Inclusion of analysis in the policy development process: Evidence-based analysis is considered and used to develop policy priorities and policy proposals. RED

The draft NAP was developed with existing knowledge and a review of literature, and without more current or robust data and information. The CGE model is used infrequently if at all to estimate the potential impact of a policy or regulatory change, though it is important to acknowledge that a CGE model is not an analytical tool that can or should be used frequently. Advisors within the MoAIWD

conduct rapid analyses and literature reviews on policy issues almost on a weekly basis. While this policy indicator is judged to be red, as it was in 2013, there has been some improvement in private sector and CSOs, specifically FUM and CISANET, that have created some capacity for data collection and evidence-based analysis. In addition, it should be highlighted that there is a considerable amount of good research from IFPRI among others that is presented in public fora and during private meetings but is not taken up by decision makers. Research from NAPAS and SEBAP influenced policy makers to alter implementation of FISP, and IFPRI's analysis of oilseed exports led to a review of the Control of Goods Act. In spite of these improvements, this is an area in the policy process that is seriously lacking.

F. Capacity to Monitor Policy Implementation and results: The government has the ability to review data on policy performance and produce an analysis of the policy's effectiveness. A policy analysis function/unit exists and has adequate and skilled staff, and is sufficiently funded. If required, specific analysis can be outsourced to specialized firms or consultants as needed. Yellow

Without donor support, the government has little capacity to monitor policy implementation. As mentioned above, the draft NAP, ASWAp and New Alliance Framework have monitoring and evaluation matrices that are comprehensive and detailed. But, there has been no attempt to track progress against the indicators, thereby depriving decision makers and managers of vital information to guide selection of priorities or allocation of resources.

The Joint Sector Review which is primarily a qualitative review of the process towards improving implementation of policy and investment plans, publishes an annual assessment in collaboration with the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD). This assessment strives to review the contributions of the government, private sector and CSOs to the ASWAp and New Alliance. The New Alliance implementation and in principle monitoring system is through the already existing ASWAp's TWGs, particularly the Commercial Agriculture TWG, the Sustainable Land and Water TWG, the Technology Generation TWG and the Food Security TWG. It also works through the TIP SWAp TWG of Access to Finance and Inputs. This approach ensures that the G8NA in Malawi is fully embedded in pre-established structures, to avoid creating a duplication of work.

In terms of quantitative M&E, the Ministry relies heavily on the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA). JICA has staff embedded in the Ministry of Agriculture, both Japanese and local, who collaborate with Ministry staff on development of an annual Monitoring and Evaluation Plan for ASWAp and Annual Joint Sector Performance Reports. The M&E Plans dispensed with the detailed lower level input and output indicators in favor of 28 high level outcome indicators. The plan gives a detailed definition of each indicator, data sources, and which department in government is responsible for producing original data.

The JICA assistance is scheduled to finish in October 2016, though it is possible that if the Ministry indeed produces a revised ASWAp Plan to support the draft NAP, JICA's work could be extended. None the less, the JICA team is concerned that MOAIWD staff, while qualified to carry out robust monitoring and evaluation, have insufficient time to carry out the needed work. It is not that the professionals in the Ministry are incapable; rather, there are insufficient human resources to accomplish this important function.

G. Annual Performance Measurement Report Produced and Reviewed: Evidence-based analysis is produced to review policy effectiveness (for implemented policies). A formal review session

is held, and includes key development partners (including principal donors and multilateral partners, such as FAO and IFPRI). Recommendations are developed as a result of the review and incorporated into subsequent plans. Yellow

As noted in the previous policy indicator, the Joint Sector Review produces an annual report on the effectiveness of ASWAp implementation and provides recommendations for improvement. The results in the reports are discussed at the JSR meeting, which includes development partners. The report is publically available on the NEPAD website.

In conjunction with the Joint Sector Review Assessment, and as also discussed previously, the Ministry produces with the help of JICA, an annual joint sector performance report on 28 high level indicators.

There is also an annual review of FISP and several evaluations of the FISP program. The annual reviews track the procurement and distribution of the inputs, but informs very little on the actual outcome and impact of the program. Several FISP evaluations which have been done so far dating back to as far as 2010 point to the fact that there have been increased maize and legume production which for example in the 2013 FISP evaluation resulted in a benefit cost ratio (BCR) 2.0 taking account of only direct impacts, and at 2.2 if wider indirect impacts (wages, lower maize prices) are also included. It is important to note that BCRs related to FISP (and the use of BCRs generally) are highly debated measures of performance. Further, with rising maize prices due to other factors such as devaluation of the Kwacha and also poor rainfall, the benefits of FISP tend to be affected negatively.

H. Independent Analysis Capacity Exists: There exists an independent capacity to analyze food security data and use the analysis to make policy recommendations and engage in policy discussion and advocacy. Such an analysis could be conducted by a research institute, university or similar non-governmental/objective organization. This organization should be engaged in the government's policy development and review process as, for example, through papers, forum, and participation in official policy review and discussion meetings. Yellow

There are numerous organizations in Malawi that have various levels of independent analysis capability. CISANET has a policy unit, and hopes to hire two Master's degree policy analysts in the near future. FUM and NASFAM also have a modest amount of capability.

FUM and NAFSAM's websites do not list any publications on the results of their policy work. CISANET has one recent policy article on maize marketing and ADMARC, the result of research it conducted in cooperation with Oxfam. It also has a policy brief on the livestock and dairy markets. CISANET, FUM and NASFAM participate in workshops and conference to provide results of their work, and they are frequent contributors to media reports.

The Center for Agriculture and Rural Development, a research institute affiliated with the Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources, is an independent research institute. It has no independent website to provide public access to its research results.

Workshops, conferences and other public fora are a common feature in Malawi. It is not clear to what extent they have an effect on policy development and implementation.

IFPRI currently provides the most independent research in Malawi. SEBAP provides high quality research output, and it supports LUANAR MSc students to publish in its Working Paper series.

POLICY ELEMENT 5: POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

- A. Implementation plans developed: The overall food security strategy has been broken down into programs and projects that have: a) a sufficient level of detail to permit implementation; b) have been packaged into priority projects that can be managed by ministerial units; and 3) “packaged” priorities can be translated into funding proposals to gain support for projects/programs from development partners (to address financing gaps)**
Green

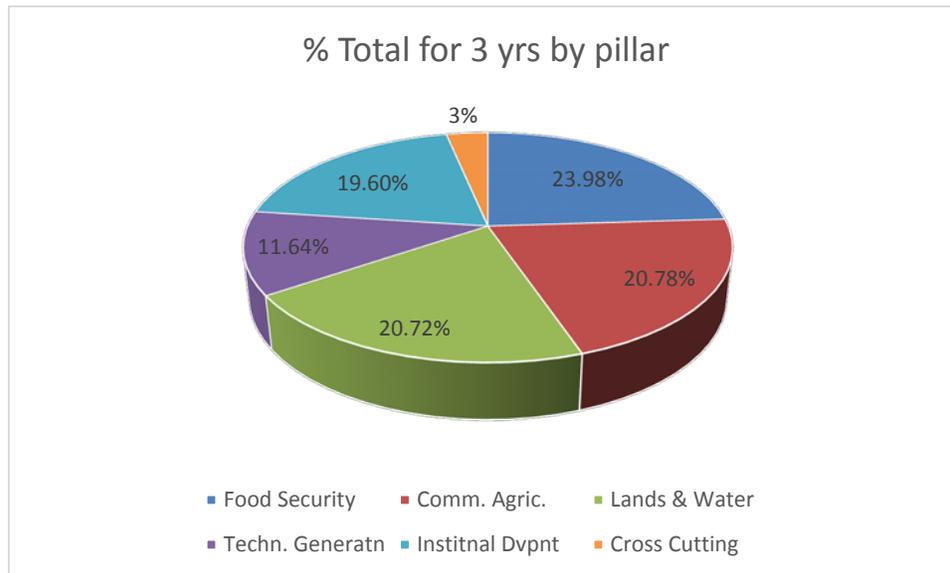
While the overall food security strategy is not in place, Malawi has the draft National Agriculture Policy pending before the cabinet. From the draft NAP, Malawi still needs to develop strategies for its various components. Previously, the ASWAP functioned as the most important policy document. At present, the Ministry is reviewing and revising ASWAP to make it more of an investors’ roadmap in support of NAP implementation.

In spite the draft NAP, ASWAP, New Alliance Framework and the lack of subsector strategies, the Government together with Development Partners (DP) has well defined food security programs and projects. A total of 720.9 million USD has been spent, budgeted, or projected for projects and programs in 2014/15, 2015/2016, and 2016/2017. These projects and programs were guided by ASWAP as follows:

- Food security: \$172.9 million
- Land and water development: \$149.4 million
- Technology generation: \$83.9 million
- Institutional development: \$141.3 million
- Cross cutting issues: \$23.7 million

Figure 2: Below presents the same in percentage form.

Donor Partner Projects per ASWAp Pillar in million USD



With respect to food security alone, projects focus on maize sufficiency, and diversification and risk management. The table below shows the resources provided by DPs for projects in these areas. These food security programs and projects have a sufficient level of detail to permit implementation and have been packaged into projects to gain support from donors. (refer to appendix 1 for details of projects by various DP).

Other projects which have been funded within the ASWAP framework are:

- Commercial agriculture projects support agriculture exports, agro processing and market development.
- Lands and water projects support sustainable land management, irrigation and water management.
- Technology generation projects support market research and farmer-led extension.
- Institutional development projects support agriculture exports, and improvements to public management systems.
- Cross cutting issues of gender and HIV and AIDS.

TABLE 1: FOOD SECURITY PROJECT FUNDING BY DEVELOPMENT PARTNER BY ASWAP FOCUS AREA AND YEAR IN MILLION USD

	DP	Total DP ASWAP Funding	Total DP Food Security Funding	Expenditure 2014/2016			Budget 2014/2016			Projection 2016/2017		
				Maize Sufficient	Diversification	Risk mgt	Maize Sufficient	Diversification	Risk Management	Maize Sufficient	Diversification	Risk mgt
1	WB	287.5	15.61	7.11	0.00	1.79	1.56	0.00	1.79	1.56	0.00	1.79
2	IFAD	66.6	1.93	0.00	0.64	0.00	0.00	0.64	0.00	0.00	0.64	0.00
3	DFID	139.0	2.94	2.31	0.42	0.21	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
4	USAID	154.9	30.76	1.52	8.08	1.59	1.52	8.08	1.59	1.52	5.49	1.37
5	EUD	187.6	12.27	2.66	0.48	2.04	2.66	0.48	0.56	2.66	0.48	0.24
6	AfDB	66.4	1.20	0.00	0.00	0.60	0.00	0.00	0.60	0.00	0.00	0.00
7	IRISH AID	44.2	19.33	1.84	4.94	0.17	1.84	4.94	0.17	1.84	3.43	0.17
8	RNE	111.2	64.96	2.91	18.43	0.67	2.91	18.43	0.67	2.91	17.37	0.67
9	Flanders	29.8	3.32	0.88	0.38	0.27	1.12	0.17	0.22	0.14	0.00	0.14
10	JICA	24.8	5.56	0.00	0.00	2.62	0.00	0.00	2.94	0.00	0.00	0.00
11	FAO	5.0	1.50	0.08	0.26	0.60	0.05	0.18	0.32	0.00	0.01	0.00
12	WFP	14.9	10.83	0.00	2.39	1.29	0.00	2.39	1.29	0.00	2.39	1.08
13	Brazil	0.0	0.00									
14	UNDP	0.0	0.00									
15	UN Women	1.0	0.45	0.00	0.23	0.23	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
16	Germany	19.1	2.20	0.00	0.06	0.00	0.35	0.86	0.00	0.35	0.59	0.00
16	Totals	1151.9	172.9	19.30	36.29	12.09	12.01	36.18	10.17	10.98	30.40	5.46
				67.68			58.35			46.83		

ASWAp also includes a budget for each component, and it identifies the source of funding – either the Malawi government or donors. In many cases, the ASWAp also indicates if there is a forecasted shortfall in funding by component. The details provided in the ASWAp document are easily turned into project proposals. In addition the New Alliance Framework contains commitments of government action and Letters of Intention from some large private sector companies on their plans to invest in agriculture.

B. System in place to analyze implementation capacity gaps: An analysis of institutional, workforce, system and financial constraints is conducted. Critical implementation constraints are identified; a work plan is developed to address constraints; and implementation actions are moved forward (and periodically reviewed) *Yellow*

The vacancy rate in the Ministry is high. At present, the Ministry is recruiting for 457 field staff, which could alleviate the capacity constraint at the front line field extension staff level. For example, as mentioned above, there is little capacity in the Ministry to conduct monitoring of sector performance, let alone monitoring of individual actions in support of the components of the ASWAp. One common complaint is that all economists in the Ministry are part of the “common service” and thus not employees of the Ministry, which implies that they may move to another government position in any Ministry at any time.

The Ministry is currently conducting a “core function” analysis to rationalize its human resource base. It is too early to tell if this analysis will bring positive change to the Ministry’s work force.

The Ministry is one of the first ministries to participate in program-based budgeting. It is expected to improve the alignment between GoM spending and the revised ASWAp. In addition, the budget is based on the funds actually available to the Ministry rather than the amount needed. Donor contributions are also explicitly acknowledged during the budgeting process.

C. Food security policy priorities aligned with work plans in line ministries. The priority policy and associated objectives of the national food security strategy are broken down into specific programs and projects (with a sufficient level of detail) so that policy actions can be implemented by line ministries. The plans of individual ministries, and units within ministries, align with overall national strategy and its policy objectives. *Green*

Respondents reported that the Ministry develops aligned work plans of the Ministry annually and these are reflected in the Government Budget. One key Ministry whose policies and strategies are aligned with the MoAIW is the Ministry of Trade and Industry. This Ministry identified agricultural diversification and improved agro-processing as important elements of its National Export Strategy.

D. Policy implementation budget committed by the host country: Resources are committed to the host country to implement the identified policy agenda. Over time, the country’s budget is adjusted to provide adequate financing for the implementation of actions required to implement policy priorities. Budget documents, including budget proposals, are released fully in a timely manner. *Yellow*

Malawi meets the CAADP target of investing 10 percent of its budget to agriculture, but allocations are uneven across policy priorities. The main priority is FISP, and at least 50 percent of the agriculture budget is allocated to this program. The recent trend is to reduce the level of spending on FISP by asking farmers to contribute more to the costs of the inputs. This is an adjustment to FISP that FUM and other organizations have advocated for in the past couple of years, as they understand

that the burden of FISP denies sufficient funding for some of the other priorities in the sector. If this trend continues it will be a positive development for the sector's implementation of ASWAp.

The national budget is a public document that stakeholders have access to. FUM, CISANET and others with the help of development partners' funding undertake a budget analysis. The results are packaged and presented to the agriculture parliamentary committee in a way that becomes easier for Parliamentarians to understand the agriculture budget and work with civil society to advocate for certain priorities. The priorities are based on extensive consultations with farmers and other stakeholders in the districts. This is indeed a positive trend that could result in a more rational budget that better balances the various priorities in the sector.

E. Supplemental Implementation Funds Secured: Proposals can be submitted, and funds secured, to address financing gaps. Funds may come from multilateral funds (such as GAFSP), regional organizations, bilateral donors and the private sector. Green

There are 16 donors that assist in the financing of agriculture projects and programs in Malawi, this does not include the World Bank and other multi-lateral funding agencies. A number of private sector companies committed funds as part of the New Alliance Framework through Letters of Intent. Please refer back to Policy Indicator 1 under this Policy Element to see the breakdown of funds supplied by each donor and in which project or program area.

F. Monitoring and evaluation: Capacity exists within the public sector, private sector, or civil society to review the effectiveness and impact of policy changes. Sector reviews are performed and other research evidence is collected. There is a system to share, store, and access the findings of these reviews. Yellow

There is a series of reviews to monitor the progress of implementation of ASWAp. As discussed previously, the Technical Working Groups rely on stakeholders in government, private sector and civil society to assess progress in 7 technical areas. The results of the TWGs feed into the Sector Working Group's monitoring, which in turn feeds into the Joint Sector Review of the entire program. The output of these reviews is shared, and the Joint Sector Review assessments are easily accessed.

POLICY ELEMENT 6: MUTUAL ACCOUNTABILITY

A. A forum exists for Regularly Scheduled Donor-Government Meetings: These meetings discuss policy and programs and set priorities. Meetings may include, for example, Joint Sector Reviews sector working groups or other similar arrangements. Green minus

Joint Sector Reviews occur semi-annually, while sector working groups and technical working groups meet more frequently. In addition, DCAFS meets with the Principal Secretary for the MoAIWD monthly.

B. Joint policy priorities developed: A document exists that articulates the shared policy objectives between the government and the donor community. Green

The ASWAp, New Alliance framework, NAP among other documents articulate common objectives for the sector.

- C. Monitoring system exists: Performance measures exist (for the commitments of the government and for the performance commitments of donors). There is a schedule for reviewing and documenting progress – at least on an annual basis. Green**

Reviewing and document progress is through the Joint Sector Reviews, which are co-chaired by the Minister and the Ambassador of the lead country of donor committee.

- D. Donor coordination – Alignment and harmonization: There is a process for donor participation in the food security policy process for aligning government and donor objectives and priorities. Donor programs should contribute directly to host country strategies, plans, and objectives. This may include the signing of cooperation frameworks that indicate a joint commitment to specific policy change goals. Yellow**

USAID funds the Donor Committee for Agriculture and Food Security (DCAFS) to consolidate common positions on agriculture policy and field programs. The DCAFS coordinates with 16 donor agencies, and only China does not participate. The DCAFS coordinator also participates in all TWG meetings in order to monitor progress from the point of view of the donor community. None the less, despite the coordination meetings, there remains fragmentation in the sector.

- E. Private Sector Accountability: The government provides feedback to the private sector on the performance of the food security program (including the private sector's role) and provides an opportunity for dialogue on the program and its performance. Yellow**

In the past three or four years the relationship between the private sector and the government has improved, but mistrust in both directions remains. FUM, a private sector organization that represents the interests of farmers and farming groups (for example, cooperatives) throughout the country is highly engaged in policy discussions. The Seed Trade Association of Malawi worked with the government on the development of the Seed Policy and Seed Act, in cooperation with CISANET.

In the New Alliance Framework, a number of private companies signed Letters of Intention which commit them to investments in agricultural projects important to development of the sector. The private sector participates in the TWGs.

In spite of this improvement, some respondents noted that private sector participation is uneven, and could be improved, and progress against New Alliance benchmarks has been slow at best.

- F. CSO Sector Accountability: The government provides feedback to the CSO sector on the performance of the food security program (including the role of CSOs) and provides an opportunity for dialogue on the program and its performance. Red**

The CSO sector is highly engaged with the government on policy formulation and implementation. CSOs participate in TWGs, SWGs and the Joint Sector reviews, and much of this participation is through CISANET, which represents a number of local NGOs in its network. And yet, stakeholders recommended that CSOs coordinate their planning and implementation so that their investments can fit into the government accountability system.

TABLE 2: WB PROJECTS ALIGNED TO ASWAP

No	Programme/ Project Name	Total Budget (US\$ Million)	Project Period (Year start and year End)	Disbursement last year (N-1) USD million	Disbursement to date (USD million)	Implementing Partner	Maize Sufficient	Diversification	Risk mgt
1	IRLAD	102.7	2006-2015	9.245	107.790	PIU -MoAFS	49.9	0	0
2	ASWAp-SP	30.0	2012-2015		24.000	Government (MoAFS)			
3	Shire River Basin Management Project	125.0	2012-2018		70.300	Government (MoIWD)	9.375		10.75
4	Agricultural Productivity Program for Southern Africa (APPSA)	29.8	2013-2019	4.620	4.620	Government (MoAFS)			
4	Total	287.5		13.865	206.710		59.2872	0	10.75
							70.0372		

CHAPTER 2: INFLUENCE OF CURRENT USAID POLICY PROGRAM IN MALAWI AND COMMENTS ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE 2013 IAA

INFLUENCE OF USAID MISSION INVESTMENTS ON IMPROVEMENTS IN IAA POLICY ELEMENTS:

USAID has four important vehicles for influencing the institutional architecture for agriculture and food security policy in Malawi. Those four funding vehicles are:

- Donor Committee on Agriculture and Food Security (DCAFS)
- Supporting Evidence-Based Agriculture Policy (SEBAP)
- New Alliance Policy Acceleration Support: Malawi (NAPAS)
- Malawi Agriculture Policy Strengthening Project (MAPS)

DONOR COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SECURITY

DCAFS plays an important role in the institutional architecture of agriculture policy in Malawi harmonization of investment into the agriculture sector. It also provides an excellent platform for sharing knowledge and coalition building. It ensures a common position amongst the 16 donors that participate on policy issues. All donors with the exception of China participate in the committee through monthly meetings, a number of thematic meetings and in various policy dialogues and fora through the DCAFS Coordinator. The DCAFS coordinator participates in technical working groups and follows closely the calendar of events in the agricultural sector. The coordinator has good knowledge of the important policy matters. Important policy issues which have dominated DCAFS meetings recently include FISP, and the seed and Land bills. Donor harmonization is an important indicator of mutual accountability. This program achieves that goal.

SUPPORTING EVIDENCE-BASED AGRICULTURE POLICY (SEBAP)

The purpose of SEBAP is “to promote evidence-based decision-making through the strengthening of policy research capacities in the MoAIWD, generate policy relevant research outputs, and enhance the impact of research outputs in decision-making through effective policy communication in support of ASWAp implementation.” The project has published a large number of policy notes on maize marketing, soya, exports of groundnuts, agricultural extension, among other topics. It also

sponsors workshops and conferences on topics relevant to agriculture and food security policy. SEBAP has a small team of economists who have office space separate from the Ministry.

The effect of SEBAP on policy decision making is mixed, in some cases it has failed to influence policy but in other cases it has been successful. It is clear that the work of SEBAP is well-received by some stakeholders in the policy analysis arena while in other cases the results are not well received. SEBAP's work contributed to the development of the draft NAP and most assuredly is used in the revision of ASWAp. However, there is little evidence that the policy analyses generated by the project nor the policy notes and position papers influence decision makers in Malawi.

SEBAP has conducted a considerable amount of work on the maize market and the market behavior of ADMARC. This is a very sensitive topic in Malawi, and after a large event to discuss maize marketing issues, the Ministry cautioned SEBAP about continuing to work on this topic. In the case of soya exports, DFID requested that SEBAP conduct a study on the institutions and processes involved with exporting soya. The work was well received; the results were posted on the Ministry of Industry and Trade website and decision-makers in that Ministry are considering levies to regulate exports of soya instead of outright export bans. This is evidence of influence on decision makers in that Ministry, but it is important to note that in fact there is no decision regarding levies vis-à-vis export bans.

SEBAP's research agenda is independent of the Ministry's priorities. Priorities are set through consultation with USAID as well as the project team's own assessment of issues critical to agriculture policy, and as in the case of the soya exports research, other donors or stakeholders may request support on a given topic. The lack of close connection between SEBAP and the government reduces the level of influence it can or should have. Malawian stakeholders appreciate the quality of research but do not take ownership of the results, and IFPRI itself publishes all its policy papers with the IFPRI logo with no attempt to create "local ownership" of the presentations. The Principal Secretary of the Ministry acknowledged frustration with IFPRI for its presentation of research results on Malawi policy topics in international or regional conferences without clearing the results with the Ministry. The resentment towards SEBAP outputs, fair or not, is real, and it diminishes the effectiveness of the program. SEBAP output serves as an important input into the advocacy efforts of other stakeholders, a notable achievement.

NEW ALLIANCE POLICY ACCELERATION SUPPORT: MALAWI

The New Alliance Policy Acceleration Support Project (NAPAS) has dual objectives: 1) "to improve the agriculture investment climate in Malawi"; and 2) "to enable increased commercialization of Malawi's agricultural sector." Implemented by Michigan State University and IFPRI, this program is designed to support the Ministry to implement its commitments contained in the New Alliance Framework.

NAPAS gave significant and highly appreciated support to the Ministry for the development of the draft NAP. One could argue that the NAPAS support led to a document richer in detail than it would have been without its support. NAPAS supported not only the drafting of the document, but also it assisted with implementation of the participatory process that led to inclusion of private sector and civil society concerns.

In addition to the draft NAP, NAPAS is also working on a number of other policy documents and draft laws. For example, it will be also assisting with the drafting of the Contract Farming Strategy,

Agricultural Extension Strategy, Farm Input Regulatory Strategy, among others, many of which are commitments in the New Alliance Cooperation Framework. NAPAS also has a training program in policy communications, much of which focuses on journalists. It also conducts capacity building activities for officials in the Ministry.

NAPAS occupies two offices in the Department of Planning within the MoAIWD. NAPAS professionals work side by side with their Ministry counterparts, a fact that increases their effectiveness. They have daily contact with the Head of the Planning Department. There is no obvious MSU/IFPRI logo to differentiate NAPAS from the rest of the Ministry.

Officials in the Ministry were universal in their admiration and comfort in working with the NAPAS team. They affirmed that the relationship is productive. They do not view, as some view SEBAP, as an external or foreign organization that criticizes the actions of the Ministry and Malawi. Rather, it is viewed as an internal group that has an agenda consistent with the needs of the Ministry.

There is one downside with the excellent relationship between NAPAS and the Ministry in that sometimes the Head of the Department of Planning treats NAPAS professionals as consultants over which he has supervisory power. He asks them to help with issues not pertinent to their work plan. It is not clear to what extent this causes time-management problems for the NAPAS team. But it is a clear indicator of the comfort level that even those in high positions have with NAPAS.

MALAWI AGRICULTURE POLICY SUPPORT PROJECT (MAPS)

MAPS is designed “to strengthen the capacity of Non-State Actors (NSAs) in the agriculture sector, including farmers and the private sector to engage effectively in policy dialogue.” The Implementing Partner to USAID is the Farmers Union of Malawi (FUM) with the Malawi Confederation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (MCCI) as a sub-grantee.

FUM is an active participant in policy analysis and implementation in Malawi. It has a large network of District Farmers Unions and Cooperatives throughout the country. Through constant interaction with these groups as well as the government-sponsored District Stakeholder Panels, FUM sets policy priorities to present to the government.

One of the main activities of MAPS is to provide capacity building and training to the Parliamentary Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources on the government budget. FUM identified the lack of understanding of the government budget by the Parliamentary committee on Food Security and Natural Resources as a constraint to making progress in the agriculture sector. MAPS performs the role of budget analyst for Members of Parliament Committee which builds their capacity to provide relevant input during budget discussions in Parliament.

In addition to the work on the government budget, MAPS trained parliamentarians in regulatory impact analysis. It also participated fully in the development of NAP, the draft Seed Law (for which it engaged lawyers to assist), the contract farming strategy, and it monitors implementation of FISP. It is an active member of TWGs.

Final Comment on USAID Policy Influence and the Demand for Policy Work: MAPS, DFACS, NAPAS and to a lesser extent SEBAP have accomplished their objectives of strengthening evidence based policy analysis and coordination. These four interventions have been instrumental in influencing a critical group of stakeholders in civil society and the private sector to understand the need for evidenced based analysis and thereby **demand** it as an important input in their work. What

was striking to the Africa Lead Team is the consistency with which stakeholders spoke about the need for evidence, information and data in order to promote good analysis and eventually policy change. While civil society, the private sector and donors still struggle to realize actual policy change commitments from the highest levels of government, the presence of a critical mass of high profile stakeholders armed with good policy analysis and evidence is a necessary precondition for change to occur.

The demand for policy analysis work within government is more difficult to assess. The professionals in the MoAIWD and the Ministry of Industry and Trade showed a keenness to have more and better evidence to improve policy analysis. The Department of Planning in the MoAIWD was proud of the quality of the draft NAP, for example, and they took pleasure in explaining the participatory process used to achieve that accomplishment. That would not have happened without USAID's intervention in SEBAP, NAPAS and MAPS. The improvements in M&E that result from JICA's intervention are also significant, though there is some doubt that this work will be sustained without additional JICA input.

But what is missing from this equation is clear evidence of demand from the actual decision makers in the country. While MAPS in coordination with other CSOs work with the parliamentary committee on the budget and budget priorities, beyond these interactions there seems to be little demand for policy analysis or evidence required to address the major issues facing the sector. The seed law, land law and the draft NAP are far from getting approval from relevant decision makers, in spite of advocacy from CSOs and the private sector. It is highly unfortunate that despite SEBAP's first class research on ADMARC's troublesome presence in agricultural marketing and numerous negative media reports on ADMARC, the GOM ignores the problem, and in fact informs SEBAP to shy away from the topic.

There is general reluctance by decision makers in government to face the major policy issues and address them to improve the lives of Malawians. USAID is the main development partner which has invested in the agriculture policy area, and other development partners such as the EU are focusing more on implementation of field based projects which can improve incomes and lives of farmers and their families. In a meeting with Africa Lead, the EU representative indicated a unwillingness to invest in more policy work until there is greater policy movement at higher levels. JICA's intervention in policy is likely to remain in the area of M&E. Thus the main source of technical assistance to policy work in Malawi in the future will be from USAID.

COMMENTS ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE 2013 IAA

POLICY ELEMENT I: THE GUIDING POLICY FRAMEWORK

Recommendations from the 2013 IAA:

1. Provide support for the use of the sampling frame of the Integrated Household Survey III to categorize farms and conduct an assessment of how households receiving FISP coupons use/dispose of them and what the effects of their use or disposition have in terms of household incomes, productivity, and resiliency.

IAA 2016 response: FUM has recently begun to evaluate the effects of FISP on incomes and productivity, especially in light of recent changes in the implementation of FISP in selected districts. However, FUM, no other organization uses the IHS III sampling frame to assess FISP.

2. DCAFS purpose is to deepen dialogue, coordination, and cooperation among development partners and between these partners and the Government in respect to Agriculture and Food Security, with a view to strengthening the quality of partnership and effectively supporting the ASWAP, CAADP, and relative agricultural development strategies. It is driven by consensus among members, who represent a wide range of national and international interests. It would seem appropriate for a consensus-driven process for DCAFS members to use a common base of quality evidence provided by its main beneficiary, the Malawian government. We strongly urge consideration by DCAFS of support of pilot programs with the Parliament, the OPC, and the MoAFS to provide agricultural economists/economists as staff to the Agriculture and Natural Resource Committee in Parliament and the Department of Planning in the Ministry of Agriculture to provide evidence-based analysis of legislative and regulatory concepts, proposed legislation, and implementing regulations for currently pending legislation, e.g. the Land Act, the Seed Act, and the Dairy and Milk Products Act.

IAA 2016 Response: FUM and CISANET work with the Agriculture and Natural Resource Committee in Parliament on discussions of the budget and advocacy of certain policies. The Department of Planning with the support of NAPAS used evidence and literature reviews in the development of the draft National Agriculture Policy. DCAFS, however, did not set up a pilot program to promote the use of evidence for policy analysis and policy development.

3. Develop and support programs with the Parliament and MoAFS to make existing laws (including proclamations, regulations, directives) more readily available to the public on-line and in print, starting with agriculture and food security-related laws. Support town-hall meetings combined with call-in programs on radio during comment periods that should extend for 30 days after a law has been tabled for Ministerial review and a second 30 days after it is submitted to Parliament and the Agriculture and Natural Resource Committee.

LAA 2016 Response: The development of the draft National Agriculture Policy was highly inclusive. The Department of Planning included the public at large, CSOs and private companies while developing the document. The Department of Planning provided the public with an email address so that ordinary citizens could comment on the document as it was being developed. However, there was no opportunity for public comment after completion and delivery to the Cabinet. The same is true for laws that are pending with the Parliament or with the Ministry of Justice. Once the document reaches Parliament, there is little or no public comment.

4. Provide technical support to Parliament and the OPC to develop and operate a pilot web-based legislation tracking system that tracks the passage of legislation through its steps from MoAFS to the OPC to Parliament, and make this available to the public online.

LAA 2016 Response: Not done.

5. Following the 2014 elections, advocate for a renewed Core Function Analysis of the ministries involved in coordinating and executing the ASWAP following a review of the elected government's willingness to consider greater rule-based policy on the definition of public administrative, technical, and regulatory space and private sector space in the agricultural economy of Malawi.

LAA 2016 Response: The Ministry of Agriculture is conducting a Core Function Analysis. This is needed for the World Bank Trust Fund.

POLICY ELEMENT 2: POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND COORDINATION

Recommendations from the 2013 IAA:

1. Because the OPC and MoAFS policy results in a national resource allocation to MoAFS's budget that is 80% FISP and 20% other, focus on policy development and coordination to get best use of the FISP resources. Complementation strategies around diversification that align with the National Export Strategy focus on grain legumes and oilseeds require better integration and coordination of policy among the OPC, MoAFS, and MoIT. OPC may be the only location where functional interministerial coordination can occur; however, OPC and Ministries involved in ASWAP need comparable policy development capacities if policies are to be balanced among competing interests, so donor support should consider setting support targets accordingly among MoAFS, MoIWD, MoIT, and MLGRD and the OPC. Additional capacity at these levels will be needed to absorb the policy development and coordination (resource mobilization) requirements of podium directives so that medium term policy priorities are not neglected.

2016 LAA response: There is inter-ministerial coordination, but it is not as a result of OPC intervention. Inter-ministerial cooperation occurs through the TWGs and the SWGs. Diversification is an important objective as it relates to risk management, and it is a strategic goal of the Ministry of Industry and Trade. But in terms of this recommendation, while there is improvement in coordination, it is not because of activities suggested.

2. Support the cluster aggregation by OPC of programs/projects and accounting for expenditure on agriculture that accounts for agricultural and food security investment throughout Malawi ministries. Assess the expenditures against the MGDS and sectoral SWAPs to identify which ones are primarily recurrent income transfers, which are recurrent expenditure on productivity

enhancing activities, and which are investments. This should permit better assessment of the policy coordination landscape.

The budgeting system is using the OPC cluster aggregation which is a program aligned to ASWAP pillars. The system encompasses all ministries accounts on agricultural and food security investment within the government framework. It is able to track recurrent and development expenditures. The system is aimed at improving the alignment between GoM spending and the agriculture sector investment plan and is able to trace the expenditures against the MDGs.

3. Advocate for a budget that adds at least one staff member to each Parliamentary Committee, and strengthen the capacity of the Parliamentary Committees to undertake research on draft policies either directly or using recommendation.⁴

2016 LAA response: This was not done.

4. Consider providing competitive grant funding on key policy issues to promote third-party analysis by broadly representative groups such as FUM, CISANET, MCCCCI, SACOM, MEJN, ECAMA; sectoral groups such as GTAP, DIDP, SOYAMA; and academic institutions. USAID/Malawi, for example, has recently provided a grant to the Farmers' Union of Malawi (FUM) to strengthen non-state actor participation in Malawi's agricultural policy dialogue.

2016 LAA response: The grant, known as Malawi Agricultural Policy Strengthening, to FUM was well spent. The LAA team is not aware of other similar grants to organizations. CISANET also works on policy issues, though not through a specific grant from USAID. Other donors however have provided funding used for policy analysis and advocacy.

POLICY ELEMENT 3: INCLUSIVITY AND STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION

Recommendations from the IAA 2013:

1. Work through existing projects to advocate for public release via the internet of the agenda and minutes of ASWAp TWG meetings.

2016 LAA response: The agenda and minutes of the TWG meetings are not released publicly. Only participants receive these documents.

2. Provide support for networking and public-private dialogue forums and fund joint leadership training events that can continue to build information exchange between public, private and civil society sectors.

2016 LAA response: USAID, through its funded projects, and other donors routinely host events such as public-private dialogue forums that provide the opportunity to exchange information among civil society, the private sector and government. These fora have been useful in reinforcing and encouraging the continued participation of civil society and the private sector in policy dialogue and advocacy.

3. Continue capacity building support, particularly training in policy analysis and outreach to civil society organizations in order to strengthen their ability to engage government. Consider support to the development of standards and curriculum for macro- and micro- policy analysis for the

economics and agricultural economics faculties of the University of Malawi, the Malawi Institute of Management, and private universities.

2016 LAA response: USAID and other donors continue to work with civil society, government and the private sector to augment their ability to advocate for change. But, there has been no work to develop curriculum for policy analysis at the universities or the MIM.

POLICY ELEMENT 4: EVIDENCE-BASED ANALYSIS

Recommendations

1. Advocate and support the public release of the three MoAFS maize crop production forecasts, preferably at the district level, but at least at the level of the three regions.

2016 LAA response: This was not done. Crop production estimates have continued to be released at national level only despite the availability of the data at Agricultural Development Division, district, and Agriculture Extension Planning Area.

2. Advocate and support the public release of the MoAFS cost of production estimates not later than May 1 of each year, with budgets aligned with the key producing districts for each crop, and at least at the level of the 3 regions for maize.

2016 LAA response: This was not done.

3. Should the government decide that minimum prices must be established, advocate and support the development of a transparent methodology for the establishment of minimum prices and a commitment from government to announce these prices at least two months before the main planting seasons and to maintain those minimum prices through the conclusion of the marketing year.

2016 LAA response: Government intervention in agricultural marketing, through ADMARC, is one of the most serious constraints to agriculture development. Government behavior is erratic and raises the risks of both agricultural production and marketing.

Government annually releases minimum agriculture prices in advance of the marketing season and the prices are maintained throughout the year. It is yet to start releasing the minimum prices before the main planting season. The methodology for calculating the minimum prices is not transparent; it is not publically available. Ministry officials are able to explain how the prices are set if asked.

4. Resample the IHS III households for information on seasonal consumption (rather than the expenditure proxy) of the main staple foods at least twice annually.

2016 LAA response: This was not done.

5. Support measures to improve public availability of key agriculture statistics, including a high-level dialogue focusing on the quality and consistency of publically generated data.

2016 LAA response: There has been discussion amongst civil society, government, donors (including FAO and USAID) about the quality of statistics. This has led to review of the methodology particularly for agriculture production estimates data (APES) which was done under the leadership of FAO. The new system introduced use of satellite imagery. However the review found out that the difference was not statistically significant. The new system also comes with a heavy cost. Currently the APES is still being done using the old system.

POLICY ELEMENT 5: POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

1. Fund analysis through CISANET, in the very short-term, meaning not later than June 2013, to support the restructuring or halting of application and enforcement of the announced and subsequent market regulatory measures that threaten to disrupt the market in the 2012-2013 season and increase investment and financial risks for the 2013-2014 production and marketing year.

2016 LAA response: This was not done.

2. Support medium-term (three months) analysis of cost of production and minimum floor prices through agricultural civil society (e.g. CISANET) and farmer organizations (FUM, NASFAM) and trade associations (GTPA, MCCCCI) to attempt to re-instate confidence in the predictability and fairness of production and marketing regulation. One example would be to support advocacy to the OPC, MoAFS, and MOIT to commit to a schedule for the pre-planting season publication of cost of production methodology and data, the calculation elements and announcement of minimum prices before the planting season (if the government cannot be convinced to abandon the minimum price policy) with territorial adjustments, and procedures to ensure that market regulatory changes are announced with sufficient lead time for market participants to meet new requirements before the beginning of the marketing season in 2014.

2016 LAA response: This was not done.

3. Support the development of fast-track economic impact analysis capacity among civil society, farmer organizations, and trade associations.

2016 LAA response: FUM, through MAPS, has trained members of the Parliamentary Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources in regulatory impact analysis. Cost-benefit analysis also is used from time to time to analyze regulations and policy. It is however not as wide-spread enough to be considered routine.

POLICY ELEMENT 6: MUTUAL ACCOUNTABILITY

1. Continue to support private sector and CSO forums in which policy discussions are held.

2016 LAA response: Private sector and CSO fora to discuss policy occur frequently.

2. Provide training and coaching to the strongest private sector and CSO associations to help them structure private-public dialogue forums focusing on clearly presented evidence to support policy positions.

2016 LAA response: Private sector and CSOs are cognizant of the need for evidence based policy development and advocacy. USAID and other donors have succeeded at raising the level of awareness of the need for good information and data to support their analysis. The demand for good information and data is rising in Malawi, and while the country has a long way to go before we can say that there is enough evidence to support good policy reform, demand is a first requirement for government or other agencies to improve its data collection and management.

3. Support improvement in the reporting standards of the economics and business press, the development of curriculum in business and economics reporting in schools that offer journalism courses, and cost share with trade associations on a 50:50 basis publications that meet

internationally accepted economics and business reporting standards of evidence and fairness in representing opposing views.

2016 LAA response: NAPAS conducts training of journalists to improve their reporting on policy and economics. There has not been any work with journalism courses and cost sharing of publications on economics and business.

4. Support cost-shared development of agricultural and food policy forums on radio, which has the broadest reach to the Malawian population.

2016 LAA response: This has not been done.

CHAPTER 3: DISCUSSION OF ORGANIZATIONS THAT COULD BE FUNDED AS A THINK TANK IN MALAWI

Why are think tanks important? The Think Tank Initiative, a Canadian IRDC program to support the development of think tanks in developing countries, defines think tanks as: “An organisation that generates policy-oriented research in social sciences with the aim of enabling public policy actors to make informed decisions”.³ Knowledge is a potent force in policy debates, especially when a country is open to change, and with potential change, may face the need to choose between competing social and political interests. Think tanks can play the important role of arbiter, even referee if they are able to craft analyses and conclusions that guide a decision maker to choices that promote the common interest. Of course, in reality some think tanks produce work that is not immune from partisan agendas. Yet, in the market place of ideas and information think tanks play an increasingly important role in political, economic and social discourse. Civil society, government and private sector organizations and individuals use analyses and conclusions generated by think tanks to propose solutions to policy and regulatory problems and issues. They are an essential element in reform processes.

James McGann of the University of Pennsylvania notes in the *2015 Global Go To Think Tank Index Report* of the Think Tanks and Civil Societies Program (TTCSP) that there are many types of think tanks.

TYPES OF THINK TANKS:

Autonomous and independent	Significant independence from any one interest group or donor and autonomous in its operation and funding from government.
Quasi-independent	Autonomous from government but controlled by an interest group, donor, or contracting agency that provides a majority of the funding and has significant influence over operations of the think tank.
Government affiliated	A part of the formal structure of government
Quasi- governmental	Funded exclusively by government grants and contracts but not a part of the formal structure of government.
University affiliated	A policy research center at a university.
Political party affiliated	Formally affiliated with a political party.
Corporate (for profit)	A for-profit public policy research organization, affiliated with a corporation or merely operating on a for-profit basis.

³ Partnership for African Social & Governance Research, Nairobi, Kenya. Think tank-University Relations in Sub-Saharan Africa, A synthesis report on 10 country studies. February, 2015.

As of December 2015, there were 6,846 think tanks worldwide, with 615, or about 9 percent in Sub-Saharan Africa. Of those 615, Malawi is said to have 15 think tanks, though a list of names is not available (the only organization that Africa Lead found as a self-described think tank is the Center for Environmental Policy and Advocacy). The top think tank in Sub-Saharan Africa in 2015 is the Kenya Institute for Public Policy Research and Analysis (KIPPRA). The Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network (FANRPAN) of South Africa was ranked as the 13th top African think tank. Out of 91 top think tanks in Africa, none was Malawian.

There are African think tanks that can serve as examples for a Malawi institution to perform the knowledge creation and policy analysis functions in a developing country. Below are brief descriptions of five think tanks; how they are funded; and their strategic goals and objectives. Some are listed as top think tanks in Africa, while others are known for their work in agriculture and food security. They are:

- Kenyan Institute for Public Policy Research and Analysis (KIPPRA)
- Tegemeo; an institute associated with Egerton University in Kenya
- REPOA in Tanzania
- Indaba Agriculture Policy Research Institute in Zambia (IAPRI)
- African Center for Economic Transformation (Ghana)

KENYAN INSTITUTE FOR PUBLIC POLICY RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS (KIPPRA)

The Kenyan Institute for Public Policy Research and Analysis (KIPPRA) was established in 1997 and began its work in 1999. The Kenya Institute for Public Policy Analysis Bill of 2013⁴ (which replaced an identically named bill of 2006) lays out in detail the administration of KIPPRA, including composition of the board, powers and functions of the institute, KIPPRA's various committees, the qualifications of the executive director and the establishment of KIPPRA's Policy Advisory Group. There is also a discussion of the institute's funds.

In spite of its establishment as an act of parliament, KIPPRA is an “autonomous public institute” with a mission to: “provide quality public policy advice to the Government of Kenya and other stakeholders by conducting objective research and through capacity building in order to contribute to the achievement of national development goals.”

KIPPRA conducts research in seven programmatic areas: 1) macroeconomics; 2) productive sector; 3) social sector; 4) infrastructure and economic services; 5) private sector development; 6) trade and foreign policy; and 7) governance. Agriculture is a thematic area under productive sector, along with tourism, environment and natural resources, medium and small enterprises, and regional and international trade. The productive sector program at KIPPRA has five full time analysts.

KIPPRA collaborates with a number of Kenya organizations, including Tegemeo Institute of Agricultural Policy, and the University of Nairobi, in addition to such public institutions as the Kenyan Revenue Authority and the Central Bank of Kenya. In terms of international collaboration,

⁴ The bill can be found in its entirety at: <http://www.kippira.or.ke/downloads/KIPPRA%20Bill%202013.pdf>.

KIPPRA maintains links with the IMF, World Bank, organizations in Europe, but noticeably missing is collaboration with USAID or other US organizations.

KIPPRA identifies three funding sources: 1) the Government of Kenya; 2) the Think Tank Initiative (TTI)⁵; and 3) the African Capacity Building Foundation. There is no information on the level of funding from TTI (except that it could be as much as 30 percent of its operating budget) or the Government of Kenya. But there is good information on the level of funding from the African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF). From initiation of activities in 1999, ACBF provided KIPPRA with three successive grants. From 1999 until 2002, ACBF provided USD 1.63 million; from 2003 until 2009 USD 1.7 million, and finally from 2010 until 2015, ACBF provided a grant of USD 2.0 million for a total of USD 5.3 million over 16 years.

TEGEMEO INSTITUTE OF AGRICULTURE POLICY ANALYSIS AND DEVELOPMENT (KENYA)

Tegemeo Institute of Agricultural Policy Analysis and Development is under the Division of Research and Extension of Egerton University, the oldest institute of higher learning in Kenya. It was established in 2013. Tegemeo conducts research and analysis in agriculture, natural resources and the environment, and rural development. It has several thematic areas:

- Monitoring (tracking) trends and patterns in rural livelihoods – to assess levels of change from policy reforms, especially related to productivity, household income and food security and nutrition.
- Policy research – to provide feedback on government interventions in the agricultural sector.
- Outreach and advocacy – to inform stakeholders in both the private and public sectors of potential investment opportunities.
- Capacity building – short and long term training to build capacity of stakeholders in the agricultural sector, especially as it relates to statistical analysis and data collection and management.

Tegemeo has a large number of staff, six of which are PhDs in agricultural economics, and two of those are from Michigan State University. The institute also sponsors workshops and conferences on various topics and breakfast forums.

Tegemeo has a large number of partners including USAID, Gates Foundation, the Ford Foundation, IDRC, DANIDA, Rockefeller Foundation, DfID, and the Kenya Ministry of Agriculture, among others. It is not clear how funds from any of the partners except USAID are used. The Gates Foundation provided two grants – USD 1.49 million in 2015, and USD 1.74 in 2013. It appears that the main source of funding is USAID through the TAPRA II Project. TAPRA (Tegemeo Agricultural Policy Research and Analysis) and TAPRA II have supported Tegemeo for the past 20 years or more. With this project, implemented through MSU, USAID supports the four

⁵ Since 2008, the Think Tank Initiative is a multi-donor program, managed by the International Development Research Centre (Canada), to support the establishment of think tanks in developing countries. Currently, TTI supports 43 think tanks in 20 countries, one of which is KIPPRA. It will provide up to 30 percent of a given think tank's operating budget with the goal of providing such institutions the space to attract talent and develop research programs. The purpose of TTI is to provide the foundation for institutions for sustained ability to influence policy and debate. The program ends in 2019.

thematic areas noted above. Tegemeo also implements the Integrated Seed Sector Development Project in coordination with Wageningen University.

From its website presentation, it is not clear what funding source supports core funding or project funding. One can reasonably assume that Gates, Ford, and DANIDA and perhaps Rockefeller funds are core. Addition funding may be less vital to Tegemeo given that it is a unit of Egerton University.

REPOA (TANZANIA)

REPOA, originally Research on Poverty Alleviation in Dar Es Salaam in Tanzania, is ranked as the 18th top think tank in Africa, and the top think tank in Tanzania, according to the *2015 Global Go To Think Tank Index Report*. REPOA started in 1994 as a Dutch funded research project, which, at the end of the Dutch funding, transformed itself into think tank.

REPOA undertakes three types of research studies: 1) strategic research studies that are important to REPOA as a think tank; 2) collaborative research studies which as the name suggests are conducted in collaboration with researchers from other institutions in Tanzania, in the region or globally; and 3) commissioned studies. According to the REPOA website commissioned studies are “commissioned to REPOA by other stakeholders in order to build the evidence base to inform and influence national policies and to demonstrate the importance of research to national development process.”

The institution has a five year strategic plan, 2015 to 2019 which identified three strategic research areas:⁶ 1) Natural Resources including agricultural land, forestry, wildlife, oil and gas; 2) Industrialization, enterprise development, and employment as the foundation for economic growth including SME development; and 3) Governance and social protection. REPOA also designs and implements training courses in these areas.

REPOA has a Board of Directors and a Technical Advisory Committee composed of 10 finance and economics professionals. It has a permanent staff of about 20. Of particular note in the area of agriculture is that REPOA is the AGRA Policy Hub in Tanzania.

REPOA's five year strategic plan provides of detailed exposition of the institutes funding. It divides funding sources into core basket funding and funding acquired through specific projects and commissioned work. Core basket funding is expected to be around 43 percent of total funding for the final four years of the five-year plan (2016 -2019), and the balance from other sources. The total budget required for the four years is USD 18.5. REPOA will receive about USD 1.0 million from TTI over the next three years for its core basket of funding, and the Embassy of Sweden and DfID expect to support REPOA in 2016 with about USD 500,000 each for core funding. The institute expects to receive commission and collaborative work from a number of donors including the Norwegian Embassy, Danish Embassy, IDRC/UNICEF, and Gates Foundation for a total of about USD 2.0 million. The institute also expects to work with Irish Aid and the Government of Switzerland.

⁶ The REPOA five year strategic plan, 2015-2019, can be found at: http://www.repoa.or.tz/images/uploads/2015-2019_STRATEGIC_PLAN.pdf.

INDABA AGRICULTURAL POLICY RESEARCH INSTITUTE – IAPRI (ZAMBIA)

IAPRI evolved into a think tank from the USAID supported Food Security Research Project, implemented by Michigan State University in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock, and the Agricultural Consultative Forum. The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) began supporting FSRP in 2007. In 2011, IAPRI was incorporated as a private company limited by guarantee. IAPRI has an 11 member Board of Directors; the chairman is the Dean of the School of Agriculture at University of Zambia. Members are from academia, and both the private and public sectors. An MSU professor is also a member of the board.

IAPRI has five main research themes: 1) marketing and trade; 2) public policy spending which includes analysis of spending on the agricultural sector; 3) productivity and poverty reduction; 4) agriculture, food and nutrition; and 5) natural resources and climate change. Each of these research themes has a number of sub-themes.

Similar to Tegemeo in Kenya, Michigan State University remains closely involved with IAPRI through the FSRP III. MSU staff are resident at IAPRI. FSRP III is jointly funded by USAID and SIDA/Sweden. These two agencies are the main source of funding for IAPRI. The USAID total is USD 5.0 million and the SIDA total is about USD 5.9 million from 2012 to 2017. The Board of Directors approved a financing plan to diversify its funding base, with a view towards sustainable operations after the USAID and SIDA funding expire. IAPRI hopes to garner resources from other bilateral as well as multi-lateral sources to achieve a good balance of both restricted and unrestricted funds.

AFRICAN CENTER FOR ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION (ACET)

The African Center for Economic Transformation, located in Accra, Ghana, was founded in 2008 by Dr. K.Y. Amoako, a highly distinguished economist whose career included positions in the World Bank, United Nations, and the International Monetary Fund. The mission of ACET is “to help government and business deliver economic transformation that improves lives”. ACET is rated 24th in the list of the top think tanks in Africa.

ACET works in five “pillars”: 1) economic strategies and management for transformation; 2) making economic growth inclusive; 3) leveraging extractives for transformation; 4) modernizing agriculture and light manufacturing; and 5) boosting trade facilitation and regional integration. The center has a large staff divided into senior team, analysis and advisory team, and strategic and operations team.

The Center works in a large number of African countries, though its base is in Ghana. It also has an office on K Street in Washington, DC.

ACET has a diversified funding base. The main funders are the governments of Netherlands and Norway, Gates Foundation, Hewlett Foundation, the Open Society Foundation, MasterCard Foundation, JICA, USAID, Rockefeller Foundation, the World Bank, and DfID. In addition, ACET receives funding from individual African countries that support its work those countries. It is not clear to what extent the funders provide core funding or specific project funding. Likely the funds from Norway and Netherlands form a portion of core funding. The Hewlett Foundation provided a USD 1.8 million grant in 2015, while the Gates Foundation provided three grants, one each in 2012, 2014 and 2015 totaling USD 3.95 million.

IMPORTANT DIFFERENCES IN FUNDING SOURCES

The main difference among the five think tanks discussed above is the sources of funding. The three listed as top think tanks in Africa all have sources of core funding that is unrestricted, funding that can be used to develop the strategic initiatives of the think tank. KIPPRA and REPOA both have funding from the African Capacity Building Foundation or the IDRC Think Tank Initiative, or both. ACET in Ghana has significant funding from Western European governments, plus Gates Foundation and Hewlett. Tegemeo has a different model. It receives core funding from Gates and perhaps others, yet the work of the institution is tied very closely to a USAID project, TAPRA II. IAPRI's funding is not diversified. It receives its funds from two sources, USAID through the FSRP II, and SIDA. IAPRI's Board has approved a program to diversify IAPRI's funding sources.

A cursory look at a few more of the top think tanks in Africa shows that success relies on diversified funding, plus core or unrestricted funding that provides for a cushion upon which the institute can become more competitive in the knowledge and information marketplace. The Governments of the Nordic Countries, plus Gates and Hewlett often provide funds for core funding. The African Capacity Building Foundation and the Think Tank Initiative have also provided crucial core funding for some of the finest think tanks in Africa.

Think Tank	Rank in Africa	Main sources of funding
IMANI Center for Policy and Education (Ghana)	2	Open Society Initiative for West Africa, Atlas Network, World Bank, IMF, UNDP.
Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa	3	African Capacity Building Foundation, SIDA, Government of Denmark, Government of the Netherlands, NORAD, Ford Foundation.
Makerere Institute for Social Research (Uganda)	37	Think Tank Initiative, Ford, USAID targeted for Capacity Building and Training of Junior Researchers.
Initiative for Public Policy Analysis	32	Private sector, foundations, no government funding and no project supported funding.
Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network	13	Project related funding in addition to funding from participating governments, including a number from USAID. Not clear about core funding.
Organization for Social Science Research in Eastern and Southern Africa	27	SIDA, NORAD, DANIDA, Netherlands, Addis Ababa University.

Should USAID proceed with a plan to fund a think tank in Malawi, the Africa Lead Team suggests that it consider building a consortium of funders, to provide for both core and project-type funding. The Tegemeo model has both core and project related funding, even though Tegemeo's work seems to be closely aligned with the USAID-funded TAPRA II Project and the seed project implemented with Wageningen University.

Potential Malawi Think Tanks

To assess the potential of individual organizations in Malawi to become a serious think tank that produces independent research in economic growth and rural development, the African Lead Team evaluated six existing Malawian institutions against a selected set of criteria developed by Dr. James McGann of the University of Pennsylvania. The organizations that we evaluated are:

- Center for Agriculture Research and Development at Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources (CARD)

- Civil Society Agriculture Network (CISANET)
- Farmers Union of Malawi (FUM)
- Economics Association of Malawi (ECAMA)
- National Smallholders Association of Malawi (NASFAM)
- Center for Environmental Policy and Advocacy (CEPA)

The criteria used to judge the potential for each of these to be supported as a think tank are:

- Non-profit and non-governmental organization in policy research or advocacy
- Legally registered in the country of operation
- Director has proven record as manager, policy research and advocacy professional and builder of networks and coalitions
- Transparency in governance structure
- Transparency in financial operations and records
- Demonstrate strong institutional background, financial viability, and effective grant management
- Capacity and willingness to adhere to goals, objectives, and guidelines of the funders
- Ability to identify and select policy research projects with high impact
- Ability to conduct and communicate research that is rigorous and relevant
- Ability to conduct independent and quality research
- Demonstrate programmatic relevance
- Ability to network with domestic and regional organizations

Our summary of each of the organizations and its potential to become a think tank follows.

Center for Agriculture Research and Development: CARD was first established with USAID funding in the late 1990s. The purpose of that support was to more or less establish the Center as a think tank in the agricultural sector to provide the GOM with high caliber research to support transformation of the sector. CARD has a new a director, after a long period of time without a leader. It does not have its own website, and the website of the University does not make any reference to CARD. It is not registered as an entity on its own right but is part of Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources (LUANAR). The university does not allow it to function as an independent organization with its own objectives and goals. The politics of CARD vis-à-vis the university is well-documented by MSU, IFPRI and University of Pretoria and makes the risk of funding CARD too high to bear.

In a recent conversation with Africa Lead, the Vice-Chancellor and the new director indicated that the relationship between CARD and the university would not change. What might change could be the incentive structure within CARD so that university faculty would be more willing to work as CARD staff on consultancies or commissioned work, instead of as independent consultant. While

alteration of the incentive structure is positive, the relationship with the university, constrains the ability of CARD to act independently. It is thus not a good choice for think tank funding.

Civil Society Agriculture Network: CISANET is an active and highly engaged organization in the area of agriculture policy analysis. It has multiple programs advocating for reform to assist farmers and agribusinesses develop and prosper. It is well connected with the current government, though it is not tentative about taking positions that might be contrary to government policy but are important for stakeholders in the sector. It is trying to build its research capacity. On paper, CISANET looks like a very good candidate for funding as a think tank. Yet, the Africa Lead Team is aware that the reputation of CISANET is changing and its independence is becoming questionable. This in our view disqualifies CISANET from funding as a think tank.

Farmers Union of Malawi: FUM, like CISANET, is active in the agricultural policy space in Malawi. FUM presents itself as a private sector organization. With its 1.0 million members registered in district farmers unions all over the country, it is a high profile and respected organization that does good work. It currently leads the USAID-funded MAPS program, which supports the improvement of policy analysis and advocacy. It is especially helpful in the area of budget analysis and informing parliament of the priorities of farmers throughout the country. It is a candidate for think tank funding. It is Africa Lead's number two candidate.

Economics Association of Malawi: ECAMA is registered as an organization in Malawi, but in fact is a club of economists. While it has a Director, Mr. Henry Kachje, who is a business development services consultant, it has no budget nor does it conduct research in agriculture policy. It does not have a website. Most recently ECAMA has been in the Malawi press because its director called the president a liar. This among other weaknesses disqualifies it from obtaining funding to be a think tank.

National Smallholders Association of Malawi: NASFAM was created under a USAID project in the 1990s. It works with thousands of district level clubs and action groups to extend new technologies and techniques in agricultural production. It also cooperates with such organizations as CISANET and FUM in the agricultural policy space. NASFAM also has a commercial branch. NASFAM's finances and operations are insufficiently transparent to be considered as receiving think tank funding.

Center for Environmental Policy and Advocacy: CEPA already describes itself as a think tank. Indeed, it has the structure and funding base not too dissimilar to the think tanks in the University of Pennsylvania list of top regional think tanks. Currently, CEPA's research is more heavily focused on environment and natural resources, but it also conducts research in such areas as GMOs, biodiversity and farmers rights. Africa Lead contends that this organization could, with good funding and capacity building play a more important and leading role in agricultural and food security policy. The key question is would CEPA be willing to broaden its research focus to include such issues as agricultural marketing, agriculture production, and agricultural finance. The executive director for CEPA recently noted that the organization has an interest in agriculture beyond issues in land and water use, and that it has an interest in working on agricultural policy more broadly. This is Africa Lead's number one candidate for funding as a think tank.

NEXT STEPS

The first step in establishing a new think tank or funding an existing organization to function as an organization to function as a think tank is for more careful study on the demand for policy analysis in Malawi, and that current set of organizations that fulfill that demand. This assessment looked at but a handful of organizations that might be considered as candidates to be a think tank in Malawi. There may be others.

The Africa Lead Team is clear that there is a high level of demand for evidence-policy analysis in Malawi. All stakeholders who contributed to this assessment discussed the need for analysis. They also advocated for an organization to consolidate knowledge and information for the needs of analysts. Currently, as noted several times previously in this report, some CSOs, including CISANET and FUM both consume analyses for their work in policy advocacy, and they produce a modest amount of analytical work within their organizations. CEPA does a more extensive amount of analysis, and is in the process of creating an impressive body of work in the area of environment and natural resources management. IFPRI currently plays the lead role in providing evidence-based analysis, and most other organizations look to IFPRI (both through SEBAP and NAPAS) to help with the most important policy issues in Malawi.

Following a more detailed assessment of the potential organizations, USAID, perhaps in coordination with other donor partners, will need to write a terms of reference to define the parameters for a think tank and the requirements to receive funding. As noted in this chapter, Africa Lead suggests that the think tank should have a broad base of funding, with sufficient unrestricted funding to provide the organization time and space to build its analytical capability and its credibility in the market place for ideas. DCAFS would be an ideal entity to coordinate the donor community generally to meet this objective.

Criteria for potential grant:	Potential Think Tank: CARD
Non-profit and non-governmental organization in policy research or advocacy	CARD is a research organization attached to LUANAR.
Legally registered in the country of operation	Yes
Director has proven record as manager, policy research and advocacy professional and builder of networks and coalitions	No. There a new director at CARD, after a vacancy of many years, and the Centre answers to University management.
Transparency in governance structure	No.
Transparency in financial operations and records	No information to assess this criterion.
Demonstrate strong institutional background, financial viability, and effective grant management	The Centre is hobbled by its relationship with the University. LUANAR management is reluctant to permit CARD to operate as an independent research facility as intended from the original USAID funding.
Capacity and willingness to adhere to goals, objectives, and guidelines of the funders	No. The original objectives of CARD were, according to Chisavo: "To strengthen Malawi's policy research capacity and increase the contribution of research to policy formation, USAID provided support to establish, within Bunda College's framework of a Centre for Agricultural Research and Development (CARD), a credible agricultural and environment and natural resource policy research unit responsive to the needs of Malawi. USAID envisioned the research Unit as a "facility for cooperative research, consultancy, and outreach/training, in which the University of Malawi, Government and other cooperating parties and participants would be co-explorers in search of innovative policies and strategies geared towards the promotion and transformation of agriculture and rural development in Malawi". Because of interference from University Management, these objectives have been compromised. CARD acts like a consulting firm at best, without adherence to the original mission of the donor. Further, of the five members of CARD, only one is a policy analyst, and the others are agricultural scientists.
Ability to identify and select policy research projects with high impact	Not able to assess. CARD has no independent website, thus it is impossible to determine which topics and issues it finds important and relevant.
Ability to conduct and communicate research that is rigorous and relevant	<p>There are four researchers associated with CARD and only one is capable of conducting research in policy analysis. The Africa Lead Team was able to locate the Center's website only by searching on the name of the one of the researchers, which led to this website:</p> <p>https://www.researchgate.net/institution/Lilongwe_University_of_Agriculture_and_Natural_Resources/department/Centre_for_Agricultural_Research_and_Development/members.</p> <p>There is no direct link on the LUANAR website. Publications are listed under the analyst's name, and not as a product of CARD. There is no listing of current or past research projects, and no publications or reports from the research staff.</p>
Ability to conduct independent and quality research	CARD staff have the ability to conduct independent and quality research, but the institutional arrangements are not conducive to good and effective results.
Demonstrate programmatic relevance	CARD is not a relevant stakeholder in the policy analysis arena of

	Malawi. While its staff may participate in conferences and other types of policy events, it does not contribute to policy debate or dialogue in a meaningful way.
Ability to network with domestic and regional organizations	As an institution, CARD is not able to participate in domestic or regional networks. Individuals attached to CARD can forge their own networks, but CARD as an institution is not part of these networks.

Criteria for potential grant:	Potential Think Tank: CISANET
Non-profit and non-governmental organization in policy research or advocacy	Yes. CISANET is a non-governmental organization with the following mission: "To Promote agricultural development and sustainable livelihoods for the poor by influencing desired change in policies, practices and attitudes of Government, Donors, Civil Society and Private Sector through effective advocacy and networking."
Legally registered in the country of operation	Yes
Director has proven record as manager, policy research and advocacy professional and builder of networks and coalitions	Yes. The head of CISANET, Mr. Tamani Nkhono-Mvula is well known in agriculture policy circles. He has carefully cultivated networks both locally and regionally to support policy analysis and advocacy work. As a full time director of CISANET, he represents the organization in television, radio and print media, on the most pressing issues facing agriculture in Malawi. He is
Transparency in governance structure	Not enough information is available on the CISANET site to determine its governance structure.
Transparency in financial operations and records	Not enough information to assess.
Demonstrate strong institutional background, financial viability, and effective grant management	CISANET has implemented and currently implements numerous grants and subcontracts for a wide array of donor groups.
Capacity and willingness to adhere to goals, objectives, and guidelines of the funders	The CISANET website does not list all the donors/partners. Yet, its goals and objectives are consistent with the overriding concerns of donors and funders in Malawi. It is committed to agricultural development, with policy analysis and networking as its top priorities.
Ability to identify and select policy research projects with high impact	CISANET works in climate smart agriculture, the situation regarding maize marketing and ADMARC, electricity shortages and its effect on agricultural productivity, among other important topics. It brings these topics to the attention of news media, and there are a number of papers, research reports and conference proceedings available on its website.
Ability to conduct and communicate research that is rigorous and relevant	It is not clear how rigorous CISANET's research is, though it should be noted that it has a good reputation amongst policy analysts in Malawi for doing good work. It communicates research findings through its quarterly newsletters and occasional other publications. It also advocates positions clearly through the news media. CISANET is a respected voice in Malawi agriculture and policy circles.
Ability to conduct independent and quality research	Mr. Tamani Nkhono-Mvula noted in an interview in April that CISANET intends to hire two Master's level policy analysts in the near future. This will improve the ability of CISANET to conduct research. The quality presently is considered good.
Demonstrate programmatic relevance	The topics which CISANET works on are highly relevant to agricultural development in Malawi. It is especially noteworthy that CISANET has
Ability to network with domestic and regional organizations	Yes. CISANET networks with the most important CSOs and private sector organizations in Malawi. It partners with USAID, other bi-lateral donors and such international NGOs as Oxfam. It is the node for FANRPAN, the Food, Agriculture, and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network in Malawi.

Criteria for potential grant:	Potential Think Tank: Farmers Union of Malawi
Non-profit and non-governmental organization in policy research or advocacy	<p>FUM is a non-governmental organization with multiple objectives. Its overall objectives are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To promote the development of strong farmers' representation in Malawi. ● To support strengthening of member organizations capacity to deliver adequate service to their members. ● To advance and protect the common interest of farmers locally, regionally and internationally. <p>One of its strategic areas is Policy Analysis and Advocacy, with the objective of strengthening farmers to advocate for an environment that will enable the sector to develop profitably.</p>
Legally registered in the country of operation	Yes.
Director has proven record as manager, policy research and advocacy professional and builder of networks and coalitions	Yes. Mr. Prince Kapondamgaga is well known in agriculture policy circles. He has guided the organization to partner with the most important CSOs and private sector organizations as well as the donor community.
Transparency in governance structure	Yes. The structure of the organization is clear. There is a General Assembly, and FUM Council with representatives of all the district level Farmers Unions, a FUM Board of Directors of the Council, a FUM Council of Trustees, and a FUM Secretariat. Recently, FUM has focused setting up cooperatives as a business structure.
Transparency in financial operations and records	Too little information to make an informed conclusion.
Demonstrate strong institutional background, financial viability, and effective grant management	FUM has a long history in the agricultural sector in Malawi. It has implemented grants from numerous donors, and it has its own funding base from its members.
Capacity and willingness to adhere to goals, objectives, and guidelines of the funders	The objectives of donors are consistent with the FUM objectives. FUM's work on MAPS adheres to the goals and objectives of USAID, and it has generated significant positive contributions to improving the policy environment especially with respect to capacity building of parliamentarians on the budget and presenting budget priorities to the parliamentary committee. FUM also contributes to funneling the opinions and ideas of stakeholders in the districts to the policy debates and discussions in the capital.
Ability to identify and select policy research projects with high impact	FUM does not really conduct research, except in support of its advocacy work, and its advocacy work indeed focuses on the most pressing issues related to agricultural development. It has conducted surveys on FISP, and it has a program of capacity building of parliamentarians related to the government budget. It has supported efforts in development of the seed law and land law.
Ability to conduct and communicate research that is rigorous and relevant	FUM is a partner with donors and international NGOs working in agriculture. Its ability to conduct rigorous and relevant research is limited, but it uses the research results of others to visibly advocate for certain positions which are designed to assist its constituency groups, the district FUMs and individual farmer members of FUM. Its website does not list any policy briefs or research papers.
Ability to conduct independent and quality research	FUM is not set up to conduct independent policy analysis, but it plays a very important niche role in capacity building in the budget process, and it will conduct discrete and small studies on important topics, such as implementation of FISP.
Demonstrate programmatic relevance	FUM is a highly relevant and active contributor in the agricultural policy analysis area in Malawi.
Ability to network with domestic and regional organizations	FUM is able to participate in the key domestic and regional networks supporting agriculture policy analysis.

Criteria for potential grant:	Potential Think Tank: Economics Association of Malawi (ECAMA)
Non-profit and non-governmental organization in policy research or advocacy	ECAMA is a registered organization in Malawi.
Legally registered in the country of operation	Yes.
Director has proven record as manager, policy research and advocacy professional and builder of networks and coalitions	The director of ECAMA is Henry Kachaje. He is the managing director of Business Consult Africa, a consulting firm that provides business development services to private sector companies in southern Africa. He appears to be a part time director of ECAMA.
Transparency in governance structure	There appears to be no structure to this organization, beyond the director.
Transparency in financial operations and records	Not enough information to assess.
Demonstrate strong institutional background, financial viability, and effective grant management	No, There is no evidence that this organization any active programs. The ECAMA website is not operational; it has a Facebook page that provides information on its mission: "To act as a voice of the economics profession through membership focused services and evidence based development policy advice that benefits the profession, its practitioners, government and national stakeholders." The last entry in the ECAMA FB page is October 2015.
Capacity and willingness to adhere to goals, objectives, and guidelines of the funders	There is no information on its funding sources.
Ability to identify and select policy research projects with high impact	No research findings are available.
Ability to conduct and communicate research that is rigorous and relevant	Henry Kachaje is sometimes interviewed in local media criticizing the President of Malawi or commenting on government policy.
Ability to conduct independent and quality research	There is no evidence that ECAMA supports independent research.
Demonstrate programmatic relevance	No evidence that ECAMA is a relevant organization in policy circles in Malawi.
Ability to network with domestic and regional organizations	No evidence of an ability to network.

Criteria for potential grant:	Potential Think Tank: National Small Holders Association of Farmers in Malawi
Non-profit and non-governmental organization in policy research or advocacy	NASFAM has two branches: 1) non-profit for development and support to its farmer members; and 2) commercial for profit arm. In the non-profit portion of the organization, NASFAM works in the area of lobbying and advocacy for improved government policy.
Legally registered in the country of operation	Yes
Director has proven record as manager, policy research and advocacy professional and builder of networks and coalitions	The Director of NASFAM, Dyborg Chibonga, is well known in agriculture policy circles in Malawi. He is not known as a policy research professional.
Transparency in governance structure	The governance structure is transparent. It is clear from the discussion on the NASFAM website how the power flows throughout the organization. There is a board of directors and a national assembly as well as a general assembly. NASFAM is organized as an extension network to support the 100,000 smallholder farmers who are members. Ten to fifteen famers are organized into clubs, and clubs are organized into Action Groups. Action Groups combine to form associations. There are over 150, 000 farmer members of NASFAM nearly 50 associations.
Transparency in financial operations and records	NASFAM's financial operations are not transparent.
Demonstrate strong institutional background, financial viability, and effective grant management	NASFAM was set up by USAID in in 1994 through the Smallholder Agribusiness Development Project, implemented by ACDI/VOCA. Since then it has received grants and subcontracts from a variety of donors, including USAID. The effectiveness of its grant management is questionable.
Capacity and willingness to adhere to goals, objectives, and guidelines of the funders	There is no doubt that the organization is committed to the development of agriculture in Malawi. The co-location of the NGO and the commercial branch of NASFAM gives rise to skepticism of its commitment to funders' guidelines.
Ability to identify and select policy research projects with high impact	NASFAM works with CISANET and FUM on budget issues. NASFAM works in the area of markets and trade, finance for smallholders, and it lobbies to ensure that the perspective of small holders is presented to government.
Ability to conduct and communicate research that is rigorous and relevant	NASFAM currently hires consultants to conduct research as needed. It engages in media campaigns.
Ability to conduct independent and quality research	NASFAM participates in policy advocacy but is not a leader in policy research.
Demonstrate programmatic relevance	The organization's program is relevant to the issues facing farmers in Malawi.
Ability to network with domestic and regional organizations	NASFAM partners with FUM and CISANET routinely. It is also a member of the Southern African Confederation of Agriculture Unions, and the World Farmers Organization in Rome.

Criteria for potential grant:	Potential Think Tank: Centre for Environmental Policy and Advocacy (CEPA)
Non-profit and non-governmental organization in policy research or advocacy	Yes. CEPA was founded in 2002 as a not for profit organization. CEPA describes itself as a think tank with the overriding objective to: “provide advice and conduct research in environment and natural resources management policies and legislation with a view to designing appropriate interventions for promoting sustainable environment and natural resources management.”
Legally registered in the country of operation	Yes.
Director has proven record as manager, policy research and advocacy professional and builder of networks and coalitions	The executive director of CEPA is William Chadza, who has experience working with NGOs and international NGOs in environmental management and policy advocacy. He is not as well-known as some of the directors of NGOs, but it is clear that CEPA is playing an important role in work in environmental policy including climate smart agriculture, farmers’ rights, and sustainable agriculture.
Transparency in governance structure	The governance structure is clear.
Transparency in financial operations and records	Insufficient information.
Demonstrate strong institutional background, financial viability, and effective grant management	CEPA has a large number of grant making partners, including USAID, DFID, Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs among many others. It has a large portfolio of work with both international and local partners.
Capacity and willingness to adhere to goals, objectives, and guidelines of the funders	CEPA has a strategic plan and clearly identified set of strategic objectives. They are: Biodiversity; Climate change; Land and sustainable livelihoods; and Environmental advocacy and justice.
Ability to identify and select policy research projects with high impact	CEPA identifies topics for research that fits into its strategic objectives and is important to Malawi. The organization has been involved in such topics are the national agriculture policy, seed policy, and national climate policy. It is also involved in farmers rights and policies related to land and water.
Ability to conduct and communicate research that is rigorous and relevant	It is difficult to judge the quality of its research. There is a long list of publications on its website, but the Africa Lead Team was unable to download them to review. The credentials of its staff and board of directors are solid which implies the capability to conduct relevant and good research.
Ability to conduct independent and quality research	As noted above, the Africa Lead Team assumes that the quality of CEPA is good.
Demonstrate programmatic relevance	CEPA topics are highly relevant to the future of Malawi agriculture and natural resources management.
Ability to network with domestic and regional organizations	CEPA is a partner with organizations important to policy analysis in Malawi.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR USAID'S AGRICULTURE POLICY PROGRAM AND CONSIDERATION OF A THINK TANK:

Foster greater local ownership of evidence-based analysis: The current set of USAID policy investments in Malawi have succeeded in generating demand for evidence-based analysis. All conversations with stakeholders included statements about the need for greater information and data to generate evidence based analysis. Accompanying those statements was appreciation of SEBAP and NAPAS in providing good analysis.

There is however greater need for the IFPRI and MSU generated analyses to be blended with structured advocacy programs. Policy change occurs when appropriate stakeholders are able to use analysis to support change. Seldom does a reform process go from the status quo to the intended outcome. Rather, policy reform occurs in achievable steps, sometimes small steps that lead to an intended change over a period of time. Further, an advocacy program includes messaging that targets specific stakeholder groups so that various groups understand how their interests are affected by policy reform. For example, to seek reform of ADMARC, a structured advocacy program would use messages to traders that would be different from those targeting farmers, that would be different from those targeting consumers. Joining together high quality research, from an organization like IFPRI, with one or more stakeholder groups, like FUM or CISANET, to develop structured advocacy programs, may be a means of obtaining more influence in policy reform.

Include more private sector organizations and businesses in the policy process:

The MAPS Project has succeeded at working with the Agriculture Parliamentary Committee to explain the budget process and the content of the budget. It also represents the interests of farmers and the agricultural committee to policy makers in government. Africa Lead recommends that USAID incorporate more trade organizations and even individual companies into the policy process. One of the most common complaints from stakeholders is that private companies do not participate as actively as CSOs in the TWGs and SWGs. While private sector retorts that the TWGs are a waste of time, it is still in their interest to participate in the policy process. And while FUM self-identifies as a private sector organizations, it is considered by many as a CSO, and therefore not as equipped as “real” private sector organizations or companies to represent their interests.

Support the implementation of the Statistics Master Plan: Stakeholders stated that the situation with respect to data and information is improving in Malawi. Yet, there is also a consensus that there remains much work to do in the area of data collection and management. For example, stakeholders at the validation workshop noted that there is sufficient data and information on

marketing and trade flows, but that these data are not consolidated in one location or in easily useable form. Future work to improve evidence-based policy reform thus should begin with a program to make data and information, which is the very foundation of good policy analysis, more accurate and more easily available. In addition to the data and information, there needs to be a significant improvement in reporting. During the course of the Africa Lead assignment, access to important documents, for example the evaluations of FISP, was difficult. Indeed, Africa Lead obtained those documents only through individuals at the MoAIWD. Upgrading and maintaining the MoAIWD is a logical place to start to improve access to reports and other information.

Consideration of a think tank: There are several very fine think tanks in Africa that can serve as models for the development of a think tank in Malawi. The finest think tanks in Africa have a broad base of funding, often with considerable “unrestricted” funding which permits the think tank to build its capacity in accordance with its strategic interests. The finest think tanks also take on commissioned work for governments, international organizations and donors to support a policy agenda.

In Malawi, there are organizations that may in the future have the capacity to play the role of a think tank. Africa Lead evaluated the potential of six organizations to function as a think tank, and determined that only two, the Farmers Union of Malawi and the Center for Environmental Policy and Advocacy, qualify as candidates to perform think tank functions, with CEPA standing as the number one candidate. Africa Lead supports USAID efforts to include a think tank in its policy portfolio. To do that, USAID needs to develop a terms of reference for such a think tank, to define exactly the role a think tank will play and how it should be set up. USAID can then ask for expressions of interest from organizations that may wish to work with USAID to become a think tank. USAID should also consider joining with other donors in order to ensure that the funding for the think tank is broad based and not devoted to the agenda of but one donor group.

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