INSTITUTIONAL ARCHITECTURE ASSESSMENT FOR FOOD SECURITY POLICY CHANGE: BACKGROUND INFORMATION[1]

In early 2013, the Africa Lead Project developed a methodology for analyzing a country's capacity to undertake food security policy change. This methodology – the Institutional Architecture Assessment for Food Security Policy Change (IAA) – was designed to provide the USAID Bureau of Food Security, USAID Missions, local policymakers, and other key stakeholders with information on possible constraints that could stymie effective policy change. The intention was that the results of the analysis could be used to identify opportunities for strengthening a country's capacity to manage the entire policy change process. In collaboration with the Economics, Agriculture, and Trade (EAT) Project, Africa Lead has completed IAAs in Africa in recent years (see text box).

African Countries/areas where IAAs have been completed

- *Ethiopia*
- *Tanzania*
- *Malawi*
- *Zambia*
- *Mozambique*
- *Ghana*
- *Senegal*
- *DRC*
- *Rwanda*
- *Uganda*
- *East African Community*
- *Kenya*
- *Malawi II*

The IAA was designed to provide a quick scan of the capacities fundamental to policy change in regard to the Africa Union's Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP). CAADP was initiated by the African Union (AU) in 2002 and was designed to help countries increase agricultural productivity by at least six percent per annum and achieve the United Nation's Millennium Development Goal number one, which is to cut hunger in half by 2015. Participation by African countries is voluntary; however, if countries decide to participate they agree to adhere to the CAADP development process and values, which include: 1) 10 percent of the national budget should be allocated to food security; 2) planning and implementation should involve the inclusive participation of a wide range of stakeholders, including the private sector and civil society organizations; and 3) decision-making should be evidenced-based.

I. IAA Methodology

The IAA methodology is composed of the following three components.

Part I: Mapping of Institutional Architecture for Policy Change: The first step in this process graphically maps out the key systems, processes, and relationships that influence the food security policy development process.

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[1] This briefing paper was written by David Callihan (MSI) for the Africa Lead II Project.

Part II:Capacity of Food Security Policy Change: The second part of this assessment involves an analysis of a country's capacity to undertake transparent, inclusive, predictable, and evidence-based policy change. A country's policy change process is examined through the following six elements to determine its 'readiness for policy change':

- Policy Element 1: Guiding Policy Framework
- Policy Element 2: Policy Development and Coordination
- Policy Element 3: Inclusivity and Stakeholder Consultation
- Policy Element 4: Evidence-based Analysis
- Policy Element 5: Policy Implementation
- Policy Element 6: Mutual Accountability

Each of these elements is analyzed though a set of indicators that determine the capacity and effectiveness of the overall policy change process. The indicators are assessed using a three-tier rating system, which highlights the level of attention needed to improve the effectiveness of each indicator. A *Green* rating means that performance is strong and additional attention is not required. A *Yellow* rating means that performance has strengths and weaknesses but additional attention is required. A *Red* rating means that significant attention is needed to improve performance on the indicator. Indicator ratings are accompanied by a narrative analysis of key gaps and constraints to the policy change process.

Part III: Summary Conclusions and Recommendations: The third part of the methodology produces conclusions based on findings from Parts I and II, and develops recommendations for future action.

II. Development of IAA Structure

There are three levels of capacity strengthening that development programs typically address and for which it is important to measure progress. These include: 1) individual capacity, such as skills acquired through training and workshops; 2) institutional capacity, which includes the functions critical to an organization's performance, such as governance, planning, accounting and procurement; and 3) systemic capacity, which focuses on the process of achieving program outcomes when two or more institutions must cooperate to achieve a common objective. The IAA was specifically designed to assess the systemic management processes and challenges inherent in managing a multi-sectoral food security program.

The structure of the IAA was developed: 1) to cover the basic steps involved in policy development; and 2) to mirror the CAADP guidelines and structure -- which is to say the methodology analyzes policy change in the context of the functions that CAADP itself has said are important. The explanation for why each of the six policy elements was selected is indicated in the table below.

Policy Element	Basis for Inclusion
Descriptive Components of a Policy Development and Implementation	
Policy Element 1: Predictability of the Guiding Policy Framework	An overview of the relevant laws, regulations, and policies governing the policy development process.
Policy Element 2: Policy Development and Coordination	A description of who initiates and develops a policy, who writes the policy, the entities involved and the relationship between these entities.
Policy Element 5: Policy Implementation	A review of the organizations that have direct responsibility for policy implementation and what coordination and management mechanisms are used.
Policy Elements Aligned to CAADP Principles[2]	
Policy Element 3: Inclusivity and Stakeholder Consultation	A review of the process of consultation with key groups critical to the food security sector and assesses the degree to which the different groups are engaged, including across government, the private sector and among non-governmental organizations. Consultation with a wide range of stakeholders is a requirement of the CAADP stock-taking exercise, and "engagement with stakeholders and public–common understanding of opportunities for agricultural growth" is a requirement of the CAADP process (to which countries agree when signing a country compact with the African Union).
Policy Element 4: Evidence-based Analysis	Reviews who is responsible for collecting data and how is it used to inform or revise policy change. CAADP Component 2 is evidence-based analysis: "the centerpiece of this component is analytical work that underpins evidence-based decisions and investment program planning. It represents the primary 'knowledge management' component of CAADP, with elements meant to stimulate information and knowledge generation, application and related learning and review."

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[2] References related to CAADP requirements and principles are from "Accelerating CAADP Country Implementation; A Guide for Implementors"; the New Partnership for Africa's Development, the African Union.

Policy Element 6: Mutual Accountability	This element reviews the mechanisms to foster greater mutual accountability between the government, development partners, and national beneficiaries, and is consistent with the principles of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. One of CAADP's "core values" is: Dialogue, (peer) review and **mutual accountability** at the national level open the door to collective responsibility and inclusive participation down to local (grassroots) structures. These principles are expected to stimulate and broaden the practice of benchmarking, mutual learning and harmonization of national development efforts, while encouraging a greater level of trans-boundary cooperation and regional integration."

It should be noted that there are several key aspects of policy change that are not covered in the IAA, but which could be part of a likeminded analytical methodology. These issues include: the political aspects of policy change, such as stakeholder mapping and governance considerations; the implementation process, including building administrative capacity and instituting a change management process; building constituencies for change (advocacy); and managing the policy change process. These issues are important for a change agent to understand in order to manage a change process, but they were not the focus of the IAA methodology when it was developed.

Capacity of Policy Change Assessment Framework

Capacity of Policy Change Indicators	Status		
	🟥	🟨	🟢
Policy Element 1: Predictability of the Guiding Policy Framework			
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.			
Predictability and Transparency of the Policy Making process: The policy development process is transparent in accordance with the rules contained within the country's constitution, basic law, and elsewhere in the formal legal framework.			
Clear and Functional Legislative System: There is a legislative capacity to deal with food security policy change, and the legislative requirements are clearly defined and predictable.			

Capacity of Policy Change Indicators	Status		
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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.			
Clearly defined Institutional Responsibilities: Institutional responsibilities are clearly defined, consistently applied, and predictable from year to year.			
Policy Element 2: Policy Development & Coordination			
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.			
Predictable Policy Agenda and Priorities Developed: The policy items required to achieve the national food strategy have been identified and documented, i.e., specific policy objectives exist.			
Work Plans: There is an annual work plan that identifies objectives and activities in regard to policy development.			
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).			
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.			
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 by the private sector and CSOs on the technical work groups (as appropriate).			
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 prime minister's office (especially for policies that cut across sectors, e.g. trade and			

Capacity of Policy Change Indicators	Status		
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agriculture).			
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.			
Policy Element 3: Inclusivity and Stakeholder Consultation			
Inclusive Participation within the Policy Coordination Management Entity: The main coordination entity has: a) clear goals and participation from key government ministries (beyond just Ministry of Agriculture) and; b) some representation from non-government entities, particularly from donors.			
Outreach and Communications: There is a process for interacting with stakeholders and sharing information. This could include regular public "forums", a website of key information and other mechanisms.			
Private Sector Participation – Opportunity/Space: The private sector is provided meaningful opportunity to participate in 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.			
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.			
Participation of CSOs – Opportunity/Space: The CSO sector, including representation from women's associations and farmers associations, is provided meaningful opportunity to participate in 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.			

Capacity of Policy Change Indicators	Status		
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Participation of CSOs – Capacity to Participate: Some organizations representing civil society, including representation from women's associations and farmers associations, 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.			
Policy Element 4: Evidence-based Analysis			
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.			
Performance Monitoring Measures and Targets Developed: The national food security policies/plans include specific objectives, performance indicators, and targets exist to monitor the accomplishment of the objectives.			
Quality Data Exists for Policy Monitoring: There is a database of quality statistics that is used to routinely report and analyze progress in achieving objectives. (Analysis to be conducted by USDA – and not as part of this assessment framework.)			
Quality Data is Available for Policy Making: Data on the performance of the agriculture sector and the food security are publically available and shared in a timely manner. This information is available for others to use and analyze.			
Inclusion of Analysis in the Policy Development Process: Evidence-based analysis is considered and used to develop policy priorities/policy proposals.			
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 (case-by-case).			
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.			

Capacity of Policy Change Indicators	Status		
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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 capacity should be engaged in the government's policy development and review process as, for example, through papers, forums or participation introduced in official policy review and discussion meetings.			
Policy Element 5: Policy Implementation			
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).			
System in Place to Analyze Implementation Capacity Constraints: 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).			
Food Security Policy Priorities Aligned with Work Plans of 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.			
Policy Implementation Budget Committed by Host Country: Resources are committed by 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 and in a timely manner.			
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.			

Capacity of Policy Change Indicators	Status		
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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 from these reviews.			
Policy Element 6: Mutual Accountability			
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.			
Joint Policy Priorities Developed: A document exists that articulates the shared policy objectives between the government and the donor community.			
Monitoring System Exists: Performance measures exist (for the performance commitments of the government and for the performance commitments of the donors). There is a schedule for reviewing and documenting progress – at least on an annual basis.			
Donor Coordination – Alignment and Harmonization: There is a process for donor participation in the food security policy process and 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.			
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.			
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.			