

New Alliance Policy Acceleration Support: Malawi (NAPAS:Malawi)

A three-year project in support of agricultural policy reform

The Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Water Development (MoAIWD) is leading many of the high-level policy reforms that the government of Malawi committed to in 2013 under the G8's New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition in Malawi. The New Alliance Policy Acceleration Support: Malawi project (NAPAS:Malawi) will enable staff from the Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Food Security Policy project (FSP) to provide policy advisory support to MoAIWD to better enable the government of Malawi achieve these policy reforms.

FSP is an applied global agriculture and food security policy research project funded by the Bureau of Food Security of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and implemented by Michigan State University, the International Food Policy Research Institute, and the University of Pretoria. Using additional financial resources provided by USAID/Malawi through the NAPAS:Malawi project, two FSP staff members – a senior advisor and a policy analyst – will be placed within MoAIWD in its Department of Agricultural Planning Services (DAPS) to work for three years.

The twin objectives of the NAPAS:Malawi project are to improve the agriculture investment climate in Malawi and to enable increased commercialization of Malawi's agricultural sector. In order to enable substantial progress to be made towards these objectives, the project has three technical components:

- i. Provide technical support for policy formulation;
- ii. Engage in communication activities to inform debate on agriculture and food security policy issues, and
- iii. Address gaps in analytical expertise constraining agricultural policy reform.

Policy Formulation

NAPAS:Malawi staff will support MoAIWD to address those New Alliance policy reform commitments for which the Ministry is responsible that primarily involve policy definition and strategy development. Many of these are efforts to increase levels of private sector investment and agricultural commercialization. The advisors will participate in the Ministry's efforts to advance policy processes to achieve these commitments, both at an intellectual level, by contributing insights from theory and models from elsewhere, and at a practical level, by participating in the drafting of policy, strategy, and position papers and by attending meetings across sectors and with all stakeholders to build consensus on the policy changes required and the action needed.

Policy Communication

Project staff will work with several institutions involved in agricultural policy processes in Malawi to increase the number of informed actors engaged in policy deliberations through targeted policy communication efforts. While NAPAS:Malawi will not lead conferences, workshops, or the production of policy reports and briefs, the project will support others to do so and contribute to the efforts they lead.

Capacity Strengthening

The NAPAS:Malawi staff will strengthen the analytical capacity of policy analysts within DAPS and other agricultural policy research institutions in Malawi. Insufficient policy analysis expertise can significantly hamper the realization of New Alliance policy reform commitments due to an absence of objective evidence on the best policy direction to take, lowering the quality of discussion in agricultural policy reform processes. Where additional evidence will strengthen political will or promote buy-in from stakeholders, NAPAS:Malawi advisors will carry out targeted policy analysis jointly with relevant individuals within DAPS and with Malawian academic institutions and civil society organizations in the sector. These joint efforts will be done to build their skills in policy analysis and to effectively communicate the analytical results for application. When appropriate, short-term training courses will be held, particularly on analytical methods and on dimensions of effective policy communication.

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