



EVALUATION REPORT

USAID/MALAWI NEW ALLIANCE POLICY ACCELERATION SUPPORT ACTIVITY EX-POST PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

DECEMBER 2023

This publication was produced at the request of the United States Agency for International Development. It was prepared independently by the Learn to Perform Activity implemented by Banyan Global.

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ABSTRACT

Michigan State University (MSU) in collaboration with the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) and the University of Pretoria (UP) implemented the USAID/Malawi New Alliance Policy Acceleration Support (NAPAS) activity from November 27, 2014 to February 27, 2019. The goal of NAPAS was to ultimately create an enabling agriculture policy environment for investment, production, and growth by providing technical, research, and capacity building support for policy formulation and implementation to the government to sustainably achieve high-level commitments to policy reform provided in the New Alliance Country Cooperation Framework.

In 2023, USAID/Malawi tasked Banyan Global through the Learn to Perform (L2P) activity to conduct an ex-post performance evaluation of NAPAS, approximately 3.5 years after its implementation. The evaluation aimed to generate evidence about the sustainability of NAPAS-supported policy interventions in Malawi. USAID and L2P developed key evaluation questions to assess the sustainability of NAPAS results in capacity building for policy analysis and formulation, continued linkages and capacities in the agriculture policy sector, and the level of commitment of the Government of Malawi (GoM) to implement reforms conducive to an enabling policy environment for increased investment and production. L2P collected data through key informant interviews and focus groups with GoM, civil society, private sector, and media, and conducted a policy process mapping exercise of NAPAS supported reforms by tracing activities since the end of the activity.

The evaluation found that new donor funded programming has continued to provide capacity building support to the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security (MoAFSFS) to conduct policy analysis, formulation, and reviews. However, MoAFSFS policy consultations and engagement with civil society and the private sector have declined. Civil society and media supported by NAPAS reported a decline in their capacity to engage in policy processes due to their diminished organizational capacity and limited access to policy information at the MoAFS. The private sector reported a worsening agricultural policy environment as a result of recent policy reforms and low levels of policy implementation and adherence.

The NAPAS ex-post evaluation findings surfaced essential lessons and recommendations for current and future USAID/Malawi policy activities, government actors, and other stakeholders. For example, donor-supported policy initiatives should begin capacity building efforts by conducting rigorous needs assessments and provide organizational governance capacity building to stakeholder networks and associations to foster sustainability. Improving private sector engagement in policy reform and implementation requires implementing targeted initiatives for the different private sector categories. Furthermore, redefining approaches for engaging the media in agricultural policy communication is necessary.

Cover photo: USAID/Malawi

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USAID/MALAWI NEW ALLIANCE POLICY ACCELERATION SUPPORT ACTIVITY - EX- POST PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

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ACRONYMS

ADS	Automated Directive System
AGPA	Agriculture (General Purposes) Act
AMELP	Activity Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Plan
AU	African Union
CDCS	Country Development Cooperation Strategy
CISANET	Civil Society Agriculture Network
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DAPS	Department of Agricultural Planning Services
DO	Development Objective
DP	Development Partner
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FSP	Food Security Policy
FtF	Feed the Future
GoM	Government of Malawi
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute
IR	Intermediate Result
KII	Key Informant Interview
LUANAR	Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources
MFC	Malawi Fertilizer Company
MIP	Multi-annual Indicative Programme
MoAFS	Ministry of Agriculture
MoAFSIWD	Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Water Development
MSU	Michigan State University
MUSCO	Malawi Union of Savings and Credit Cooperatives
MwAPATA	Malawi Agricultural Policy Advancement and Transformation Agenda

MW2063	Malawi Vision 2063
NAIP	National Agriculture Investment Plan
NAMIS	National Agriculture Management Information System
NAPAS	New Alliance Policy Acceleration Support
NASFAM	National Smallholder Farmers' Association of Malawi
PolSAT	Policy Support for Agricultural Transformation
PS	Private Sector
SCA	Special Crops Act
SEG	Sustainable Economic Growth
SOW	Statement of Work
TWG	Technical Working Group
UP	University of Pretoria
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

EVALUATION PURPOSE/USE AND EVALUATION QUESTIONS

USAID/Malawi requested Banyan Global through the Learn to Perform Activity (L2P) to conduct an ex-post performance evaluation of the New Alliance Policy Acceleration Support (NAPAS) Activity, which was implemented between November 27, 2014 and February 27, 2019 by Michigan State University (MSU) in collaboration with the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) and the University of Pretoria (UP). The main objective of the NAPAS activity was to provide direct technical support to the Government of Malawi (GoM) to fulfill their commitments under the Feed the Future New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition, a framework to increase private sector engagement and investment in agriculture as a means of increasing production. NAPAS was an activity under the Sustainable Economic Growth (SEG) office of USAID/Malawi. Its results contributed to Development Objective (DO) 2 of the USAID/Malawi 2015-2019 Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS).

The main purpose of the ex-post evaluation is to generate evidence on the sustainability of NAPAS-supported policy interventions in Malawi, including capacity building for policy formulation, increased knowledge production and dissemination, and engagement on policy issues. Evaluation results will provide lessons and recommendations for current and future policy-related activities supported by the primary audiences of this evaluation:

USAID/Malawi, other development partners working in the country, and the GoM. These lessons and recommendations will assist in programming with private sector partners and civil society. Findings will contribute to two of USAID/Malawi's learning agenda priorities, #2 (Understanding how USAID's support for the GoM's public sector strengthening reforms contribute to self-reliance) and #4 (Understanding how and if market-based, private sector engagement approaches by USAID across multiple sectors contribute to sustainable economic growth). Evaluation results will also provide evidence for a key assumption underlying DO1 in the Malawi CDCS "GOM will undertake concrete policy action and the implementation and enforcement of reforms necessary to secure the enabling governance, institutional, and economic conditions for these policy actions to be effective at financing social services and generating sustainable, inclusive and diversified economic growth." As this is a learning activity, the evaluation results have the potential to benefit a broader audience, such as Banyan Global, implementers (e.g., MSU, IFPRI, UP), and other development practitioners.

USAID and L2P developed three key evaluation questions based on the objectives of the ex-post evaluation and suggested questions detailed in the evaluation statement of work (SOW). The key questions are as follows:

1. To what extent have the Government of Malawi and other actors continued to implement and/or sustain interventions, activities, and/or results generated by NAPAS?
2. Do the capacity and linkages that NAPAS built among key stakeholders such as smallholder farmers, the private sector, and civil society with Ministry of Agriculture (MoAFS)¹ still exist?
3. To what extent has GoM demonstrated commitment towards implementation of policy reforms supported by NAPAS, including those affecting the private sector?

¹ Previously, Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Development (MoAFSIWD). For consistency, MoAFS will be used throughout the report.

BACKGROUND

To support Malawi's commitments under the New Alliance, USAID/Malawi issued an associate award (Associate Cooperative Agreement no. AID-612-LA-15-00001) to the USAID/Washington-supported Feed the Future (FtF) Innovation Lab for Food Security Policy (FSP) under the Leader with Associates Cooperative Agreement (AID-OAA- L13-000001) for the New Alliance for Policy Acceleration Support (NAPAS) Activity. The FtF Innovation Lab for FSP activity was an applied policy research agreement funded by USAID's Bureau for Food Security (now the Bureau for Resilience, Environment, and Food Security). The FSP promoted inclusive agricultural productivity growth, improved nutritional outcomes, and enhanced livelihood resilience through an improved policy environment. To do so, FSP addressed critical evidence gaps for informed policy debate and engaged in efforts to foster credible, inclusive, transparent, and sustainable policy processes. The FSP was implemented by a consortium that included Michigan State University (MSU) in collaboration with the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) and the University of Pretoria. NAPAS contributed to the USAID/Malawi Sustainable Economic Growth (SEG) project of USAID/Malawi under DO2 of the 2015-2019 CDCS. The activity was implemented from November 27, 2014 to February 27, 2019 with total funding at US\$4,002,467.

The goal of NAPAS was to *"provide effective technical support to the government so that it sustainably achieves the high-level commitments to policy reform made in the New Alliance Country Cooperation Framework for Malawi."*² To support this goal, the design of the NAPAS project include three components:

- Provide effective technical support for policy formulation. Project staff work jointly with the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security (MoAFSFS) staff and pertinent Technical Working Groups (TWGs) to draft and present evidence-informed policies and program designs for consideration by stakeholders in agriculture and food security policy processes, particularly to achieve the policy reforms committed to under the New Alliance;
- Engage in effective communication to inform debate on agriculture and food security policy issues; and
- Ensure that gaps in expertise constraining effective agricultural policy reform are filled.

EVALUATION DESIGN, METHODS, AND LIMITATIONS

The ex-post evaluation used qualitative methods, which included key informant interviews, focus group discussions (FGDs), and documents review. Key informants included NAPAS stakeholders and individuals currently active in the agricultural policy sector. CSO and media FGD participants were selected from organizations that participated directly in NAPAS activities. As part of the document review, the evaluation team evaluated policy processes initiated by NAPAS to determine if and how progress continued after the end of the project, using data from the final project report as a baseline. L2P operationalized and linked each evaluation question to the NAPAS Activity results framework and developed a data collection and analysis plan for each. Data were transcribed and analyzed using conceptual analysis in Atlas.ti and manually using a data matrix analysis process. Limitations to the design include:

- Insufficiencies in the NAPAS activity data and M&E system, including a lack of formal capacity assessments for baseline and endline data.
- Difficulty in locating some key stakeholders knowledgeable about the activity and relevant documentation

² FSP Application for Associate Award for the New Alliance Policy Acceleration Support: Malawi (NAPAS: Malawi) Activity Under Leader with Associates Cooperative Agreement no. AID-OAA-L13-000001; Michigan State University, New Alliance Policy Acceleration Support (NAPAS) Activity (Associate Cooperative Agreement no. AID-612-LA-15-00001) Project Lifetime Report, November 27, 2014 to February 27, 2019.

- Recall biases resulting from respondents' poor recollection of past events

FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Findings

Q1. To what extent have the Government of Malawi (GoM) and other actors continued to implement and/or sustain interventions, activities, and/or results generated by NAPAS?

- New Information, Knowledge, and Practices – Malawi Agricultural Policy Advancement and Transformation Agenda (MwAPATA) institute has continued to conduct policy research both at the request of the MoAFS and based on sector needs. Private sector actors reported conducting additional value chain analyses and updates to value chains produced by NAPAS.
- Knowledge Dissemination and Learning Events (Communication) – Respondents from all non-government stakeholder groups reported a sharp decrease in information availability after NAPAS closure. Non-state actors reported difficulty in obtaining policy documents. GoM and Development Partner (DP) informants attributed this to a lack of programming and budgeting for information sharing events. However, other stakeholders from the private sector, civil society, and media cited political will in addition to resource constraints.
- Policies, Programs, and Regulations Review and Analyzed – Document review and key informant interviews (KIIs) indicate that the MoAFSFS has continued to conduct policy reviews since the completion of NAPAS. Interviewees mentioned several specific policy reviews including the Seed Act, Fertilizers, and Farm Feeds Remedies Act to create a single Fertilizer Act, and Grain Reserve Guidelines. Policy Support for Agricultural Transformation (PoSAT) is a main partner in the implementation of policy reviews.
- Human Resource Capacity Building - PoSAT continues to provide policy focused capacity building support to the MoAFSFS initiated by the NAPAS project. The PoSAT activity does not include capacity building support to the other civil society, media, and private sector provided under the NAPAS activity.

Q2. Do the capacity and linkages that NAPAS built among key stakeholders such as smallholder farmers, private sector, and civil society with MoAFS still exist?

- NAPAS supported two MoAFS institutional tools – the strategic plan and the National Agriculture Management Information System (NAMIS) – but neither are completely operational. The strategic plan was completed but became obsolete after the reorganization of the ministry in 2020. The NAMIS was not completed by the closure of the NAPAS Activity. Since the end of the NAPAS activity, development has progressed through the first testing phase, but is not fully operational due to financial, material, and capacity challenges.
- The ministry continues to develop and review policies with the support of PoSAT and other development partners.
- NAPAS did not conduct formal capacity assessments before or after implementation, meaning most capacity levels were self-reported. Respondents reported that organizational capacity decreased among some NAPAS civil society partners including the Civil Society Agriculture Network (CISANET), a civil society network focused on increasing agricultural policy engagement that was a NAPAS partner. Civil society respondents reported a decrease in CISANET organizational capacity due to governance issues. This was also evident through the inaccessibility of key organizational documents such as annual reports.

- Media participation in the agricultural sector as a result of NAPAS capacity building efforts was not sustained. The Association of Journalists for Agriculture and Development dissolved and media outlets that participated in the NAPAS trainings reported limited reporting on agricultural issues due to resource constraints and waning interest.
- Engagement around policy formulation decreased after the end of the NAPAS activity. The MoAFS has limited programming and/or budget allocated to this type of activity, both through GoM and PoSAT programming. Some private sector and civil society informants stated that engagement platforms still exist, but activity is down due lack of resources, political will of the government, and interest on the part of the stakeholders due to a perception that their feedback is often not taken into account. However, the joint sector review platform remains active and important in policy formulation.

Q3. To what extent has GoM demonstrated commitment towards the implementation of policy reforms supported by NAPAS, including those affecting the private sector?

- GoM's commitment to many of the New Alliance policy reforms supported by the NAPAS activity continues despite changes in administration. Five of the policies NAPAS supported were integrated into the new development plan (MW2063) and listed as priorities in the first 10-year implementation plan (MIP-1). Key policy processes supported but not finalized under the NAPAS project have also been completed, including the National Fertilizer Policy and the Seed Bill.
- Challenges remain at the policy implementation level. The two main causes are lack of awareness of new policies and financial constraints. Informants stated that both subnational level MoAFS officials and policy users, such as farmers and other private sector entities, were not aware of the content of new policies due to limited policy dissemination and orientation. A majority of respondents cited policy implementation support as a priority need for future programming in the agricultural policy sector.
- Private sector informants noted a perceived lack of commitment to private sector needs, with some stating that the most recent policies represent a deterioration in the policy environment. In particular, they noted the constraints presented by the new Fertilizer Policy and Land Policy (not under the MoAFS) on private investment. They also raised frustration that recommendations made by the private sector were not integrated into the Fertilizer Policy.

CONCLUSIONS

The ex-post evaluation generated evidence of continued policy development activities formally supported by NAPAS; however, several of the activities were integrated into subsequent programming through PoSAT and MwAPATA. This is especially true for activities led by the MoAFS, which includes policy development, review, research, and analysis activities. The evaluation cannot conclude that these results are sustainable because the MoAFS remains heavily reliant on donor-funded technical support programs for the continuation of these activities.

The main gap in former NAPAS programming was engagement between GoM and other relevant stakeholders, particularly with regards to the flow of information and feedback loops. This was evident in discussions focused on access to information, policy engagement, and the GoM's responsiveness to other stakeholders' needs, particularly the private sector. Since the end of the NAPAS activity, stakeholders have had difficulty accessing information including policy documents and implementation strategies. Inaccessibility of policy information presents significant obstacles to participation for private sector and civil society, and implementation at the sub-national level.

The current policy engagement space for private sector and civil society is not conducive to stakeholder input into the policy formulation and implementation process. The consultations and learning events supported by NAPAS were overwhelmingly considered one of its most important results. All stakeholders, both government and non-state actors, reported a notable decrease in policy consultation processes outside of the joint sector reviews after the completion of the NAPAS activity, which heavily subsidized and led in organizing the engagement platforms. Additionally, private sector stakeholders felt that when opportunities for contribution did arise, their inputs were ultimately not reflected in the final document. This may be due to the vast differences in needs and perspectives across the private sector, which result in conflicting interests. Policy formulation requires a delicate balance across a multitude of competing interests not only within the private sector but also government interests and other stakeholders, which may also lead to certain stakeholders feeling unheard.

Barriers to engagement continue through the policy implementation phase. Informants across all stakeholder groups noted obscurity in implementation strategies and roles. Non-governmental stakeholders reported a lack of willingness or capacity on the part of the GoM to involve them in policy implementation, precluding their facilitation of potential private sector investments into the strategies.

Lastly, based on the review of NAPAS project documentation, the activity did not include a sustainability strategy with a clear handover plan. Elements of sustainability were included in the project design, such as institutional and human resource capacity building, but in many instances, these were not formalized. The last activity quarterly report and the final Project Lifetime Report did not include an exit strategy or any information on project activity handover, other than attempting to identify additional resources to continue.³

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusions of the ex-post evaluation assessment, the evaluation team offers the following recommendations for current and future programming in the agricultural policy sector in Malawi.

To USAID and other development partners

1. Begin capacity building efforts by conducting a rigorous capacity needs assessment and developing stakeholder-specific capacity development plans that include capacity monitoring frameworks with baselines and targets. These plans should be long term and not based on an activity implementation period, but a tool that the institution may use for ongoing capacity development. Focus efforts at the system level and include materials and tools that will assist in ongoing capacity development as individuals move in and out of the system. An example could be policy analysis or review modules that could be utilized and updated within an institution for new staff, for refresher training, or as a reference resource. This approach will increase the sustainability of capacity gains and lay the foundation for ongoing capacity building.
2. To increase organizational sustainability, provide organizational governance capacity building to stakeholder networks and associations. Assist associations, such as CISANET and media associations, to put strong governance systems in place, which will have a significant impact on the sustainability of the structure. This includes

³ NAPAS Quarterly Report and Fiscal Year 2018 Report, July 1 – October 30, 2018: Michigan State University, New Alliance Policy Acceleration Support (NAPAS) Activity (Associate Cooperative Agreement no. AID-612-LA-15-00001) Project Lifetime Report, November 27, 2014 to February 27, 2019.

supporting new networks to develop foundational documents, such as bylaws and strategic plans, and completing formal registration processes.

3. Develop training modules, guides, and other resources on policy processes based on international best practices and adapted to the Malawian context for each stakeholder group. These resources should be available beyond activity implementation periods, to a wider audience beyond activity partners, and to new entrants in policy processes. This will expand the reach and use of capacity building tools and activities, thereby increasing their sustainability.
4. Provide capacity strengthening support on policy engagement to both supply and demand side actors concurrently beyond the organization of policy consultations. The ongoing coaching and support provided to the MoAFS on policy processes should be provided to all stakeholder groups. This will enhance engagement, contribute to better policy formulation, and improve stakeholder group coordination. Such support should also include negotiation and conflict resolution techniques.
5. To improve private sector engagement in policy reform and implementation, develop approaches for private sector support specific to different categories (small, medium, and large enterprises) based on their specific needs, resources, and opportunities. Recognize that different private sectors may have competing interests.
6. Re-evaluate the feasibility of engaging the media in agricultural policy issues to increase communication around policy development and implementation. Examine the possibility of working with one of the stronger, existing networks, such as the association focused on the environment. Encourage new reporting through activities such as grants to offset costs, buyout of journalist time, grants in kind of materials and equipment, and awards for high quality reporting. Funds for these types of activities may be identified through collaborations with large/commercial private sector actors. Increased communication on policy by the media to the public will improve policy development and facilitate policy implementation.
7. Consider funding projects specific to the implementation of current policies. These projects should be equally engaged with all stakeholder groups, and not focused only on the government. Programming should focus on supporting relevant stakeholders to fulfill their roles in the implementation process—for example, raising awareness of the policy at the subnational level, providing capacity building support for relevant subnational stakeholders, etc.
8. Evaluate the feasibility of establishing policy implementation monitoring frameworks for priority policies. These platforms could be nested within structures like CISANET or CASS and should be multi-stakeholder. They would support policy implementation by developing monitoring frameworks and tools, and building capacity for policy monitoring. This will enable government and non-governmental actors to reinforce accountability.
9. Require activities similar to NAPAS to have a clear exit strategy to ensure continuity and sustainability of its activities. One of the major challenges that the evaluation noted as a barrier to the sustainability of NAPAS activities is the lack of a clear sustainability plan. The exit strategy should include a phased handover plan for each activity, personnel needs including staffing profiles and skills required, and identification of financial and material resource needs and possible sources.

To the Government of Malawi

10. Conduct a rigorous capacity needs assessment for policy development and implementation and develop a capacity development plan that includes a monitoring framework with baselines and targets. This assessment is best done by or in conjunction with the National Planning Commission (NPC), if that is not already part of their mandate. The plan should not be limited to a program scope or implementation period, but rather serve as a tool for the institution to use for ongoing capacity development. The capacity development plan should focus at the system level and include materials and tools that will assist in ongoing capacity development as new staff are engaged. An example is policy analysis or review modules that could be utilized and updated for new staff orientation, refresher training for current staff, or as a reference resource. This approach will increase sustainability of capacity gains and lay the foundation for ongoing capacity building.
11. To improve policy formulation and implementation, build the capacity of the MoAFS to engage with stakeholders on policy issues. This should include the development of an engagement strategy (or improving existing strategies). The plan should include a stakeholder analysis, and an action plan for how and when to engage with each stakeholder group. Develop training modules and guidelines on policy engagement to be used for new staff, refresher training, and as a resource.
12. To increase access to information, assess the feasibility of creating or supporting an agricultural policy resource center at the MoAFS, a university, or other appropriate institution where agricultural sector stakeholders may store and access policy documents, research papers, briefs, and other relevant materials. This center could also act as a link between academic research and policy actors, and be accessible to the public. Increased transparency of policy reforms will enable a broader set of actors and stakeholders to assist in their implementation.

EVALUATION PURPOSE AND EVALUATION QUESTIONS

EVALUATION PURPOSE AND USE

USAID/Malawi requested Banyan Global through the Learn to Perform Activity (L2P) to conduct an ex-post evaluation of the New Alliance Policy Acceleration Support (NAPAS) Activity, which was implemented between November 27, 2014 and February 27, 2019 by Michigan State University (MSU) in collaboration with the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) and the University of Pretoria (UP). The main objective of the NAPAS activity was to provide direct technical support to the Government of Malawi (GoM) to fulfill their commitments under the Feed the Future New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition, a framework to increase private sector engagement and investment in agriculture as a means of increasing production. NAPAS was an activity under the Sustainable Economic Growth (SEG) office of USAID/Malawi. Its results contributed to Development Objective (DO) 2 of the USAID/Malawi 2015-2019 Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS).

The main purpose of the ex-post evaluation is to generate evidence on the sustainability of NAPAS-supported policy interventions in Malawi, including capacity building for policy formulation, increased knowledge production and dissemination, and engagement on policy issues. Evaluation results will provide lessons and recommendations for current and future policy-related activities supported by the primary audiences of this evaluation: USAID/Malawi, other development partners working in the country, and the GoM. These lessons and recommendations will assist in programming with private sector partners and civil society. Findings will contribute to two of USAID/Malawi's learning agenda priorities, #2 (Understanding how USAID's support for the GoM's public sector strengthening reforms contribute to self-reliance) and #4 (Understanding how and if market-based, private sector engagement approaches by USAID across multiple sectors contribute to sustainable economic growth). Evaluation results will also provide evidence for a key assumption underlying DO1 in the Malawi CDCS "GOM will undertake concrete policy action and the implementation and enforcement of reforms necessary to secure the enabling governance, institutional, and economic conditions for these policy actions to be effective at financing social services and generating sustainable, inclusive and diversified economic growth." As this is a learning activity, the evaluation results have the potential to benefit a broader audience, such as Banyan Global, implementers (e.g., MSU, IFPRI, UP), and other development practitioners.

EVALUATION QUESTIONS

USAID and L2P developed three key evaluation questions based on the objectives of the ex-post evaluation and suggested questions detailed in the evaluation SOW. The key questions are as follows:

1. To what extent have the GoM and other actors continued to implement and/or sustain interventions, activities, and/or results generated by NAPAS?
2. Do the capacity and linkages NAPAS built among key stakeholders such as smallholder farmers, private sector and civil society with MoAFS⁴ still exist?
3. To what extent has GoM demonstrated commitment towards implementation of policy reforms supported by NAPAS, including those affecting the private sector?

Each question will be further operationalized and linked to the activity results framework in the evaluation methodology section.

⁴ Previously, Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Development (MoAFSIWD)

BACKGROUND

In 2013, Malawi completed a Country Cooperation Framework to join the New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition. This joint commitment brought together G8 and African countries with the private sector to promote agricultural growth and help raise 50 million people out of poverty.⁵ The New Alliance approach focused on increasing investment in the agricultural sector by creating an enabling policy environment. Malawi's commitments (Annex 9) under the New Alliance provided an opportunity to develop new innovative policies and strategies and increase engagement between government and the private sector, including large and small farmers and civil society, to increase agricultural investment, production, and returns. In addition, new policies could diversify markets, provide greater market access to small farmers, and create new employment opportunities in both urban and rural areas.

To support Malawi's commitments under the New Alliance, USAID/Malawi issued an associate award (Associate Cooperative Agreement no. AID-612-LA-15-00001) to the USAID/Washington supported FtF Innovation Lab for FSP under the Leader with Associates Cooperative Agreement (AID-OAA- L13-000001) for the NAPAS Activity. The FtF Innovation Lab for FSP project was an applied policy research activity funded by USAID's Bureau for Food Security. The FSP activity promoted inclusive agricultural productivity growth, improved nutritional outcomes, and enhanced livelihood resilience through an improved policy environment. To do so, FSP addressed critical evidence gaps for informed policy debate and engaged in efforts to foster credible, inclusive, transparent, and sustainable policy processes. The FSP was implemented by a consortium that included MSU, the IFPRI, and the UP. NAPAS contributed to the USAID/Malawi SEG project of USAID/Malawi under DO2 of the 2015-2019 CDCS. The activity was implemented from November 27, 2014 to February 27, 2019 with total funding at US\$4,002,467.

Per project documents, the overarching development hypothesis under which NAPAS was developed was *"if the commitments to policy reform made by the government in the New Alliance Country Cooperation Framework for Malawi are realized through a policy engagement and capacity building approach, then the enabling environment for agriculture investment and development in Malawi will be improved."*⁶ Due to FSP's understanding that there were capacity constraints at the MoAFS and a need for focused capacity development, an activity level hypothesis was developed – *"Focused technical assistance and capacity building in policy development for MoAFSIWD will lead to action and decisions from the Ministry that will improve the enabling environment for agriculture development and investment."*⁷

Based on these hypotheses, the goal of NAPAS was to *"provide effective technical support to the government so that it sustainably achieves the high-level commitments to policy reform made in the New Alliance Country Cooperation Framework for Malawi."*⁸ These policy reforms had the broader aim of improving the agriculture investment climate through

⁵ USAID Fact Sheet: Key Facts: The New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition.

⁶ FSP Application for Associate Award for the New Alliance Policy Acceleration Support: Malawi (NAPAS: Malawi) Activity Under Leader with Associates Cooperative Agreement no. AID-OAA-L13-000001.

⁷ IBID.

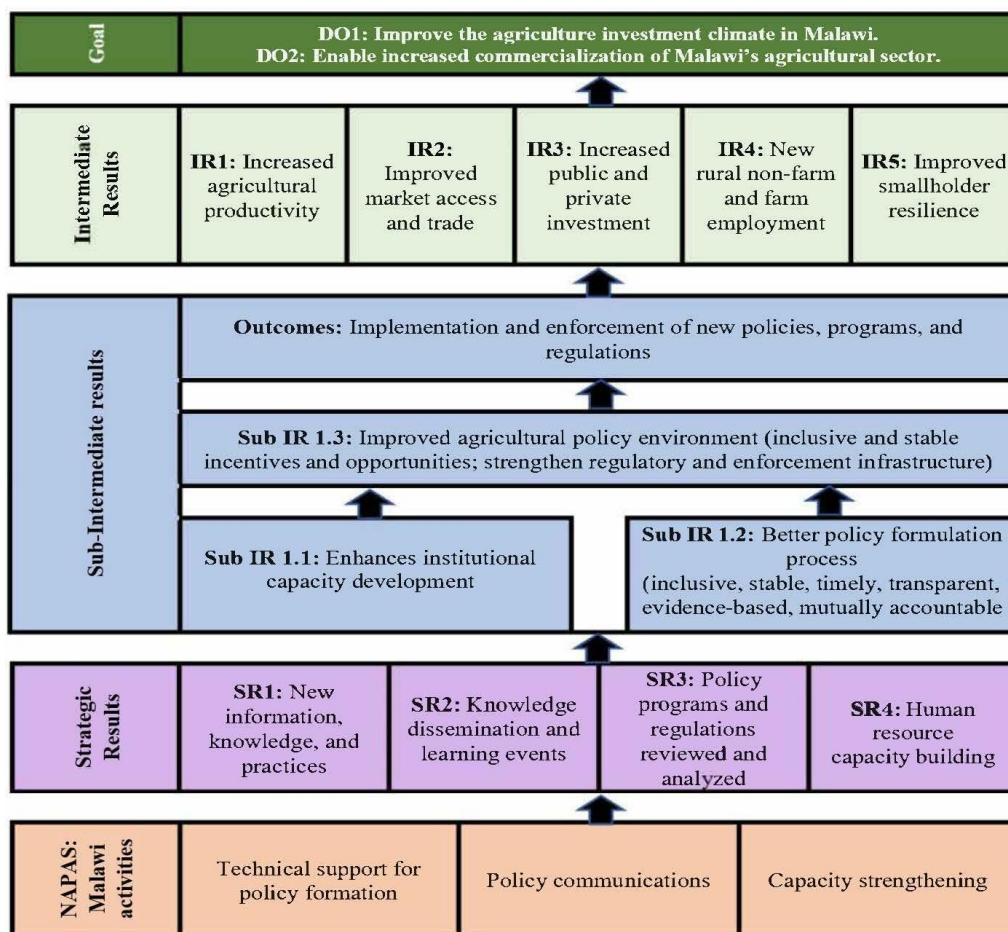
⁸ FSP Application for Associate Award for the New Alliance Policy Acceleration Support: Malawi (NAPAS: Malawi) Activity Under Leader with Associates Cooperative Agreement no. AID-OAA-L13-000001; Michigan State University, New Alliance Policy Acceleration Support (NAPAS) Activity (Associate Cooperative Agreement no. AID-612-LA-15-00001) Project Lifetime Report, November 27, 2014 to February 27, 2019.

commercializing and increasing the role of the private sector in Malawi's agricultural sector. To support this goal, the design of the NAPAS project included three components:

- 1) Provide effective technical support for policy formulation. Project staff work jointly with MoAFS staff and pertinent TWGs to draft and present evidence-informed policies and program designs for consideration by stakeholders in agriculture and food security policy processes, particularly to achieve the policy reforms committed to under the New Alliance;
- 2) Engage in effective communication to inform debate on agriculture and food security policy issues; and
- 3) Ensure that gaps in expertise constraining effective agricultural policy reform are filled.

The activities conducted under these components supported the overall NAPAS results framework, which was adapted from FSP's overall framework, found in Figure 1.

Figure 1: NAPAS Results Framework



**Note: Sub IR 1.2 was not included in the NAPAS AMELP*

Of the 15 policy commitments taken by Malawi under the Country Cooperation Framework, the MoAFS was responsible for nine. The NAPAS team was based within the MoAFS, specifically the Department of Agricultural Planning Services (DAPS), to facilitate direct technical support to the MoAFS in developing these nine policies and/or strategies. This arrangement allowed for continuous engagement with the DAPS staff on policy issues as well as daily capacity support through collaboration and coaching. In addition to supporting the MoAFS, NAPAS engaged with and supported relevant TWGs; other GoM entities, such

as the Ministry of Lands; private sector; civil society; academia; and media. NAPAS also collaborated and coordinated various activities with donors supporting the New Alliance at the time of implementation. Donors included the European Union, the UK Department for International Development (DFID) - which is now the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO), Irish Aid, Flanders, and Norwegian Aid.

Table 1: NAPAS Stakeholders

Stakeholder Category	Key institutions
Government	Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Trade
Donor agencies	Belgium's Flanders International Cooperation Agency (FICA), Canada, Germany, European Union, Ireland, Japan, Norway, United Kingdom's Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO), USAID and Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)
Civil Society	Farmers Union of Malawi (FUM), Civil Society Agriculture Network (CISANET), National Smallholder Farmers' Association of Malawi (NASFAM), and We Effect.
Private Sector	Malawi Union of Savings and Credit Cooperatives (MUSCO), Fertilizer Association of Malawi (FAM), Malawi Mangoes, Malawi Fertilizer Company (MFC), Mtalimanja Holdings, Malawi Confederation of the Chambers of Commerce and Industry (MCCCI)
Research Institutions	Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources (LUANAR)

Context

The evaluation covers the period from the end of the project on February 27, 2019 to the dates of the evaluation data collection in mid-2023. During this approximately four-year period, several events took place that affected the agricultural operating context. Major events included the Malawian Presidential Elections of 2020, the reorganization of the MoAFS, and the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Presidential Elections of 2020 resulted in a new government under a new ruling political party, which led to changes to the country's development strategy and vision. In January 2021, the government launched Malawi Vision 2063 (MW2063), a new comprehensive development plan for the country. The strategy incorporated priorities from each sector and included a monitoring and evaluation framework. The plan is implemented through 10-year operational plans, or MIPs. The first, MIP-1, included several of the agricultural policies prioritized in the previous administration (discussed further in the findings section), which increased their visibility. At the same time, the plan integrated new priorities such as the "establishment of at least one mega-farm in each district for development of high value crops, fisheries and livestock."⁹ The new administration also conducted a reorganization of some key ministries, including the MoAFSIWD. The reorganization resulted in the separation of the institution into two ministries, the MoAFS and Ministry of Water and Sanitation. Although this did not have a huge impact on agricultural priorities, it did have some impact

⁹ MwAPATA Institute. (2020). The Potential for Mega-Farms to Transform Malawian Agriculture. Retrieved from MwAPATA Institute Website: <https://www.mwapata.mw/wp2201>

on institutional capacity, such as rendering the Five-Year Strategic Plan defunct (discussed further in the findings section).

The COVID-19 global pandemic also presented changes in the operating environment. A review of available literature indicated that Malawi experienced only a modest decline in economic activities due to COVID-19, particularly because there was no shutdown of the key production sectors, including agriculture. Government institutions continued to operate with partial intermittent closures of national offices while field offices generally continued to operate. Transport restrictions imposed mainly focused on limiting seating capacity, which ultimately increased transport costs for travelers.¹⁰ Assessing the impact of COVID-19 on the working conditions of respondents, Leavens and others (2021) found that “while there may have been a modest impact initially, rural Malawians do not directly report that COVID-19 influences unemployment.”

Though Malawi did not have a full shutdown due to COVID-19, most institutions instrumental in the policy process, such as Development Partners and NGOs, encouraged their staff to work from home. This affected participation in the policy processes as most interactions took place online. The farming community and other local institutions that could not access online services were completely cut off from these processes. Generally, the COVID-19 pandemic delayed the execution of most activities that had a bearing on policy formulation and implementation (discussed further in the findings section).

Finally, in 2019, the MoAFS requested that USAID and other donors continue the NAPAS support through additional funding. This resulted in the creation of two new initiatives again implemented by MSU and funded by the Coalition for a Smoke Free World and USAID. The first, PoSAT, is embedded in the MoAFS and provides technical support for policy development and implementation. The second, the MwAPATA, is an independent think tank focused on increasing availability and use of high-quality research on agricultural policy issues. Both initiatives have continued throughout the period covered by the ex-post evaluation.

¹⁰ Leavens, L., Ambler, K., Herskowitz, S., Maredia, M. K., & Mockshell, J. (2021). COVID-19 in Rural Malawi: Perceived Risks and Economic Impacts Rounds 1 - 4. Washington: IFPRI. Retrieved from <https://ebrary.ifpri.org/utils/getfile/collection/p15738coll2/id/134861/filename/135072.pdf>

EVALUATION METHODS AND LIMITATIONS

Key Concepts and Related Evaluation Questions

The ex-post evaluation assesses the sustainability of the results achieved by the New Alliance Policy Acceleration Support (NAPAS) Activity. The evaluation focuses on policy process improvements and institutional changes brought about through NAPAS support, and not on the overall impact of NAPAS on the agricultural sector. The design of the evaluation is based on a set of key concepts, including sustainability, policy formulation, policy environment, and institutional capacity. The evaluation team used the following definitions for the key concepts for questionnaire design and data analysis to ensure a common understanding.

Sustainability is defined by USAID as “the ability of a local system, network, or institution to produce desired outcomes over time. Programs contribute to sustainability when they strengthen the ability to produce valued results and to be both resilient and adaptive in the face of changing circumstances” (ADS 201). To be considered sustainable based on this definition, the main activity stakeholders, particularly the Ministry of Agriculture (MoAFS), must have continued to progress towards completion of the policy commitments under the New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition using the improved approaches in policy analysis, budgeting and dialogue acquired through NAPAS technical assistance, and were able to adapt to shifts in support and other contextual considerations.

Policy formulation refers to the process of identifying, developing, and adopting policy. The approach championed by the NAPAS activity focused on evidence-based policy formulation that incorporates a feedback loop with stakeholders, such as civil society, the private sector, and the media. For the purposes of this assessment, the NAPAS model of policy formulation will be used.

Policy environment refers to the institutional and regulatory framework under which a particular sector operates. This includes national policies, practices, strategies, and laws. The NAPAS objective was to create a policy environment that would encourage investment in the agricultural sector while improving food security and nutrition and reducing poverty.

USAID does not have a standard definition of **institutional capacity**; no definition was provided in NAPAS activity documents. However, the new USAID Local Capacity Strengthening Policy, developed in 2023, defines capacity as “encompass[ing] the knowledge, skills, and motivations, as well as the relationships that enable an actor—an individual, an organization, or a network—to take action to design and implement solutions to local development challenges, to learn and adapt from that action, and to innovate and transform over time.” For the purposes of this evaluation, institutional capacity refers to the capacity of the MoAFS and other stakeholders to formulate and implement policy using components of the new definition for capacity. The “knowledge” and “skills” link to developing and using evidence for policy development and improved budget and policy analysis. The “relationships” refer to MoAFS links to and engagement with the private sector, civil society, and other government and international entities.

DATA COLLECTION METHODS

The evaluation team was comprised of a team lead and two Malawian subject matter experts (SMEs). The team lead was selected through an international recruitment process, and has over 15 years of experience in USAID monitoring and evaluation research. The two SMEs are experienced researchers with expertise in the Malawian agricultural policy sector and academia. Banyan Global recruited a second team lead, an experienced researcher

specializing in public policy, during the analysis phase. Team member bios may be found in Annex VII.

Learn to Perform (L2P) operationalized each evaluation question to link to the results framework and identify relevant concepts. This included defining different components of the question and identifying which categories of NAPAS programming contributed to each. Data for each question were collected through multiple methods to facilitate triangulation, complementation, and validation.

Q1. To what extent has the Government of Malawi and other actors continued to implement and/or sustain interventions, activities, and/or results generated by NAPAS?

This question focuses on the sustainability of strategic results (SRs) of the NAPAS results framework relative to each stakeholder group. The SRs will be analyzed as follows:

- **SR1 - New Information, Knowledge, and Practices** – Value chain analyses and other research to improve policy development and implementation
- **SR2 - Knowledge Dissemination and Learning Events** – Policy forums, dialogues, and other events, media reports
- **SR3 – Policies, Programs, and Regulations Review and Analyzed** – Policy analysis and evaluation
- **SR4 – Human Resource Capacity Building** – Training and coaching on policy formulation and monitoring and evaluation for the MoAFS and CSOs, communication training (media)

Data collection for Q1 included Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) with MoAFS staff, development partners, and private sector, and KIIs and focus group discussions (FDGs) with civil society and media. Questions focused on determining whether NAPAS activities have continued; if so, how, and if not, why. Data collected through interviews and discussions were complemented by document review.

Q2. Do the capacity and linkages that NAPAS built among key stakeholders such as smallholder farmers, private sector and civil society with MoAFS still exist?

This question examines NAPAS' achievements at the Sub-Intermediate Result (SIR), specifically SIR1.1 and SIR1.2, to examine whether the capacity and linkages built by NAPAS have been sustained.

- **SIR1.1: Enhanced institutional capacity development:** NAPAS provided capacity building support to the MoAFS on policy formulation and provided institutional capacity support to develop a Five-Year Strategic Plan (2019-2023) and conceptualize the National Agriculture Management Information System (NAMIS). The evaluation team gathered information about the use of the plan and the status of the NAMIS through key informant interviews and reports.

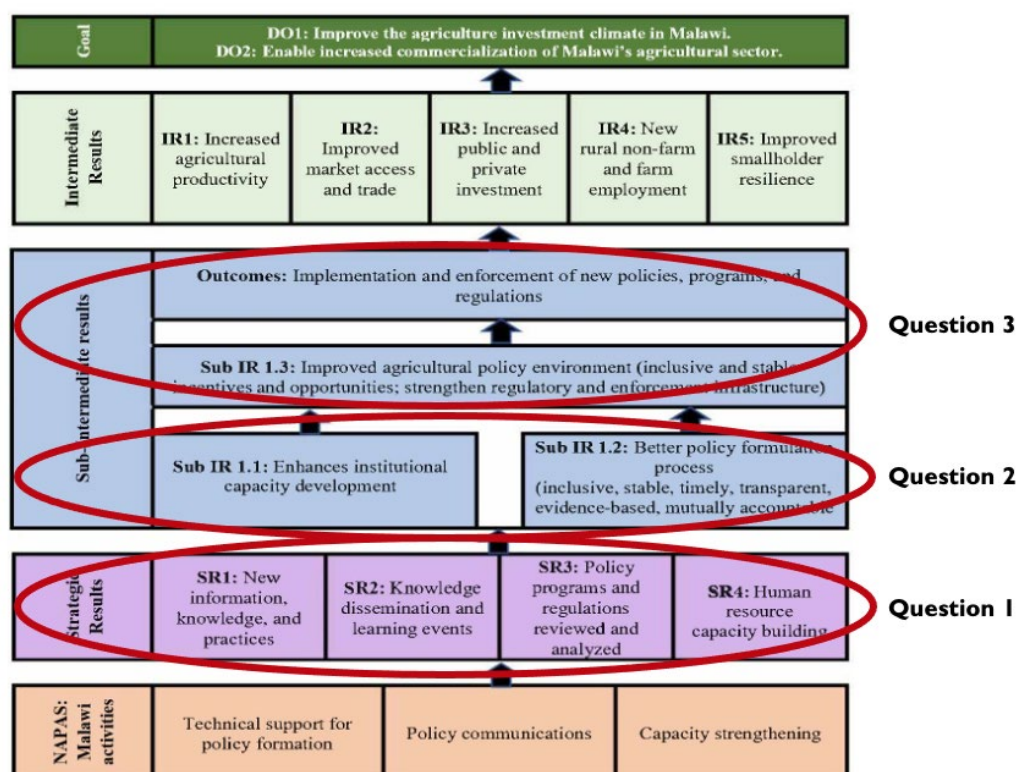
A major component of capacity-building efforts for agriculture sector stakeholders focused on increasing the capacity of the media to report on agricultural issues. NAPAS conducted four formal training sessions for journalists and created a network for agriculture reporting. The evaluation team gathered data through key informant interviews and a media FGD to assess whether the network is still functioning, at what level, and if agricultural reporting has continued at similar rates. NAPAS also provided some training to civil society and the private sector on policy formulation, also considered under this SIR.

- **SIR1.2: Better policy formulation process:** NAPAS supported other stakeholder groups, including nongovernmental organizations, farmers' unions, and the private sector, by creating opportunities to participate in the policy-making process. This was accomplished through organizing numerous conferences and symposiums to provide information and receive feedback across the policy process. The evaluation team gathered information through KIIs and FGDs with civil society and private sector, and validated through reports when possible, to determine if this level of engagement continued beyond the completion of NAPAS. As noted above, the MoAFS' capacity in policy formulation is treated under SIR 1.1. *(Note: this SIR is not included in the results framework from the NAPAS Activity Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Plan).*

Q3. To what extent has the GoM demonstrated commitment towards the implementation of policy reforms supported by NAPAS, including those affecting the private sector?

This question evaluated the sustainability of results under **SIR1.3: Improved agricultural policy environment** and the overall **SIR Level Outcome: Implementation and Enforcement of new policies, programs, and regulations**. The overall purpose of the NAPAS activity was to support the policy reforms to which the GoM committed in the New Alliance for Food Security and Security Country Cooperation Framework, which in turn would create an enabling policy environment for increased agricultural investment. To assess the sustainability of these efforts, the evaluation team collected and analyzed data to determine the status of supported policy reforms. Data collection and analysis methods included KIIs, FGDs, and a process mapping activity for each of the 14 policies beyond the end-date of the NAPAS activity.

Figure 2: Evaluation question links to the NAPAS Result Framework



SAMPLING

The evaluation used a purposive sampling approach in which respondents from predefined groups and/or who have particular attributes or characteristics were selected for a detailed exploration of the research questions. The evaluation team ensured that all categories of stakeholders involved in NAPAS activities were represented in the pool of respondents interviewed. These included MoAFS officials, farmers organizations, civil society, private sector, media, and development partners supporting agricultural policy development. The nature of the evaluation objectives indicated that individuals with knowledge of the NAPAS activity and the agricultural policy sector as a whole were best placed to provide information. For KIIs, the team used a snowballing process where key informants selected from an initial list subsequently identified additional informants since a sampling frame could not be constructed based on the information available. The initial list of respondents included those who had direct involvement in NAPAS design and implementation. These respondents suggested additional informants to be interviewed based on their experience working in the agriculture sector and familiarity with NAPAS. For FGDs, the team invited participants based on their individual or organizational knowledge of and participation in the NAPAS activity. Civil society FGD participants were drawn from CISANET, a civil society network focused on agricultural policy that partnered with the NAPAS activity. Journalists were selected from the membership list of the association of agriculture journalists that NAPAS supported based on their participation in NAPAS training.

Table 2: Number of respondents by stakeholder group

Stakeholder Group	Number of Respondents
Government of Malawi	14
Quasi-governmental	5
Civil Society	10
Private Sector/Farmers Unions	11
Development Partners	6
Academia/Researchers	6
Media	8
Total	60

DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

The evaluation team collected data using documents review, KIIs, and FGDs. The documents review focused on sources relevant to the activity priorities, stakeholders, and the agricultural sector at large. Documents reviewed included activity work plans, quarterly and annual reports, workshop/training reports, commissioned study reports (including value chain analyses and background papers), and policy documents.

KIIs involved collecting data from expert sources using a semi-structured interview approach. The evaluation team developed questions to stimulate discussion on the sustainability of NAPAS activities, policy implementation, and the overall policy environment using an open-ended format. This format provided the opportunity to gain further insight on topics and allowed for follow-up questions. The evaluation team conducted most interviews in person based on the availability of the informant; however, four were conducted over the phone or virtually through written responses. The evaluation team also conducted follow-up discussions over the telephone for clarification as needed. Interviews were recorded when possible, based on agreement by the informant. In total, the team conducted 45 KIIs, of which 21 were recorded.

The evaluation team conducted FGDs with leaders and senior staff representatives of civil society organizations active in the agricultural sector (three female, six male) and journalists (one female, five males) who were members of the Association of Journalists for Agriculture and Development in order to further explore key evaluation questions and information gathered through document review and KIIs. Participants were invited based on their involvement in the agricultural sector and included those who partnered directly with NAPAS and others who had indirect experience or who are currently active in the sector. FGDs were audio recorded with verbal consent from the participants.

The evaluation team carried out two data analysis processes to allow for additional triangulation. Data collected through KIIs and FGDs were transcribed and cleaned in preparation for analysis and uploaded into Atlas.ti for coding purposes. Data were analyzed using conceptual content analysis based on the evaluation objectives. The coding process primarily used deductive coding to organize and analyze data, employing a code list (Annex IV) based on evaluation questions and concepts, and the activity's result framework. The evaluation team used inductive coding when additional concepts were identified through the coding process. Data were also analyzed manually through matrix analysis, classified based on questions and themes. Drawing the same conclusions through the different types of analysis by different researchers helps to increase confidence in findings and recommendations.

To better understand the policy process post NAPAS, the evaluation team conducted a policy process mapping exercise for each policy supported through the activity. The evaluation team traced the process of each policy reform supported by NAPAS since activity closure to determine status (what has and is happening after NAPAS), level of implementation (for adopted policies), and stakeholder engagement. The mapping process used data from document review (reports, legislations, and review of individual policies), KIIs, and FGDs. Refer to Annex I for the policy process mapping matrix.

LIMITATIONS

The evaluation team identified certain limitations in the design and conduct of the NAPAS ex-post evaluation, some of which were difficult to mitigate and may affect the reliability and validity of the findings. These limitations included challenges due to the NAPAS activity's data and M&E system, difficulty locating stakeholders with in-depth knowledge of the activity and its results, and recall bias. Details of each are outlined below.

- NAPAS activity data and M&E system: Based on documents available to L2P, the monitoring and evaluation system established by the NAPAS activity did not provide baselines and endlines that could be used during an ex-post evaluation. The activity conducted a perception survey where a purposeful sample of respondents were asked to assess several elements relevant to agriculture policy in Malawi. Two outcome monitoring indicators were taken from this survey:
 1. Index (or scorecard) of quality of the institutional architecture for agriculture and food security policy processes in Malawi (SIR 1.3)
 2. Index (or scorecard) of quality of agriculture and food security policy processes in Malawi (SIR 1.2)

Unfortunately, both indicators decreased between the baseline and endline, despite the completion of several key policy reforms. One area that did improve was respondent assessment of the influence of their institution in agricultural policy. The methodology for the survey was designed to solicit responses to the survey from the same actors (or positions) for the baseline and endline. This approach resulted in a small sample size for the overall comparison (55 total respondents). This makes it difficult to repeat the survey

for inclusion in this evaluation. The overall concern is that the decrease from the baseline to endline suggests that the approach was not optimal for understanding the effects of the NAPAS activity.

There are also no baselines or measurements for assessing capacity level in the Activity Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning Plan (AMELP) or other documents available to the evaluation team. This means that any data collected by the evaluation team to evaluate capacity will be based on perception and not verifiable evidence. There was also a disconnect between the results framework, the logical framework, and the indicators, in that the logical framework focused on the output level and did not include indicators at the Sub-Intermediate Result level.

- Difficulty locating some key stakeholders who are knowledgeable about the activity and relevant documentation: A common challenge in ex-post evaluations is finding participants and activity staff after the activity has ended. To mitigate this limitation, the team used a snowball sampling approach to identify additional informants who previously worked with or were impacted by the activity. The evaluation team could not locate some relevant policy documents and reports, which created challenges for triangulation via document review. This was mitigated by validation by multiple respondents.
- Recall biases resulting from respondents' poor recollection of past events: Key informants may not accurately recall the details of the activity interventions due to the length of time that has lapsed. The team used multiple methods (KIIs, FGDs, and document review) to triangulate results, thereby reducing biases caused by poor recollection of past events.

FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This section provides a detailed description of the findings for each key evaluation question, including evidence gathered from different stakeholder groups through interviews, focus groups, and document review. This is followed by an overall analysis of the sustainability of the program in the conclusion section, highlighting common elements and challenges identified through the findings for the three questions. Finally, recommendations are provided for current and future policy programming relevant to the Malawi context and wider policy programming.

FINDINGS

Q1. To what extent have the GoM and other actors continued to implement and/or sustain interventions, activities, and/or results generated by NAPAS?

This question focuses on the sustainability of SRs from the NAPAS results framework. The NAPAS AMELP identified these SRs as outputs, therefore, they are a direct result of NAPAS activities. To answer this question, the evaluation team collected data from each stakeholder group and conducted a document review.

SR1 - New Information, Knowledge, and Practices - Value chain analyses and other research to improve policy development and implementation

The NAPAS activity sought to increase the availability and use of information, knowledge, and practices to improve the policy formulation and implementation process. The activity achieved this by the conducting several studies, most notably 12 value chain analyses to support the development of the National Agriculture Investment Plan (NAIP). Over the life of the activity, NAPAS generated 37 policy research and best practices papers, and conducted reviews for 15 policies.¹¹ Several key informants and focus group discussants cited these knowledge outputs as a core outcome of the NAPAS activity. Informants from the private sector and development partners noted that many of these value chain analyses are still being used today. One private sector KII stated that they use the NAPAS value chain analyses as a “starting off” point when conducting their own value chain analysis based on the current context. A respondent in a Civil Society Organization (CSO) focus group stated that ***“NAPAS taught us evidence-based [policy formulation]... we used to engage in policy processes, but in terms of really synthesizing the different information and evidence that you’ve come across to develop a factual presentation of a policy paper...that was the value added we saw at the time.”***

Evaluation findings indicate that this level of research and analysis has continued since the end of the NAPAS Activity, particularly by MwAPATA. Many KIs (civil society, private sector, and development partners) consider MwAPATA to be the continuation or “successor” to NAPAS. One difference in the type of research and analysis conducted through MwAPATA is that it can be both supply and demand driven.¹² MwAPATA is staffed with agricultural experts and, therefore, conducts some studies based on subjects identified by researchers. At the same time, MwAPATA has regular meetings with the MoAFS, facilitated by Policy Support for Agricultural Transformation (PoSAT), where the ministry may request research on certain issues (Development Partner KI). One private sector respondent noted that the independence of MwAPATA improved the research agenda since topics can be submitted by stakeholders outside of the MoAFS, such as the private sector.

¹¹ Michigan State University, New Alliance Policy Acceleration Support (NAPAS) Activity (Associate Cooperative Agreement no. AID-612-LA-15-00001) Project Lifetime Report, November 27, 2014 to February 27, 2019.

¹² MwAPATA Website www.mwapata.mw

In addition to research conducted on behalf of the GoM, KIs indicated that both academia and the private sector are conducting sector-related research, including value chain analysis and other industry research. Two private sector KIs reported that their groups are conducting research activities, including value chain analysis, for their own use. Journalist participants in the FGD reported attending academic research events at Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources (LUNAR) that included research relevant to agricultural sector actors. One FGD participant stated ***“I attended conferences where someone presents a paper and you are like, wow, this is massive. I’ll give you an example of the loss of soil in line with how much the country is spending on fertilizer because we have not managed to sustain the soil or make the soil healthy... they did calculations based on how we spend through subsidized fertilizer and how much as a country, if we’re able to keep our soil healthy we would save as a country.”*** FGD participants reported that this type of information does not normally arrive at the policymaker level (see below discussion).

SR2 - Knowledge Dissemination and Learning Events (Communication) – Policy forums, dialogues, and other events, media reports

The NAPAS activity increased policy communication by organizing national symposiums, research dissemination events, policy dissemination events, workshops, and learning events. NAPAS organized 44 stakeholder learning and dissemination events, and disseminated 600 copies of policy briefs and approximately 150 copies of policy documents to civil society, private sector, farmers organizations, and other agriculture sector stakeholders. In addition, NAPAS provided training to journalists on reporting on agriculture and nutrition, which resulted in the development and publication of articles. The evaluation team was unable to determine the specifics of articles published (for example how many, when, in what media) as they did not have access to the media archives, but participants in the journalist FGD stated that their media groups had published articles as a result of the NAPAS training and that they remain in their organizational archives. Civil society and private sector KIs and FGD respondents stated that information on agriculture policy, including copies of policy enacted, was readily available during the NAPAS period, but has decreased since the end of the activity.

Evidence gathered through KIIs and FGDs indicates that the level of policy communication and information dissemination carried out by NAPAS has not been sustained. This sentiment was shared across the stakeholder groups, including civil society, the private sector, and the media. Respondents in the civil society FGD noted that obtaining copies of policy documents from the MoAFS is currently difficult. Two FGD respondents noted they had to go through personal connections to get copies of current policies. One private sector KI stated that since the close of the NAPAS activity, ***“access to information is completely out.”*** Participants in the media FGD also listed a lack of information from the GoM as a main barrier to reporting on agricultural issues. One respondent noted the issue of “red tape” with government institutions, stating that ***“if you want to dig deeper into an issue with the officials, most of the time they’re not willing to share whatever they have to sum up your story.”*** Another respondent stated that the ***“issue sometimes is to get the proper information that we may want. For example, maybe when we are reporting about issues of fertilizer subsidy, sometimes there’s no proper information given out...so it becomes a challenge to do proper stories. It involves being investigative to get the right stories.”***

SR3 – Policies, Programs, and Regulations Review and Analyzed – Policy analysis and evaluation

NAPAS provided technical support to the MoAFS to conduct policy review processes. During the life of the activity, NAPAS conducted reviews of approximately 15 policies, programs,

and regulations, such as the Agriculture Extension Policy, Special Crops Act, Agriculture General Purpose Act.¹³ Technical experts, either from the NAPAS team or consultants, conducted the initial review and prepared a report. The report was then presented to stakeholder groups for comments, feedback, and validation. The MoAFS used the results of the reviews to update or modify the policy.

Document review and KIs indicated that the MoAFS has continued to conduct policy reviews since the completion of NAPAS. Interviewees mentioned several specific policy reviews, including the Seed Act (Development Partner KI), Fertilizers and Farm Feeds Remedies Act to create a single Fertilizer Act (GoM KI), and the Grain Reserve Guidelines (Development Partner KI). PoISAT continues to provide ongoing support to the MoAFS in this area. Private sector and development partner informants also confirmed their participation in the review processes of the Fertilizer Act and sub-committees. In addition, the MoAFS finalized the review of the Special Crops Act (SCA), Agriculture General Purposes Act (AGPA) and Contract Farming legislation to combine into the Crops Bill (GoM and Private Sector KIs). Currently, the MoAFS is reviewing the NAP and NAIP as part of the preparation process for the new iterations (GoM, Development Partner, Civil Society, and Private Sector KIs).

SR4 – Human Resource Capacity Building – Training and coaching on policy formulation and monitoring and evaluation for the MoAFS and CSOs, and communication training for media.

NAPAS's main capacity building objectives focused on the MoAFS, and specifically the DAPS. Key areas of capacity support to the DAPS included formal training workshops and coaching on policy analysis, formulation, budgeting, and monitoring and evaluation. The NAPAS Activity was embedded in the DAPS to allow for day-to-day coaching and mentoring. Despite this intensive approach, interviews with the MoAFS, development partners, and former NAPAS team members indicated that capacity building results fell short of expectations. One GoM KI stated that **“generally, there was limited activity around capacity building. This was one area that the NAPAS did not do well. Nevertheless, personnel acquired knowledge and skills that they continuously use.”** Another respondent noted that **“the intention was that staff be exposed to short- and long-term training, but much of that was not carried through. There [were] a few one-day, two-day training sessions.** Respondents also noted that one of the obstacles to this capacity development was a lack of clarity on the working arrangement, in particular reporting structures, between the activity and MoAFS staff.

NAPAS capacity building support continues under other donor-funded efforts. PoISAT is currently supporting the DAPS in areas previously supported by NAPAS. PoISAT activity documents identify “Capacity strengthening of the Department of Agriculture Planning Services to analyze, interpret, and use evidence for better-informed decisions in the agricultural sectors” as a main objective of the program. The capacity building program under PoISAT mainly took the form of on-the-job training of MoAFS technical personnel. The DAPS is also receiving capacity building support through the AGCOM 2.0 program funded by the World Bank.

In addition to the MoAFS, NAPAS provided capacity building support to civil society, the private sector, and media. The main civil society partners were members of CISANET. For CSOs and the private sector, the capacity building took place through three policy analysis training workshops and actual participation in policy formulation processes. Based on interviews and FGDs, capacity building support to the private sector has and is being

¹³ Michigan State University, New Alliance Policy Acceleration Support (NAPAS) Activity (Associate Cooperative Agreement no. AID-612-LA-15-00001) Project Lifetime Report, November 27, 2014 to February 27, 2019.

provided by several other partners and multinational companies. One FGD respondent reported that the NAPAS activity spurred other capacity building support to the private sector, particularly European donors and enterprises, to ensure they could effectively participate in the activities. A CSO FGD respondent noted that NAPAS training was ***“delivered in a TOT [training of trainers] fashion, training of trainers. So what then happened was, for example, when we went, I underwent this training, then I did the same with the number of officers in [organization],”*** and that capacity building was sustained in this manner. However, PolSAT has not continued providing training to civil society or the private sector.

NAPAS conducted four training sessions for the media personnel on reporting on agricultural issues. Topics included food security and nutrition, investigative techniques, ethics in reporting, and reporting on research. Although the evaluation team invited journalists listed as participants in the NAPAS training, several could not remember if they had in fact participated. All journalists reported both in FGDs and KIIs that they have not had training on agricultural issues since NAPAS, but all noted that they have continual training on journalism issues such as investigative techniques and ethics. While some of these trainings were sponsored by the African Union (AU), respondents noted that a media association or organization normally invited them, and often, they did not know who was sponsoring the training.

CONCLUSIONS

The findings demonstrate that the GOM and its partners have continued some of NAPAS's activities, though some activities slowed or stopped altogether. MwAPATA continues to conduct research to support the MoAFS. Academia, private sector, and civil society also conduct agricultural research for their own use. PolSAT provides technical assistance and capacity building support to the MoAFS in policy development and review, but does not provide similar support to civil society and the private sector. Capacity strengthening support to the media has not continued.

The major barrier to continuing NAPAS activities is the lack of knowledge dissemination and learning events. Although MwAPATA organizes research presentations, agriculture stakeholders reported very low access to information on policies and policy processes since the completion of NAPAS. The GoM and development partner informants attribute this to a lack of programming and budgeting for these types of events; however, other stakeholders from private sector, civil society, and media attributed both to a lack of resources and political will.

Q2. Do the capacity and linkages that NAPAS built among key stakeholders such as smallholder farmers, private sector, and civil society with the MoAFS still exist?

This question focuses on NAPAS's achievements at the Sub-Intermediate Result (SIR) level, specifically SIR1.1 and SIR1.2. The evaluation team collected data to determine if capacity is sustained for the MoAFS and other stakeholders, and if linkages between GoM and other stakeholders remain. Data collection included KIIs with representatives of the GoM, private sector, civil society, and media and FGDs with civil society and media. The evaluation team also completed a policy process mapping exercise (Annex 1) to examine stakeholder engagement in the policy process. The findings are organized by SIR.

SIR1.1: Enhanced institutional capacity development

NAPAS provided capacity building support to the MoAFS, civil society, the private sector, and media. As specific capacity activities are detailed in the previous section, this section

will focus on the existing levels of capacity of the different groups to participate in agriculture policy. As discussed in the limitations section of the report, NAPAS did not measure capacity during implementation, limiting the evaluation team's ability to cross-validate the qualitative findings. Therefore, the evidence presented in this section is based solely on the perceptions of respondents.

MoAFS: NAPAS provided institutional capacity support to the MoAFS for policy formulation through direct technical support, training, and coaching. NAPAS also supported the development of a strategic plan and provided M&E training that led to the conceptualization of the NAMIS.¹⁴ Findings on these components of institutional capacity indicate a lack of sustainability.

Key informants from both GoM and former NAPAS staff reported that NAPAS did not substantially contribute to capacity development of the DAPS; however, both highlighted positive results in policy reviews and development. Respondent views on the sustainability of the MoAFS's institutional capacity differed between GoM and other stakeholder informants. GoM KIs reported ongoing institutional capacity both through sustained capacity from NAPAS and current direct support from PoISAT, and this is demonstrated by the continuation of policy development. A GoM KI stated that institutional capacity remains, ***“as evidenced by continued development and reviews of strategies, frameworks and legislation, among the key activities. Key policies and legislation pursued in Malawi include Contract Farming, National Fertilizer Policy and Farmer Organization Development Policy...drafting of the seed policy and the fertilizer bill.”*** Another KI noted that PoISAT's presence in the DAPS has contributed to continued policy capacity, stating ***“POISAT has helped a lot to sustain the policy development agenda of the Ministry. The pace and quality of policy development has also been maintained.”*** A third GoM KI stated that sustained capacity ***“is reflected in the revision of the NAP that the Government has done under PoISAT. Some of the knowledge and skills applied were acquired from NAPAS policy reform activities.”***

Despite the continuation of policy development, several civil society and the private sector stakeholders perceive that capacity gained at the MoAFS through the NAPAS program has not been sustained. Many respondents feel that the policy process has slowed since the end of NAPAS, and attribute the loss of capacity to staff turnover. One private sector KI stated that ***“staff turnover has been so rampant in the DAPS”*** and another noted that ***“there has been a steady staff turnover as most staff that were trained within the ministry, especially the economists, were a pool service staff...there is currently one member of staff remaining in the ministry from the days of the project”*** (the evaluation team could not confirm this). Two civil society respondents cited a lack of performance management in the MoAFS as a barrier to sustained capacity, while others saw the deterioration of capacity as a resource issue, noting that policy development was faster under NAPAS due to funding. One FGD participant stated that ***“the presence of NAPAS made financing of the various activities for policy seamless ... right now it is difficult to do policy issues in government because they always tell you about funding...NAPAS facilitated finance.”***

NAPAS provided institutional capacity support to the MoAFS for the development of two institutional tools - the MoAFS Five-Year Strategic Plan (2019-2023) and the conceptualization of the NAMIS. The evaluation team found that the MoAFS has not significantly utilized the strategic plan over the past five years. The original process included drafting annual work plans based on the strategic plan, however, after the reorganization of the ministry in 2020 the plan became obsolete as the institution was divided into two new

¹⁴ Michigan State University, New Alliance Policy Acceleration Support (NAPAS) Activity (Associate Cooperative Agreement no. AID-612-LA-15-00001) Project Lifetime Report, November 27, 2014 to February 27, 2019.

ministries. The MoAFS continued to do yearly planning, but no longer based it on the existing strategic plan because of the reorganization. As the plan nears its expiration, the MoAFS intends to develop a new one, but all institutional strategy development is on hold until the new NAP is approved in order to ensure alignment (GoM KI).

The evaluation team also found that NAPAS only contributed to the development of the NAMIS at the conceptualization phase, mainly through the provision of M&E training. Key informants reported that NAMIS is currently being tested by the GoM and other stakeholders (GoM and Civil Society KIs). After completing the conceptual framework in 2019, the project to complete the NAMIS received funding from other donors.¹⁵ The MoAFS is still developing the NAMIS and has tested it in 12 districts in collaboration with civil society partners, though no modules are complete (GoM and civil society KIs). The main barrier to the finalization of the system is the lack of financial resources. The significant lack of resources was cited as the reason the test was conducted only in 12 districts (GoM KI). KIs also cited the lack of appropriate equipment and IT capacity needs with the system (GoM KI). One CSO KI who advocated for the inclusion of non-state actors in the development of NAMIS and who participated in its development and testing noted that **“there's lots of resources that non-state actors [invest] in the agriculture sector. So it was important that the NAMIS captures the totality of the agriculture sector.”** He also noted that having all information in one system will allow the sector to see which farmers are being served, avoid duplication of efforts, and allocate resources to where they are needed (civil society KI) .”

Civil Society: NAPAS supported civil society capacity development directly through training and workshops and indirectly by supporting their participation in policy processes. Discussions with members of civil society confirmed that there was indeed improvement in the MoAFS's engagement of institutions including NASFAM, CISANET, and FUM in policy advocacy since their participation in NAPAS activities. Civil society KIs and FGDs indicated that some of NAPAS's CSO partners have lost capacity since the closure of NAPAS due to staff turnover and governance issues. However, they noted that the capacity created by NAPAS still exists broadly within the sector. One FGD participant stated that **“it's better to [look at] the sector, leave the talk about the institutions. People move. You might see as if there is no impact because people move, but when they move, they move within [the sector].”** Another participant noted that if different organizations are trained **“it's because of how they participate in policy processes... if you leave [your organization] you join FAO for example, you are still in the sector.”** One respondent added the approach that NAPAS used for training increased the sustainability of the capacity in the sector, noting that **“it was more on the general skill set of if you wanted to engage with policy analysis, with the development of a policy paper, how do you go about it? How do you need to engage? So it was more giving you a toolkit that you can apply, you can contextualize it.”** Respondents also reiterated that normally activities around policy processes are conducted in consortiums and groups, and therefore the groups retain the capacity.

Civil society respondents reported a decline in institutional capacity related to collaboration and coordination since the end of NAPAS, particularly in CISANET. One FGD participant noted that in the past, if there was an issue, **“you go for a meeting at CISANET with other organizations and we discuss and then come up with a solution. So there was that strong one voice that used to do this [policy] development. But now there are so many other voices...so we're working in silos.”** Another participant added that **“we need to strengthen the system. CISANET needs to be strengthened so that it's able to do the advocacy on behalf of the members of CISANET,”** and noted that members are losing interest in participating because capacity has decreased due to a lack of resources.

¹⁵ IBID; MoAFS, Conceptual Framework for the Design of National Agriculture Management Information System (NAMIS), prepared by Gateway Development, May 2019.

Additionally, CISANET elaborated a strategic plan in alignment with the NAIP to support its implementation, but the evaluation team found no evidence that the plan was operationalized, and annual reports are unavailable for the time period in question. The Commercial Agriculture Support Services (CASS), an engagement platform that brings together farmers' organizations, civil society, government, and private sector support by Grow Africa, does seem to still be active, though representatives note that engagement with the government is more difficult (Civil Society FGD).

Media: NAPAS supported the media to strengthen journalists' capacity to report on agricultural issues, including increasing the number of articles produced and published to support policy communication and dissemination. Striving for sustainability, the activity supported the creation of the Association for Journalists in Agriculture and Development (AJAD). KIIs and FGDs with association members indicated that capacities supported through these activities were not sustainable for the most part, though there is some lingering effect at the institutional level.

Very few FGD respondents recalled specifics of the four journalism trainings NAPAS implemented. Only one remembered participating, and another noted that NAPAS had trained former colleagues from his organization, but they were no longer with the company. One Media KI did mention that capacity had diminished because there had not been follow-on training on the subject, adding that ***“the training should be biannual or quarterly because those who were trained are no longer in the newsroom. That training that we received was special - the first of its kind in Malawi.”*** A FGD participant shared the example of a different media training activity implemented by a different organization where training modules and guides were developed on the topic and distributed to journalists, and suggested this as a potential approach to increasing sustainability of capacity building efforts. A development partner KI also stated that the movement of journalists among media outlets creates a barrier to sustainability in media capacity building more broadly.

The poor recall of NAPAS training results created obstacles in determining whether the specific capacities created through that training process remained. However, participants did discuss their involvement with the Association and publications that resulted from participation in NAPAS activities. One participant stated that the publications that resulted from the training workshops still had an impact today. He noted that he uses the archives to identify possible follow up stories, stating, ***“this is something that is embedded in the newsrooms, and we have to chase those stories. So in a way, I think the continuation is still there because those things are still in our libraries, and we are still working on stories based on the background that was there because of such projects.”*** Other participants stated that they would like to continue reporting on agriculture out of interest, and one noted that he was currently preparing a story on food and nutrition for publication.

FGD participants generally agreed that there are several barriers to reporting on agriculture. Media companies are for-profit businesses and must report on issues that bring revenue. One journalist stated that ***“Even though I wanted to be very consistent with the agricultural reporting... My employer looks at me as a journalist, just a journalist who can report on almost anything. So they want to get the most out of me instead of employing me on one specific business.”*** Another noted that for example, if you want to do a story ***“in the agriculture sector maybe for the rural masses to adopt a particular technology for conservation agriculture, they'll look at, okay, what's in this for us as an institution.”*** FGD participants suggested that providing grants and other resources such as equipment could facilitate more reporting on these topics. Another challenge was access to information. In addition to obstacles to obtaining information from the government discussed in the previous section, journalists cited a lack of linkages with academia to facilitate reporting on research findings that may be of interest to the public. One participant stated that he believed that academics do not understand the value of their research to the

public. Participants did note though that MwAPATA maintains strong linkages with media, and one participant noted that they are one of their “closest allies.”

Journalist participants in the FDG reported that the AJAD no longer exists. FGD participants attributed the dissolution of the association to governance and resources issues. One participant stated that the leaders of the association left the media sector and that there was a **“vacuum of leadership and somehow the organization disintegrated.”** Another added that this happened before the association’s registration was finalized, which contributed further to the dissolution. Several participants agreed that many journalists are only association members in name and normally belong to several associations, so no true affinity to the network exists. One participant noted that future projects should include **“capacity building on governance and leadership, on how they should manage the association would be very important...I think that would be key.”** Another suggested regular follow-up to see **“whether we are working or they’re not working, resources available or not, and everything else just to make it vibrant.”**

Private Sector: NAPAS provided minimal direct capacity building with the private sector. One informant noted that **“because the NAPAS itself could not engage the private sector in a way that would entice the private sector to be part of it... we managed to become part of the process because of the side trainings,”** noting that the private sector received limited direct support such as training. He went further to state that European donors and enterprises provided capacity building support to private sector actors through training and grants to enable their participation in the New Alliance processes, including those supported by NAPAS that “stimulated” this additional support. Another private sector representative added that **“oftentimes the private sector will only participate when people ...in the forefront are trying to seek information or there’s research...but in terms of training, if you look at the private sector and all the training that we’ve done, they didn’t participate,”** adding that this affected their understanding of how to invest based on the new policies. One private sector KI confirmed that his company had participated in a NAPAS policy analysis training, and that they continue to use those skills today, however, he also noted the need for continual training and a follow-on activity (private sector KI).

Private sector members that participated in capacity building activities tended to be representatives of small private sector actors that needed more capacity support, and continued capacity building. Larger private sector actors interviewed reported that they are doing their own research, including value chain analyses, and are even assisting in drafting of new policy and bills (private sector KI). This suggests that the capacity does still exist in the private sector, however, it skewed towards larger private sector actors. This is particularly noteworthy because the NAPAS activity and agriculture sector in general seems to treat the private sector as a single stakeholder group, and fails to take into account the vast diversity in size, scope, resources, and goals represented among different actors within the sector.

SIR1.2: Better policy formulation process

For this SIR, the evaluation team focused on stakeholder engagement in policy formulation, specifically inclusiveness and transparency, as the team examined technical aspects of policy formulation under SIR 1.1. Stakeholder engagement was a central component of NAPAS, and one that many respondents noted as a major contribution. One private sector KI stated that **“during NAPAS, none of the private sector would claim that they were not engaged. It would’ve been their choice by not attending.”**

Overall, most non-state actors interviewed for this evaluation reported that engagement around policy formulation decreased since the end of the NAPAS activity. The MoAFS has

not maintained the previous level of outreach to stakeholder groups. One civil society FGD participant shared that before NAPAS ***“in forums where you're discussing policy, in 70%, [of the time] you were going there to endorse. NAPAS, changed that a bit. You were not going there to endorse anything. You were going there to discuss a paper and you would see things [suggestions] being taken. Today you can go into a meeting or a policy you would discuss, discuss... the document is released, there is no change.”*** Many stakeholders feel that engagement by the MoAFS and non-state actors has decreased due to resource constraints on both sides. Several civil society KIs and FGD participants noted that they have not participated in consultations on any of the new policies, including the new NAP or Crops Bill, currently being developed. One GoM KI noted this challenge to organizing consultative and other engagement activities, and stated that current donor programming does not allow for this level of engagement in its budget. Private sector KI's agreed with this, and one noted that this leads to most of the consultation and engagement being with international NGOs as ***“they've got money to throw into these processes.”*** Another private sector KI stated that ***“platforms of mutual accountability I may say are there but generally the participation of the private sector in direct policy formulation is minimal...NAPAS created the space which currently is not very much available. For instance, the Crops Bill development process faced resistance from the private sector because the process was not very open.”*** A development partner KI noted similar issues with keeping private sector engaged in policy formulation, stating that engaging ***“the private sector requires continued “outside/project” support because it is not easy or cheap to keep them engaged with the policy or implementation processes without physically engaging them in the processes.”***

Another barrier to engagement on policy formulation that surfaced in interviews and discussions was perceived selectivity and bias of the MoAFS. One civil society FGD participant noted that ***“the government has been quite selective in terms of who gets involved in these policy processes, especially in the consultation processes.”*** Civil society informants felt that the MoAFS has identified certain members of civil society that they are willing to engage with, but not the wider civil society. Similar sentiments were expressed by private sector KIs. Civil society FGD participants again made references to the MoAFS engaging mainly with international NGOs. Two civil society FGD participants also noted that they initiated engagement on two policy issues from their side, but without any results. Another shared the view that ***“the decisions or policy direction authority is not lying in the ministry...they are not able to drive policy or to direct policy.”***

Finally, some informants felt that the COVID-19 pandemic may have negatively influenced stakeholder engagement in the policy process. One example was the formulation of the Crops Bill, which was reviewed during the pandemic. Development partners and civil society KIs cited COVID as a reason the GoM did not do a wider consultation, though GoM KIs did not mention this.

Respondents did report that engagement on agricultural policy continues to take place through formally organized platforms, such as Pillar Coordination Groups (PCGs), Enabler Coordination Groups (ECGs) meetings, and Joint Sector Review (JSR) forums. The Pillar and Enabler Coordination Groups are relatively new institutions established through/by the National Planning Commission (NPC) to foster the implementation of MW2063. Joint sector reviews are a government-led process bringing different stakeholders together to engage in dialogue, review status, and monitor expenditure, progress, and performance in implementing its national sector plans. Joint sector reviews take a critical look at achievements as well as bottlenecks in plan implementation and propose forward-looking remedial actions. Several private sector and civil society KIs identified the joint sector reviews as continuing opportunities for engagement, though two noted that they are not always held as scheduled.

CONCLUSIONS

Findings indicate that while there is some sustained capacity and linkage that was built among stakeholders in the agriculture sector, several gaps remain in institutional capacity and policy formulation. For the MoAFS, neither of the two institutional tools supported by NAPAS was completely operationalized. The strategic plan became obsolete after the reorganization of the ministry in 2020. While the NAMIS has progressed, it has not become fully operational due to financial, material, and capacity challenges. Furthermore, much of the capacity support provided to the MoAFS through projects and programs tends to be direct technical support, which may not be sustainable. However, the MoAFS has continued to develop and review policies, indicating some capacity is sustained.

Other stakeholders, such as civil society and the private sector, have experienced mixed results in the sustainability of capacity built under the NAPAS activity. One example is the CISANET network, which was very active during the NAPAS implementation period. Over the past few years, the network's advocacy capacity appears to have declined, according to interviews and civil society FGDs, and underscored by the limited availability of key organizational documents such as annual reports. Lastly, the capacity built for media participation in the agricultural sector has mostly been lost as well. The Association of Journalists for Agriculture and Development has dissolved and there is little to no focus on reporting on agriculture due to resource constraints and low levels of interest among media outlets.

The engagement around policy formulation to improve outcomes has decreased after the NAPAS activity. The MoAFS allocated little to no programming and/or budget to this type of activity, and PoSAT did not include it in activity programming. Some private sector and civil society informants stated that engagement platforms still exist, but are less active due to political will and interest on the part of all of the stakeholders. However, some platforms remain active and important in policy formulation, particularly the MoAFS-led joint sector review.

Q3. To what extent has GoM demonstrated commitment towards implementing policy reforms supported by NAPAS, including those affecting the private sector?

The overall purpose of NAPAS to “improve the enabling environment for agricultural development and investment” requires that policies are not only drafted, but also implemented and enforced. In order to evaluate the GoM's progress post NAPAS, the evaluation team collected and analyzed data on the implementation status of adopted policies and progress made towards finalizing others through KIIs, FGDs, and document review. The evaluation team also completed a policy process mapping exercise (Annex 1) through document review, KIIs and FGDs to identify steps taken post-NAPAS, current implementation status, and stakeholder engagement for each policy supported by NAPAS. Information under this section links to SIR1.3: Improved agricultural policy environment and the overall SIR Level Outcome: Implementation and Enforcement of new policies, programs, and regulations in the results framework.

GoM KIIs reported that there is a high level of commitment to policy reform and implementation and cited examples that demonstrate this, including the implementation of National Agriculture Policy, the National Agriculture Investment Plan, and completion of the National Fertilizer Policy and Act, the Seed Bill, the Agriculture Extension Policy Review and Strategy, the Agriculture Sector Food and Nutrition Strategy, and the Farmer Organization Development Strategy (FODS). The evaluation team confirmed these reform processes through the policy process mapping exercise. Government commitment to agricultural policy

reform is also evident in the integration of the reforms agenda in the long-term national development plan, Malawi Vision 2063 (MW2063) and its first 10-year implementation plan (MIP-1). Specific policy and legislative reforms that NAPAS pursued but did not complete and that are integrated into the MIP-1 include (but are not limited to the following):

- By 2022: Review the Fertilizer, Farm Feeds and Remedies Act to address quality standards and supply system [responsible: MoAFS] (completed)
- By 2023: Review laws that relate to the crops and products earmarked for promotion under the existing National Export Strategy (NES) [responsible: Ministry of Trade]
- By 2023: Review agriculture-pricing policies to provide incentives for production and ensure food security [responsible: MoAFS]
- By 2023: Formulate policy/legislation on contract farming for smallholder/out grower arrangements [responsible: MoAFS]
- By 2023: Legislate for minimum product quality standards for agricultural exports, in conformity with World Trade Organization (WTO) provisions [responsible: Ministry of Trade].

GoM KIs also agreed that current policy development and implementation are responsive to stakeholder needs, and one reiterated that the GoM was committed to **“developing policies to suit the needs of all stakeholders, including the private sector.”**

Despite the progress made in the examples cited above, there are still gaps in the legal framework identified through the policy process mapping exercise. Policies still lacking the legal framework for enforcement include the Contract Farming Strategy and the National Fertilizer Policy. Other policies have low levels of implementation due to operational constraints. For instance, the adoption of the Agricultural Extension Strategy has not resulted in additional extension officers in rural areas. One private sector KI attributed this to difficulty recruiting young graduates to live in rural areas, noting that extension officers are not recruited from areas of need. Informants also felt that the implementation of the Farmer Organization Development Strategy (FODS) implementation is slow, though the DAES has made efforts to disseminate the strategy and orient groups. Lastly, the Horticulture Policy and Strategy development has stalled for the past few years due to the lack of resources to facilitate consultations and the lack of consensus on the contents (GoM KI).

Most stakeholders report that the NAP and NAIP implementation process has been limited or slowed. One GoM KI stated that implementation of the NAP was not as successful as planned, noting that **“the policy was followed up with an investment plan, the NAIP. However, policy implementation is multi-sectoral and does not entirely fall under the control of DAPS. There are several players involved. In general, implementation of the NAIP has not been impressive if we look at what has been achieved versus the targets that were laid down.”** Another GoM respondent felt that the government had made efforts to raise awareness among stakeholders, but fell short. **“Policy implementation is complex. The NAIP was the vehicle for policy implementation. Awareness has been raised on the policy but there is more to policy implementation than these aspects, especially considering the wide spectrum of stakeholders involved.”** There was general consensus among civil society focus group participants that implementation support is what is needed most at this point. One stated **“what I really long for is something like what the NAPAS did... but supporting policy implementation. And I don’t know how that can be created, but it’s something that we lack as a country.”** This was supported by development partner KIs as well. **“The obstacle is policy implementation. There seems to be a disconnect between what is laid out in the policies and strategies and what goes on with implementation. There is not enough ownership of the policies and strategies by the policy actors.”** (Development Partner KI)

Table 3: Policy Reforms Pursued by the MoAFS Post NAPAS*

Policy	Results at end of NAPAS	Status as of June 2023	Evaluation Source
Horticulture Policy and Strategy	Zero draft policy to be validated internally and externally.	The Horticultural Policy and strategy remain in draft form	KII with government FDG with the civil society
Agriculture Extension Policy Review and Strategy	Document is submitted to MoAFSIWD for adoption (results unknown)	Revised policy adopted, in use by DAES and stakeholders	KII with government (DAES) FGD with CSO Agricultural extension: Evidence from Malawi Africa South of the Sahara (foodsecurityportal.org)
Farmer Organization Development Strategy (FODS)	Director of DAES will push for its adoption in the Ministry	The FODS was launched in 2020 and it runs for the period 2020-2025.	KII with DAES Civil Society FGD
National Fertilizer Bill (NFB)	Draft Bill developed	Enacted into law in December 2022	KIIs with the private sector
National Fertilizer Policy (NFP)	Not gone through the OPC approval process by the end of the NAPAS	Policy launched in March 2021.	KIIs with GoM and PS
Agriculture Sector Food and Nutrition Strategy	Awaiting finalization and adoption.	Strategy was launched in 2020 to be implemented over the period 2020-2024	KII with DAES
Farm Input Subsidy Program (FISP)	Positive steps towards improved financial sustainability and efficiency of the FISP	FISP rebranded to "Affordable Input Subsidy Program". Retrogressive in terms of financial sustainability and efficiency.	KII with private sector, FGD with the CSOs
Special Crops Act (SCA), Agriculture (General Purposes) Act (AGPA) and Development of Contract Farming (CF) Legislation Review	Project closed before the final report was produced. The MoAFSIWD was expected to use the final review report to inform drafting of new Agriculture Legislation.	The World Bank is supporting the review of AGPA and SCPA under the name of the Crops Act. However, this process has stalled due to objections from the private sector who feel the process of developing the Crops Acts has been rushed through without much consultation with all the stakeholders.	KII with government KIIs with private sector

*See Annex I for full mapping of policy process

Civil society and private sector KIs also reported that the policy implementation processes fell short of expectations. The main causes cited for this were lack of resources and poor awareness of the policies by subnational government workers and policy users. One civil society FGD respondent noted that ***“it’s an issue of putting the policy into practice and then backing it up with the necessary investment to support the growth outcomes that were espoused. So in this period, at least what we’ve seen is agriculture growth is a mixed bag. You have 3% against the 6% that is needed. Despite that you are meeting certain requirements in allocating the resources to their sector.”*** Development partner KIs also cited resource constraints in the government as the main obstacle in policy implementation, and some noted that donor funds are normally required to support the implementation. Several private sector KIs also identified lack of government resources as the main barrier to policy implementation. A private sector respondent stated that ***“I believe the main issue could be resource constraints in government. It’s so surprising that the government does not budget to strengthen governance structures in the ministry. These are always supported by donors.”***

Civil society and private sector respondents felt a lack of clarity on the policies and implementation approaches by GoM and stakeholders presented a major barrier to implementation. One civil society FGD participant stated that ***“the ministry...itself, did not create [sic] awareness of these policies at the district level...you go to a district, and you go down the agriculture ladder, you basically see that the level of understanding of these policies was actually low.”*** A private sector KI shared that ***“from the private sector point of view, the national agriculture policy gives us an overview of the intention, the national intention without a proper implementation structure. The other problem was who was supposed to be the implementer.”*** A development partner KI noted that the policy actors' lack of ownership of the policy resulted in poor implementation. ***“Government is not able to engage/stimulate more actors in the private sector. Private sector is also not able to take advantage of some of the opportunities provided (that is, smaller private sector actors like farmers).”***

All but one of nine private sector KIs feel that the policy environment is not conducive to private sector investment. Several cited issues with the Fertilizer Policy, with one saying that based on the policy their company decided not to invest in fertilizer in Malawi. Another noted that ***“there are a number of issues that the Government needs to resolve particularly regarding registration of specific blends in relation to specific soil conditions, applicable fees on fertilizer imports and reduction of bureaucracies that impede efficiency in the fertilizer related businesses.”*** Private sector KIs also cited the Land Act as a major barrier to investment. One private sector KI noted that ***“the policies and legislation that Malawi is developing now are more retrogressive than the previous ones. Examples include the Land Act and the Fertilizer Act that are making it harder for the businessperson in the country to conduct business involving these factors of production.”*** Another stated that foreign investment would be almost impossible to attract with the current Land Act (Private Sector KI). Others spoke more generally noting that ***the “government is paying lip service to policy reforms that support the private sector. There is little that is there to support mega farms, to support increased agricultural production and exports” and “the policy environment in Malawi is hostile towards the private sector...very little effort is done to enhance productivity, and export and yet there are huge taxes, fees, levies on business activities. The needs of the private sector are seldom addressed.”*** Some development partners agreed with this sentiment, with one noting an ***“overemphasis on development strategies, policy reviews and other documents, and not enough done to free up constraints to the operation of private firms in the agriculture sector.”***

CONCLUSIONS

There are several examples that demonstrate GoM's commitment to many of the New Alliance policy reforms supported by the NAPAS activity. Despite changes in administration, several of these policies were integrated into the new development plan and listed as priorities in the first 10-year implementation plan. Key policy processes supported but not finalized under the NAPAS project have also been completed, including the National Fertilizer Policy and the Seed Bill. However, there are still several challenges at the implementation level. The two main barriers to policy implementation cited were lack of awareness of new policies and financial constraints. Private sector and civil society informants felt that both subnational level MoAFS officials and policy users, such as farmers and other private sector, are not aware of the content of the policies, and note a lack of a clear implementation plan for new policies. Most respondents stated that policy implementation support is a priority area of need for future programming in the agricultural policy sector.

Private sector informants reported a perceived lack of commitment to private sector needs, with some stating that the most recent policies represent a deterioration in the policy environment. They particularly noted the constraints of the new Fertilizer Policy and Land Policy (not under the MoAFS) on private investment. Some of their frustration also focused on recommendations made by the private sector but not integrated into the policy.

OVERALL CONCLUSIONS

The ex-post evaluation generated evidence of continued policy development activities formally supported by NAPAS, however several of the activities were integrated into subsequent programming through PoSAT and MwAPATA. This is especially true for activities led by the MoAFS including policy development, review, research, and analyses. The evaluation cannot conclude that these results are sustainable because the MoAFS remains heavily reliant on donor-funded technical support programs for the continuation of these activities.

The main gap in former NAPAS programming is engagement between GoM and other relevant stakeholders, particularly in the flow of information and feedback loops. This was evident in discussions focused on access to information, policy engagement, and the GoM's responsiveness to other stakeholders' needs, particularly the private sector. Since the end of the NAPAS activity, stakeholders have had difficulty accessing information including policy documents and implementation strategies. Inaccessibility of policy information presents significant obstacles to participation and implementation.

The current policy engagement space is also not conducive to stakeholder input into the policy formulation and implementation process. The consultative and learning events supported by NAPAS were overwhelmingly considered one of the most important results. All stakeholders, both government and non-state actors, reported a notable decrease in policy consultation processes outside of the joint sector reviews after the completion of the NAPAS activity, which heavily subsidized and organized the engagement platforms. The decline suggests that current and future programming should allocate resources to build the capacity of the MoAFS to conduct policy consultations on an ongoing basis by integrating it into normal operating procedures with budget allocations. Additionally, private sector stakeholders felt that when opportunities for contribution did arise, their inputs were not considered in the final document. This may also be a result of vast differences in needs and perspectives across the private sector, which present conflicting interests. Policy formulation requires a delicate balance across a multitude of competing interests not only within the private sector but also government interests and other stakeholders, which could also lead to certain stakeholders feeling unheard.

Barriers to engagement continue through the implementation phase. Informants across all stakeholder groups noted obscurity in implementation strategies and roles. Non-governmental stakeholders reported a lack of willingness or capacity on the part of the GoM to implicate them in policy implementation, including in facilitating investment into the strategies from the private sector.

Table 3: Overview of NAPAS ex-post evaluation results

Result	Sustained?
To what extent has the Government of Malawi and other actors continued to implement and/or sustain interventions, activities, and/or results generated by NAPAS?	
Strategic Results	
SR1 - New Information, Knowledge, and Practices	Yes
SR2 - Knowledge Dissemination and Learning Events	No
SR3 – Policies, Programs, and Regulations Review and Analyzed	Yes
SR4 – Human Resource Capacity Building	Yes, with limitations
Do the capacity and linkages that NAPAS built among key stakeholders such as smallholder farmers, private sector and civil society with MoAFSIWD still exist?	
SIR1.1: Enhanced institutional capacity development	
Ministry of Agriculture	Yes, with limitations
Civil Society capacity to participate in policy processes	Yes, with limitations
Media capacity to report on agriculture	No
SIR1.2: Better policy formulation process	
Stakeholder Engagement and inclusiveness	Yes, with limitations
To what extent has GoM demonstrated commitment towards implementation of policy reforms supported by NAPAS, including those affecting the private sector?	
SIR1.3: Improved agricultural policy environment	
Continued policy reform including those affecting private sector	Yes, with limitations
SIR Level Outcome: Implementation and Enforcement of new policies, programs, and regulations	
Implementation of policy reforms including those affecting private sector	Yes, with limitations

Another barrier to sustainability highlighted in the evaluation was due to the lack of institutional capacity of stakeholders that received NAPAS capacity building support. Capacity outside of areas currently supported by donors has decreased. This may be a result of the NAPAS activity design in that capacity building strategies did not include long-term capacity development plans or measurements. Baseline capacity levels and stakeholder-specific plans were not included in the project work plans or monitoring and evaluation systems. The dissolution of the Association of Journalists for Agriculture and Development resulting from a lack of continued support and a weak governance structure is an important example of capacity decline.

The GoM continues to prioritize agriculture sector policy reform and implementation as demonstrated by the integration of several key policies in the MW2063 and the first MIP, however gaps in the implementation process. Private sector and civil society KIs reported a lack of clarity on policy reform contents and strategies by subnational government workers and policy users. Private stakeholders also report a worsening of the agricultural policy environment that impedes investment and growth, and characterized the Fertilizer Policy and Land Act as hostile towards the private sector.

Most stakeholders across all categories cited a lack of financial resources as a major obstacle to the continuation of NAPAS activities and policy implementation. The lack of resources prevents the MoAFS from conducting necessary and adequate stakeholder consultations, and civil society and the private sector from engaging with the GoM to contribute to policy processes. Journalists identified financial resource constraints as one of the main barriers to the continuation of reporting on agricultural issues.

Lastly, based on the review of NAPAS project documentation, the activity did not include a sustainability strategy with a clear handover plan. Elements of sustainability were included in the project design, such as institutional and human resource capacity building, but in many instances, these were not formalized. The last activity quarterly report and the final Project Lifetime Report did not include an exit strategy or any information on project activity handover, other than attempting to identify additional resources to continue.¹⁶

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusions of the ex-post evaluation assessment, the evaluation team offers the following recommendations for current and future programming in the agricultural policy sector in Malawi.

To USAID and other development partners

1. Begin capacity building efforts by conducting a rigorous capacity needs assessment and developing stakeholder-specific capacity development plans that include capacity monitoring frameworks with baselines and targets. These plans should be long term and not based on an activity implementation period, but a tool that the institution may use for ongoing capacity development. Focus efforts at the system level and include materials and tools that will assist in ongoing capacity development as individuals move in and out of the system. An example could be policy analysis or review modules that could be utilized and updated within an institution for new staff,

¹⁶ NAPAS Quarterly Report and Fiscal Year 2018 Report, July 1 – October 30, 2018: Michigan State University, New Alliance Policy Acceleration Support (NAPAS) Activity (Associate Cooperative Agreement no. AID-612-LA-15-00001) Project Lifetime Report, November 27, 2014 to February 27, 2019.

for refresher training, or as a reference resource. This approach will increase the sustainability of capacity gains and lay the foundation for ongoing capacity building.

2. To increase organizational sustainability, provide organizational governance capacity building to stakeholder networks and associations. Assist associations, such as CISANET and media associations, to put strong governance systems in place, which will have a significant impact on the sustainability of the structure. This includes supporting new networks to develop foundational documents, such as bylaws and strategic plans, and completing formal registration processes.
3. Develop training modules, guides, and other resources on policy processes based on international best practices and adapted to the Malawian context for each stakeholder group. These resources should be available beyond activity implementation periods, to a wider audience beyond activity partners, and to new entrants in policy processes. This will expand the reach and use of capacity building tools and activities, thereby increasing their sustainability.
4. Provide capacity strengthening support on policy engagement to both supply and demand side actors concurrently beyond the organization of policy consultations. The ongoing coaching and support provided to the MoAFS on policy processes should be provided to all stakeholder groups. This will enhance engagement, contribute to better policy formulation, and improve stakeholder group coordination. Such support should also include negotiation and conflict resolution techniques.
5. To improve private sector engagement in policy reform and implementation, develop approaches for private sector support specific to different categories (small, medium, and large enterprises) based on their specific needs, resources, and opportunities. Recognize that different private sectors may have competing interests.
6. Re-evaluate the feasibility of engaging the media in agricultural policy issues to increase communication around policy development and implementation. Examine the possibility of working with one of the stronger, existing networks, such as the association focused on the environment. Encourage new reporting through activities such as grants to offset costs, buyout of journalist time, grants in kind of materials and equipment, and awards for high quality reporting. Funds for these types of activities may be identified through collaborations with large/commercial private sector actors. Increased communication on policy by the media to the public will improve policy development and facilitate policy implementation.
7. Consider funding projects specific to the implementation of current policies. These projects should be equally engaged with all stakeholder groups, and not focused only on the government. Programming should focus on supporting relevant stakeholders to fulfill their roles in the implementation process—for example, raising awareness of the policy at the subnational level, providing capacity building support for relevant subnational stakeholders, etc.
8. Evaluate the feasibility of establishing policy implementation monitoring frameworks for priority policies. These platforms could be nested within structures like CISANET or CASS and should be multi-stakeholder. They would support policy implementation by developing monitoring frameworks and tools, and building capacity for policy monitoring. This will enable government and non-governmental actors to reinforce accountability.
9. Require activities similar to NAPAS to have a clear exit strategy to ensure continuity and sustainability of its activities. One of the major challenges that the evaluation

noted as a barrier to the sustainability of NAPAS activities is the lack of a clear sustainability plan. The exit strategy should include a phased handover plan for each activity, personnel needs including staffing profiles and skills required, and identification of financial and material resource needs and possible sources.

To the Government of Malawi

10. Conduct a rigorous capacity needs assessment for policy development and implementation and develop a capacity development plan that includes a monitoring framework with baselines and targets. This assessment is best done by or in conjunction with the National Planning Commission (NPC), if that is not already part of their mandate. The plan should not be limited to a program scope or implementation period, but rather serve as a tool for the institution to use for ongoing capacity development. The capacity development plan should focus at the system level and include materials and tools that will assist in ongoing capacity development as new staff are engaged. An example is policy analysis or review modules that could be utilized and updated for new staff orientation, refresher training for current staff, or as a reference resource. This approach will increase sustainability of capacity gains and lay the foundation for ongoing capacity building.
11. To improve policy formulation and implementation, build the capacity of the MoAFS to engage with stakeholders on policy issues. This should include the development of an engagement strategy (or improving existing strategies). The plan should include a stakeholder analysis, and an action plan for how and when to engage with each stakeholder group. Develop training modules and guidelines on policy engagement to be used for new staff, refresher training, and as a resource.
12. To increase access to information, assess the feasibility of creating or supporting an agricultural policy resource center at the MoAFS, a university, or other appropriate institution where agricultural sector stakeholders may store and access policy documents, research papers, briefs, and other relevant materials. This center could also act as a link between academic research and policy actors, and be accessible to the public. Increased transparency of policy reforms will enable a broader set of actors and stakeholders to assist in their implementation.

ANNEXES

ANNEX I: POLICY PROCESS MAPPING MATRIX

Policy Process Mapping Matrix

Role played by NAPAS	Status	Post NAPAS Activities/ Level of Implementation	Stakeholder Engagement Post NAPAS	Source
National Agriculture Policy (NAP)				
The National Agriculture Policy (NAP) is the main deliverable that NAPAS activity helped the MoAFSIWD to produce.	Policy was adopted in September 2016.	The NAP has been the overall guiding policy for the agriculture sector in Malawi over the past seven years. It is currently undergoing a review.	Stakeholder engagement under NAP followed a formal process through the Joint Sector Reviews (JSRs) that provides a platform for mutual accountability among the stakeholders. CISANET (CS agriculture platform) developed its agriculture strategic plan for the period 2019 – 2023 under the theme “Together for a vibrant agriculture”, aligned with the NAP and the NAIP.	Agriculture Sector Performance Report: July 2020 - June 2021; KII with Government and FAO Greenwell et al ¹⁷
Investment Plan (NAIP)				
NAPAS team provided critical technical support for development of the	The NAIP adopted the implementation plan of NAP in 2016.	The NAIP is currently the main operational strategy (or	The NAIP is monitored through the structures created for the review of	Agriculture Sector Performance

¹⁷ Greenwell et al, Agricultural Sector Performance in Malawi, Regional and Sectoral Economic Studies, 2014, vol. 14, Issue 2.

Role played by NAPAS	Status	Post NAPAS Activities/ Level of Implementation	Stakeholder Engagement Post NAPAS	Source
NAIP, through a task force that the Ministry formed to oversee the process.		implementation plan) of the NAP.	<p>NAP. In addition, there is a biannual Agriculture Sector Performance report that tracks the implementation of the NAIP that stakeholder groups submit to, though engagement from CS and PS has started to fall. Stakeholders consulted stated that the quality of the reviews and reports have generally been satisfactory.</p> <p>CISANET developed its agriculture strategic plan for the period 2019 – 2023 under the theme “Together for a vibrant agriculture”, aligned with the NAP and the NAIP.</p>	<p>Report: July 2020 - June 2021</p> <p>KIIs with Development Partners</p> <p>KIIs with Civil Society</p>
Farm Input Subsidy Program				
NAPAS activity produced a brief on reform of the Farm Input Subsidy Program (FISP) for use by senior management of the Ministry to lobby for FISP restructuring. This resulted in the MoAFS increasing the contribution of farmers to the cost of purchasing	Reform ongoing	The FISP has been reformed and it is now called the Affordable Input Program (AIP). The current reforms (changing FISP to AIP) were mainly done to align to the prevailing political interest of the ruling coalition	The input subsidy programs in Malawi are highly political and stakeholder involvement during the reform process are usually minimal. However, there is a now increased participation of the private sector in the delivery processes of the subsidies.	<p>KIIs with GoM</p> <p>KIIs with Private sector</p> <p>Mapemba et. al, 2020</p> <p>NAPAS-Malawi Project Lifetime Report FY15 to</p>

Role played by NAPAS	Status	Post NAPAS Activities/ Level of Implementation	Stakeholder Engagement Post NAPAS	Source
the inputs from US\$2 to US\$16. Government allowed the private sector to import and distribute 40 metric tons of fertilizer to 12 of the 28 districts in Malawi as a pilot towards increasing private sector participation in the FISP program.				FY19-May 10 2019 (2)
Contract Farming Strategy (CFS)				
NAPAS team revised the initial CFS document to align it with the MoAFS vision.	The CFS was adopted by the Ministry in August, 2016.	Although the strategy was adopted, it was never implemented because it lacked a legal framework for its enforcement. As of the writing of this report, the process has taken close to 15 years. Currently there are efforts to incorporate contract farming issues in the Crops Bill, which is under development.	Limited engagement focused on the contract farming strategy within the Crops Bill.	KII with GoM Review of the draft Crops Bill NAPAS Endline Report

Role played by NAPAS	Status	Post NAPAS Activities/ Level of Implementation	Stakeholder Engagement Post NAPAS	Source
Agricultural Zonation Scheme				
Through IFPRI, NAPAS developed the Malawi Agriculture Zoning (crop suitability) atlas for Malawi. MAPS were shared with the MoAFS Irrigation and Water Development, specifically with the Department of Land Resources Conservation, the Department of Crop Development and the Department of Planning.	MAPS are being used by various organizations (including the Agricultural Transformation Initiative) for planning purposes and additional analytical work [available online] ¹⁸ .	The evaluation did not establish a wider use of the maps outside of government. Most institutions interviewed are not aware of their existence and use.	There has been minimal use of these among other stakeholders	KIIs with GoM KIIs with Private Sector
Concept Note on Irrigation				
NAPAS team supported the development and dissemination of the Concept Note on Irrigation and assisted the MoAFS in drafting an Expression of Interest call, seeking to engage private sector in irrigated maize production for supply to the National	The concept note supported the integration of irrigation outcomes into the National Agriculture Policy (NAP).	Government is implementing three flagship irrigation projects namely, Programme for Rural Irrigation Development (PRIDE, Shire Valley Transformation Programme (SVTP) and Kutukula Ulimi Mmalawi (KULIMA) that are focused on increasing agricultural productivity and commercialization in line with	There is a whole range of Government, CSO and private sector stakeholders engaged in irrigation development. The Department helps the private sector to get the required waivers related to acquisition of irrigation technology as provided for	KII (GoM) Department of Irrigation, 2023) ²⁰

¹⁸ <https://www.canr.msu.edu/resources/detailed-crop-suitability-maps-and-an-agricultural-zonation-scheme-for-malawi>
<http://www.ifpri.org/publication/detailed-crop-suitability-maps-and-agricultural-zonation-scheme-malawi-spatial>

²⁰ Department of Irrigation. (2023, June 23). Home: Our Projects. Retrieved from Department of Irrigation Web Site: <https://doi.gov.mw/>

Role played by NAPAS	Status	Post NAPAS Activities/ Level of Implementation	Stakeholder Engagement Post NAPAS	Source
<p>Food Reserve Agency (NFRA).</p> <p>NAPAS team facilitated a Ministerial visit¹⁹ to the School of Agriculture for Family Independence (SAFI) in Dowa owned by Mtalimanja Holdings, to help them appreciate irrigation development activities at the farm. NAPAS Team helped resolve land issues faced by Malawi Mangoes in Salima through engagement of the Director of Planning and Principal Secretaries for Agriculture and Lands.</p>		<p>the aspirations of the national vision (Malawi 2063). https://doi.gov.mw/</p>	<p>in the national taxation legislation.</p>	

¹⁹ Involving the Minister, PS, Director of Planning along with NAPAS team and other Ministry officials

Role played by NAPAS	Status	Post NAPAS Activities/ Level of Implementation	Stakeholder Engagement Post NAPAS	Source
Review of the 2000 Agricultural Extension Policy and Development of the Agricultural Extension and Advisory Services Strategy				
NAPAS activity worked closely with DAES and the USAID-supported SANE activity to produce a background paper on the Agricultural Extension Policy. NAPAS activity also supported the review and development of the Agricultural and Advisory Services Strategy the Extension Policy Review was validated with stakeholders in March 2017, while the Agricultural Extension and Advisory Services Strategy was validated in November 2018.	It was understood that the revised draft Strategy would be reviewed by a technical team before submission to MoAFSIWD for adoption in 2019 (after closure of NAPAS project).	The policy and the strategy are currently the main reference documents for the provision of extension services in Malawi. However studies and interviews indicated weakness in the implementation of extension policy in Malawi. The policy review process is scheduled for 2025.	Stakeholder engagement during the development process and implementation was high as the local level structures established to enable the implementation of the policy have been active. The policy is being implemented through a decentralized structure that provides a platform for engagement for the stakeholders through the Decentralized Agriculture Extension Services System (DAESS)	KII with GoM (DAES) KIIs with Private Sector FGD with Civil Society Agricultural extension: Evidence from Malawi Africa South of the Sahara (foodsecurityportal.org)
National Fertilizer Policy				
The NAPAS team supported the Department of Agriculture Research Services (DARS) to draft the National Fertilizer Policy (NFP) through the production of a background paper and incorporation of stakeholder inputs	The National Fertilizer Policy was launched in March 2021.	The National Fertilizer Policy is currently the guiding document for the fertilizer industry. Supporting legislation has also been developed (see National Fertilizer Bill section below).	Stakeholder engagement has been fair in this process. A multi-stakeholder task force, involving the private sector, farmers organization, academia was established to guide the development processes of the policy.	KIIs with Private Sector

Role played by NAPAS	Status	Post NAPAS Activities/ Level of Implementation	Stakeholder Engagement Post NAPAS	Source
emanating from a write shop held in Salima and other sources.				
National Fertilizer Bill (NFB)				
NAPAS supported the drafting of the Fertilizer Bill through the organization of a writeshop to align a 2014 draft Fertilizer Bill to the draft National Fertilizer Policy.	The National Fertilizer Bill was enacted into law (Act) in February 2023. The Act provides for the establishment of the Malawi Fertilizer Regulatory Authority (MFRA); regulation of the registration of fertilizers approved for use in Malawi; regulation of the manufacturing, production, blending, distribution, importation and exportation of fertilizer. MFRA is mandated to regulate the fertilizer industry manufacturers, blenders, importers, exporters, distributors, and analysts. It will also accredit testing laboratories and research institutions and ensure efficient delivery of fertilizer.	The MFRA is not operational yet. GoM stakeholders believe the initiative will reduce inefficiencies and improve performance of the fertilizer industry, facilitating sustainable agricultural production and productivity as outlined in the NAP. Private sector stakeholders are concerned that the Act will make it more difficult to conduct business, which will ultimately increase the price of fertilizer on the market. Others have also doubted the autonomy of the MFRA, arguing that it will more likely be controlled by the politicians, the majority of which have a vested interest in fertilizer as a campaign tool.	All stakeholders were engaged in the development of the policy. However, the private sector has complained that their views on reforming the fertilizer business, particularly in relation to the AIP, were not adopted.	KII with Government KIIs with Private Sector Fertilizer Act, 2023 NAPAS Quarterly reports, Endline report

Role played by NAPAS	Status	Post NAPAS Activities/ Level of Implementation	Stakeholder Engagement Post NAPAS	Source
Farmer Organization Development Strategy (FODS)				
NAPAS activity supported DAES in the drafting of the Farmer Organization Development Strategy (FODS) through the organization of stakeholder consultative workshops, a survey and a writeshop. DAES (MoAFSIWD) and NAPAS teamed up with other organizations such as the Ministry of Industry Trade and Tourism (MoITT), FAO, Farmers Union of Malawi (FUM), NASFAM, Malawi Union of Savings and Credit Cooperatives (MUSCCO), and WeEFFECT to develop the draft FODS, submitted to the Director of DAES in MoAFSIWD in February 2019.	The FODS was launched in 2020 and it runs for the period 2020-2025.	Stakeholders interviewed by the ex post evaluation felt that though the FODS was launched not much follow up is being done on the farmers organization for its implementation and adherence.	The main activities that have taken place since the FODS launch have been the dissemination of the document through the ADDs and other decentralized structures. The DAES has conducted orientation on the document to farmer organizations and has mainstreamed the strategy its programming.	KII with DAES Civil Society FGD

Role played by NAPAS	Status	Post NAPAS Activities/ Level of Implementation	Stakeholder Engagement Post NAPAS	Source
Agriculture Sector Food and Nutrition Strategy (ASFNS)				
The NAPAS Activity collaborated with the Department of Agricultural Extension (DAES), the USAID/SANE activity and the Department of Nutrition and HIV/AIDS (DNHA) in the Ministry of Health to develop the ASFNS. NAPAS co-financed regional consultations and a validation workshop for the ASFNS alongside SANE and DNHA. NAPAS team also provided technical support in improving the M&E section of the strategy.	The Agriculture Sector Food and Nutrition Strategy (ASFNS) was launched in 2020 for a period 2020-2024.	The strategy has guided the extension staff in mainstreaming nutrition in agriculture programming. However proper coordination is required so as to avoid overlaps with the National Nutrition Policy and Strategy, with Extension responsible for production and the DNHA responsible for curative nutrition.	Stakeholder engagement in the development process and current implementation is high as most NGOs have embraced nutrition mainstreaming in agriculture with the current strategy as the main guiding document. The government through the DAES has been conducting orientation and dissemination of the strategy to the grassroot institutions through the DAES.	KIIs with GoM KIIs with Civil Society KIIs with Development Partners

Role played by NAPAS	Status	Post NAPAS Activities/ Level of Implementation	Stakeholder Engagement Post NAPAS	Source
Review of the Special Crops Act (SPA), Agriculture General Purposes Act (AGPA) and Development of Contract Farming (CF) Legislation for Integration				
The NAPAS activity supported the review of the Special Crops Act and the Agriculture General Purposes Act, including exploring the possibility of developing the Contract Farming (CF) legislation and drafting it in the Agriculture General Purposes Act (AGPA). The NAPAS team held consultations with the Competition and Fair Trade Commission (CFTC) that guided incorporation of the contract farming legislation in the amendment to the Agriculture General Purposes Act. It also hired a legal consultant to support the review process.	The project closed in February 2019 before the final report was produced. The MoAFSIWD was expected to use the final review report to inform drafting of new Agriculture Legislation.	The process of review of these pieces of legislation (SPA, AGPA and CF) is currently underway. They are now being combined under the Crops Bill. The bill has undergone a validation process and is now undergoing reviews and approvals before being taken to parliament to be enacted.	The review process has faced a number of challenges. Most stakeholders complained of a low level of engagement in the development process of the Crops Bill. Most institutions, especially the private sector, felt the process and the contents of the bill have been made without considering the realities of each of the value chains concerned.	KIIs with Government KIIs with Private Sector
Horticulture Policy and Strategy				
The NAPAS activity provided technical support through planning meetings and a writeshop	Draft policy was developed but adoption pending resolution on whether	The process of finalizing the policy development and the strategy has stalled for a number of years. This has been	Stakeholder consultation and engagement has been very minimal.	KIIs with Government

Role played by NAPAS	Status	Post NAPAS Activities/ Level of Implementation	Stakeholder Engagement Post NAPAS	Source
for the development of the Horticulture Policy and Strategy. The work was based on a draft Strategy produced by a consultant. The NAPAS Team worked alongside Ministry officials, the Malawi Strengthening Inclusive Markets for Agriculture (MSIKA) ²¹ team, and several key stakeholders in the Horticulture sector to develop the policy and strategy. A zero draft of the Horticulture Policy and Strategy was produced in February 2019, and was going through internal review with officers in DAPS. The zero draft Policy was expected to be validated internally in the MoAFSIWD and externally, across the three regions of Malawi, after closure of the project.		due to inadequate funding to finalize the consultations. In addition, there have been delayed internal processes within the ministry of agriculture to reach a consensus on the contents of the policy. Implementation of the policy and strategy has not commenced		FDG with Civil Society
National Resilience Plan				

²¹ A USAID supported project implemented by Land O'Lakes International Development

Role played by NAPAS	Status	Post NAPAS Activities/ Level of Implementation	Stakeholder Engagement Post NAPAS	Source
<p>The NAPAS Activity provided technical support to MoAFSIWD for the development of agriculture components and other sections of the National Resilience Plan (NRP), led by the Department of Disaster Management Affairs (DoDMA).</p> <p>The National Resilience Strategy (NRS) was produced and expected to form the basis for an upcoming Food for Peace Development Food Security Activity (DFSA) to be funded by the USAID.</p>	<p>The National Resilience Strategy (NRS) was adopted in February 2018 and is valid until 2030.</p>	<p>GoM is piloting the implementation of the NRS in two districts namely, Mangochi and Zomba. There is noticeable progress in the implementation of Pillar 2 (Risk Reduction, Flood Control, and Early Warning and Response Systems) and Pillar 3, particularly on the Social Protection component only that monitoring and documentation of progress is minimal. NRS implementation is mostly done through local authorities who may be in need of capacity building support.</p> <p>Development partners supporting implementation of the NRS include USAID, UN Organizations (e.g. UNDP and UNICEF), AfDB, World Bank. CSOs include Care, Emmanuel International, and Save the Children.</p>	<p>Government institutions, particularly local authorities²² and NGOs (such as Emmanuel International, CARE, WaterAid and Save the Children) have actively participated in the implementation of NRS given the wide scope of interventions. For example, DoDMA is engaging the Department of Water Resources and the Department of Climate Change on a flood-based community-based early warning system. However, Private Sector involvement in NRS implementation has generally been minimal.</p>	<p>KIIs with GoM</p> <p>KIIs with Civil Society</p> <p>Titukulane project documents (Retrieved from Care Website: https://www.care.org/our-work/food-and-nutrition/markets/titukulane/)</p>

²² According to DoDMA, USAID is supporting pilot implementation of the NRS in Mangochi and Zomba through the Titikulane Project.

STATEMENT OF WORK FOR THE EX-POST EVALUATION OF THE NEW ALLIANCE POLICY ACCELERATION SUPPORT (NAPAS) ACTIVITY

I. PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION

USAID/Malawi has proposed an Ex-Post Evaluation of the New Alliance Policy Acceleration Support (NAPAS) Activity. NAPAS was an activity under the Sustainable Economic Growth (SEG) project of USAID/Malawi under DO2 of the previous CDCS (2015-2019). The activity was implemented by Michigan State University (MSU) in collaboration with the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) and the University of Pretoria (UP). The USAID-funded Feed the Future New Alliance Policy Acceleration Support Activity (NAPAS) aimed to support the Government of Malawi under the New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition to implement an ambitious policy agenda to increase agriculture investment in Malawi. The New Alliance brings partners together to unlock private investment in African agriculture to benefit smallholder farmers and reduce hunger and poverty. The New Alliance provides private sector firms a platform through which to engage actively in agriculture and to participate in the country's agricultural policy processes. NAPAS's role was to address the policy obstacles that impede greater private sector engagement in agriculture by providing direct technical assistance to the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Water Development.

The purpose of this ex-post evaluation is to examine and gather evidence of the impact and sustainability of the NAPAS initiated and supported policy interventions in Malawi. The ex-post evaluation will also bring lessons and recommendations for current and future policy related activities supported by the mission, other development partners and Government of Malawi.

II. SUMMARY INFORMATION

This Statement of Work (SOW) provides the required depth of the evaluation analysis for the NAPAS activity. The SOW highlights the required team, proposed methods and deliverables expected by USAID/Malawi as evidence base for learning and informing current and future programs.

III. BACKGROUND

The Country Cooperation Framework for Malawi to support the New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition of the G81 was signed in late-2013 to specify the commitments government, several private sector firms, and many of Malawi's development partners will make to generate greater private investment in agricultural development, scale up successful innovations, achieve sustainable food security outcomes, reduce poverty, and end hunger in Malawi. The commitment by the government of Malawi to various policy reforms provided an important opportunity to initiate and sustain a new dynamic in agricultural policy dialogue and innovation in the country. The government intended to integrate a growth agenda for the sector through agricultural commercialization linked to the National Export Strategy and the reform of programs in support of food security. These policy reforms would help to ensure healthy returns to new private sector investment and provide smallholder farmers with diversified market opportunities, while creating new employment in urban areas and market towns.

The Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Food Security Policy (FSP) project was an applied policy research project funded by USAID's Bureau for Food Security and implemented by Michigan State University (MSU), the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), and the University of Pretoria under the leadership of MSU. The FSP project globally sought to promote inclusive agricultural productivity growth, improve nutritional outcomes, and enhance livelihood resilience through improved policy environments. To do so, FSP contributed to addressing critical evidence gaps for informed policy debate and engaged in efforts to foster credible, inclusive, transparent, and sustainable policy processes. FSP was financially supported by USAID/Washington under a Leader with Associates Cooperative Agreement (AID-OAA- L13-000001).

The goal of NAPAS was to provide effective technical support to the government so that it sustainably achieves the high level commitments to policy reform made in the New Alliance Country Cooperation Framework for Malawi. These policy reforms had the broader aim of improving the agriculture investment climate in Malawi through commercializing and increasing the role of the private sector in Malawi's agricultural sector. As the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Water Development (MoAFSIWD) was one of the lead ministries responsible for the commitments of government under the New Alliance, the FSP proposed to post two NAPAS -Malawi policy advisors within the Ministry to work with it on the New Alliance policy reform agenda.

The activity had three principal objectives:

1. To provide effective technical support for policy formulation. FSP staff was to work jointly with Ministry staff and with members of pertinent Technical Working Groups (TWG) to draft evidence-informed policy and program design documents for consideration by senior government officials and stakeholders in agriculture and food security policy processes. The focus of this technical support was to better enable the government to effectively achieve the policy reforms it committed to under the New Alliance Cooperation Framework.

2. To engage in effective communication to inform debate on agriculture and food security policy issues. To improve the quality of debate among participants in the policy processes through which the policy reforms committed to under the New Alliance will be undertaken, NAPAS was to contribute to policy communication efforts, such as conferences, workshops, or the production of periodic policy briefs, that are led by other policy research and civil society institutions in Malawi.

3. To ensure that gaps in expertise constraining effective agricultural policy reform were filled.

Insufficient staff with the appropriate expertise to conduct informative policy analysis and to communicate analytical results effectively hampers the Ministry in carrying out programs of policy reform and restricts the ability of stakeholder institutions in these policy processes from engaging in informed dialogue on policy options.

A. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROBLEM AND CONTEXT

The majority of MoAFSIWD financial resources were used to fund the Farm Input Subsidy Program (FISP). Despite positive gains in maize production and possibly in poverty reduction due to FISP, the program was costly, fiscally very difficult to sustain, and not implemented efficiently. More broadly, MoAFSIWD lacked a clear vision or plan for the future of the sector. In consequence, policy change and reform were difficult in MoAFSIWD.

Agriculture policy decision-making historically was centralized at the senior level, but key discussions were often based on weak evidence. Dialogue on national policy issues on agriculture and food security was constrained as stakeholders were unable to determine where best to engage.

A key factor in this stagnation in policy reform in the Ministry was that MoAFSIWD was ill-equipped to address in an informed manner the vast challenges facing the Malawi agriculture sector. MoAFSIWD was understaffed, and civil servants were under-compensated. DAPS, which was charged with formulating policies for the sector, had numerous vacant positions and officers were rotated quickly through the department, since many belonged to the common service of economists within government, which was controlled by the Ministry of Economic Planning and Development. In this institutional environment, planning officers could not stay in a place long enough to carry through important policy formulation or reform processes. Given these constraints in resources and capacity, MoAFSIWD was severely challenged in its ability to effectively implement Malawi's commitments for policy reform under the New Alliance.

B. DESCRIPTION OF THE INTERVENTION TO BE EVALUATED AND THEORY OF CHANGE

The broader development hypothesis to which NAPAS:Malawi was oriented to: If the commitments to policy reform made by the government in the New Alliance Country Cooperation Framework for Malawi are realized through a policy engagement and capacity building approach, then the enabling environment for agriculture investment and development in Malawi will be improved. However, the Ministry of Agriculture, in particular, had significant human capacity constraints in conducting policy analyses and in organizing inclusive policy processes. These constraints hampered productive and informed policy engagement for policy reform. NAPAS:Malawi was implemented to address many of the capacity constraints that otherwise would have inhibited progress on the New Alliance policy reform agenda.

The hypothesis was that: Focused technical assistance and capacity building in policy development for MoAFSIWD will lead to action and decisions from the Ministry that will improve the enabling environment for agriculture development and investment. Logically, the principal result sought under NAPAS:Malawi was that: MoAFSIWD implements effectively the commitments to policy reform made by the government in the New Alliance Country Cooperation Framework for Malawi for which it was responsible.

NAPAS:Malawi had the following intended outcomes;

1. A productive policy engagement with MoAFSIWD is achieved.
2. Results of demand-driven policy studies are utilized to inform policy content.
3. Engagement in policy processes on agriculture and food security issues by private sector and civil society groups is strengthened.
4. Technical capacity of policy and planning staff within MoAFSIWD is strengthened.

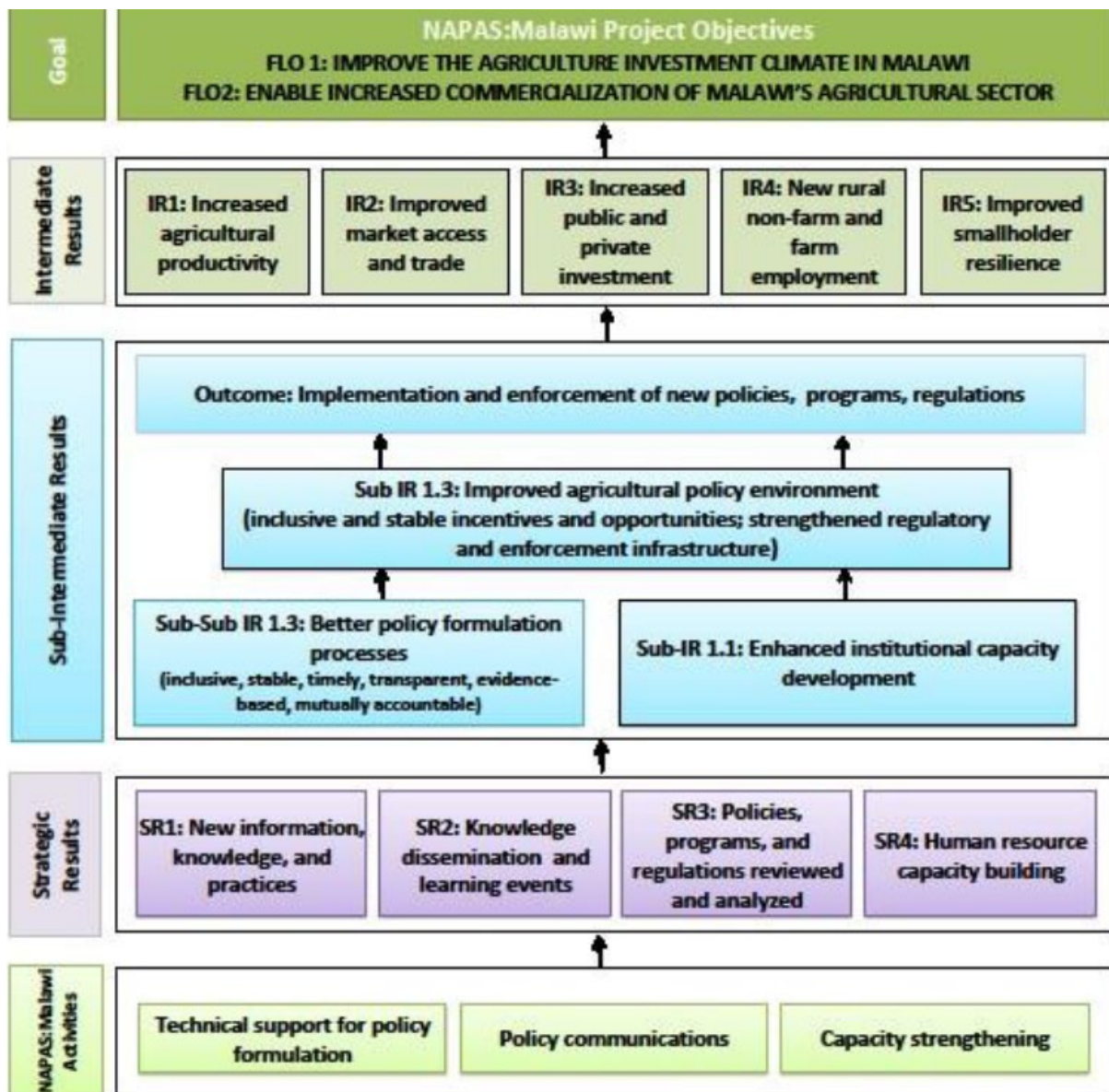
NAPAS:Malawi directly supported implementation of USAID/Malawi's Country Development and Cooperation Strategy (CDCS) covering the period 2013 to 2018. The goal of the CDCS was to improve Malawians' quality of life. NAPAS:Malawi supported this goal through CDCS Sub Intermediate Result 1, "Capacity of institutions increased", and Sub Intermediate Result 3, "Policy systems strengthened". These Sub Intermediate Results linked directly to Development Objective 2: "Sustainable livelihoods increased", particularly through the Intermediate Results 2.2, "Production of targeted commodities increased" and 2.4, "Agriculture trade expanded". Moreover, the project activities supported USAID/Malawi's Feed the Future strategy, particularly the strategic pillar of improving the policy environment. The engagement of NAPAS:Malawi on agriculture and food security policy linked with other USAID agriculture policy activities in Malawi, particularly the Feed the Future value chain activities, to provide critical feedback to policymakers regarding the policy constraints faced by smallholder farmers and obstacles that impeded greater private sector engagement in agriculture by providing direct technical assistance to the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Water Development. . The project staff also collaborated with the agriculture policy support activities of other development partners in Malawi.

C. PROJECT OR ACTIVITY MONITORING, EVALUATION, AND LEARNING (MEL) PLAN

NAPAS AMELP was built on the results framework for the Feed the Future Innovation Laboratory for Food Security Policy (FSP) project which provided the model for the results framework for NAPAS:Malawi. The FSP results framework was itself consistent with that of Feed the Future (FtF), the US Government's global hunger and food security initiative. The FSP results framework adapted for NAPAS:Malawi is illustrated in Figure 1. It shows the pathways by which NAPAS:Malawi was to achieve its objectives. This framework was central to the management, monitoring, and evaluation of the project.

The various tiers of the results framework with an overall goal that was broken into two first-level objectives (FLO), five intermediate results (IR), and two sub-intermediate results (Sub IR) (represented by boxes with solid black lines), were aligned with the overall objectives of FtF initiative. Moreover, the FtF objectives were consistent with those of the New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition in Malawi.

The NAPAS:Malawi results framework also included one custom Sub-Sub IR and four strategic results (SR) across the project components that would contribute to the sub-intermediate results. These tiers were arranged to illustrate the causal relationship between planned efforts under NAPAS:Malawi and their expected impact and to identify the intermediate results critical to achieving the objectives of the project. Specifically, the framework demonstrated how planned activities and deliverables will lead to expected outputs, outcomes, results, and eventual impact.



The NAPAS:Malawi project performance indicators for project monitoring and reporting are listed in Table 1. These indicators were identified by reviewing the performance indicators developed for Feed the Future (FtF), as used in the FtF Monitoring System (FTFMS), and those developed for the FSP project, which were consistent with those used in the FTFMS. These indicators were consistent with USAID/Malawi's Country Development Cooperation Strategy, 2013-2018 Performance Management Plan.

Table 1: Proposed performance indicators for the NAPAS:Malawi project

#	Indicator definition	Results framework level	Type	Category	Unit of measurement	Disaggregated by *	Data source	Frequency
1	Number of policy research and best practice papers generated	Strategic Result (SR)	Output	New information, knowledge, and practices	Papers	Policy area	Project records	Annual
2	Number of stakeholder learning forums on agriculture and food security policy issues supported by NAPAS:Malawi	SR	Output	Knowledge dissemination and learning events	Stakeholder forums	Policy area	Project records	Annual
3	Number of people receiving short-term training in policy analysis, planning, formulation, advocacy, monitoring, and evaluation (FtF indicator 4.5.2-7)	SR	Output	Human resource capacity building	Number of People trained	Gender, organization type	Project records	Annual
4	Number of institutions where trained individuals are applying new practices	Sub-intermediate result (Sub-IR)	Output	Institutional capacity building	Institutions	Organization type	Project records	Annual
5	Number of private sector and civil society organizations assisted to participate in policy formulation processes	Sub-IR	Output	Institutional capacity building	Institutions	Organization type	Project records	Annual
6	Numbers of policies, legal frameworks, regulations, administrative procedures, or institutional arrangements <u>newly developed or revised</u> to promote policy change agenda	Sub-IR	Outcome	Formulation of new policies, programs, legal frameworks, and regulations	NEW or REVISED legal frameworks, regulations, procedures, or systems	Policy area	Project records	Annual
7	Number of demonstrated uses by policy makers of evidence (analyses and policy papers) generated or presented through NAPAS:Malawi	Sub-IR	Outcome	Formulation of new policies, programs, legal frameworks, and regulation	Policy decisions, acknowledgements of use	Policy area	Project records; stakeholder survey	Annual
8	Index (or scorecard) of <u>quality of the institutional architecture</u> for agriculture and food security policy processes in Malawi, as measured by stakeholder evaluation survey to capture level of satisfaction and confidence	Sub-IR	Outcome	Strengthened regulatory and enforcement infrastructure; Enabling policy environment	Stakeholder perceptions and levels of satisfaction and confidence	Organization type, policy area	Stakeholder survey	Baseline & endline stakeholder surveys
9	Index (or scorecard) of <u>quality of agriculture and food security policy processes</u> in Malawi, as measured by stakeholder evaluation to capture level of satisfaction and confidence	Sub-IR	Outcome	Strengthened regulatory and enforcement infrastructure; Enabling policy environment	Stakeholder perceptions and levels of satisfaction and confidence	Organization type, policy area	Stakeholder survey	Baseline and endline stakeholder surveys

IV. EVALUATION QUESTIONS

The evaluation will address the purpose by answering the following questions;

1. To what extent has the Government of Malawi (GOM) and other actors continued to implement and/or sustain interventions, activities, and or results generated by NAPAS?
2. Did NAPAS build effective linkages between smallholder farmers and MAIWD that support ongoing private sector engagement? Is there evidence of any such linkages being sustained?
3. Did NAPAS build effective linkages between civil society and MAIWD? Is there any evidence of such linkages being sustained?
4. Is there evidence of ongoing strengthened government capacity given stated high turnover rates and vacancy levels?
5. To what extent have policies that were developed or supported by NAPAS been implemented by the GOM?;

6. Is there evidence that studies supported by NAPAS were demand-driven? Were any such studies utilized to inform policy content?
7. What is the GOM current commitment and level of political will and buy-in towards the policies and strategies supported by NAPAS including those affecting the private sector?;
8. What were the strengths and weaknesses of the NAPAS design and implementation structure in achieving intended outcomes, and sustainability? What improvements could the AMELP plan for a similar activity in the current context incorporate?

V. EVALUATION DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The contractor should propose a robust evaluation methodology to answer the key evaluation questions identified above. The evaluation methodology should follow a mixed-method approach using both quantitative and qualitative techniques in gathering reliable data and valid evidence of project outcomes or impacts. The contractor should develop a Mixed Methods Evaluation Design Matrix that will detail the data source, data collection methods, data collection instruments and analysis of data to answer each of the evaluation questions. By using a mixed-method approach, the evaluator is expected to gain insight on the impact of NAPAS activity, the processes and key interventions that correlate to those impacts. The evaluator should also generate evidence that demonstrates youth and women participation in policy processes. The evaluator is expected to utilize its expert judgment and evaluation best practices in selecting which methodological components to include in the evaluation design.

The evaluator is expected to consult both primary and secondary data sources which will include key informant interviews, opinion surveys, focus group discussions and desk reviews as appropriate. The key informant interviews should among others include the most relevant GoM ministries and agencies, local government authorities, private partners and community leaders, bi- and multilateral development partners supporting GoM's agricultural initiatives.

All the methodological strengths and weaknesses should be explicitly described in the evaluation report. Prior to the start of the evaluation, the evaluation team shall meet with USAID/Malawi NAPAS Evaluation PoC to refine the evaluation questions and methodology as well as to address any other concerns that may arise in respect to the design, administration and management. The evaluator is expected to report any other limitations that may be experienced during the study.

VI. DELIVERABLES AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

1. Evaluation Work Plan:

The Contractor will prepare a detailed work plan that includes a task timeline for key tasks such as development of evaluation methodology to be used in answering each evaluation question, document review, key informant and stakeholder interviews, site visits, travel time, debriefings, presentation of preliminary findings, submission of draft report, incorporating draft report feedback from USAID, and submission of final report. The work plan will be submitted to the USAID NAPAS Ex-Post Evaluation Point of Contact (POC).

2. Evaluation Design:

Evaluation Design Matrix. A table that lists each evaluation question and the corresponding information sought, information sources, data collection methods, data analysis methods, and limitations. The matrix should be developed and shared with USAID/Malawi before evaluation field work starts. It should also be included as an annex in the evaluation report.

Data Collection Instruments. The Contractor should develop data collection instruments and/or checklists which should be submitted to USAID for review and approval as part of the evaluation design.

3. In-briefing:

The Contractor is expected to present the draft work plan to USAID either virtually or in-person depending on the prevailing situation at the material time. The in-brief meeting should occur within ten working days after contract signing. The in-briefing meeting will provide an opportunity to the Contractor to seek clarifications as necessary regarding the evaluation scope.

4. Inception Report:

The Contractor will compile and submit an Inception Report to demonstrate the understanding of the assignment. The inception report will outline key aspects of the Evaluation, including the Work Plan, Evaluation Design Matrix, and proposed Data Collection Instruments (e.g., interview guides). The inception report will be presented to USAID during the in-briefing meeting.

5. Briefing and Interim Meetings:

In case of plausible issues in the course of the evaluation, the Contractor or USAID may call a meeting(s) to make critical adjustments or updates.

6. Preliminary Presentation of Findings:

The Contractor shall make a presentation of preliminary key findings to USAID and its relevant stakeholders before final report presentation of the evaluation.

7. Draft Evaluation Report:

Draft Evaluation Report. A draft report on the findings and recommendations should be submitted to USAID/Malawi within 15 working days after the preliminary presentation of findings. The report must be no more than 50 pages in length (excluding annexes) and comply with the Checklist for Assessing USAID Evaluation Reports (see annexes). The written report should clearly describe findings and the evidence for these findings, conclusions, and recommendations. The draft report must be of high quality with no grammatical errors or typos.

A report is high quality when it represents a thoughtful, well-researched and well-organized effort to objectively evaluate what worked in the project, what did not and why. The draft report must have well-constructed sentences that are presented in a way that clearly presents findings, conclusions and recommendations. The report should answer all the evaluation questions and the structure of the report should make it clear how the questions are answered. The draft report must meet the criteria set forth under the Final Report section below. USAID will provide written comments on the draft report within 10 working days of submission.

8. Evaluation Findings Stakeholder Validation Workshop:

The Contractor must present the key findings, conclusions and recommendations at a half-day stakeholder's workshop in Lilongwe. The Contractor shall be responsible for costs, logistics and managing invitations to this workshop. The Contractor shall produce a summary/brief (max. 3 pages) of key findings, conclusions and recommendations to be distributed to stakeholders during the workshop.

9. Final Presentation of the Evaluation Report:

The Contractor will make a final presentation of the evaluation report at an agreed date after addressing substantive comments on the draft evaluation report.

10. Final Evaluation Report:

Final Evaluation Report: The Contractor will submit two versions of the Final Evaluation Report that incorporate Mission comments and suggestions no later than five working days after the final presentation of the evaluation report.

The format of the final report is provided below. The report will be electronically submitted in English. The public version of the final report that will be uploaded to the Development Experience Clearinghouse (DEC). The Contractor must ensure that Appendix I of the USAID Evaluation Policy – Criteria to Ensure the Quality of the Evaluation Report is followed. The final report should at a minimum meet the following criteria to ensure the quality of the report:

- The evaluation report should represent a thoughtful, well-researched and well-organized effort to objectively demonstrate how evaluation questions have been answered.
- The evaluation report shall address all evaluation questions included in the scope of work.
- The evaluation report should include the scope of work as an annex. All modifications to the scope of work, whether in technical requirements, evaluation questions, evaluation team composition, methodology or timeline need to be agreed upon in writing by the USAID/Malawi NAPAS Ex-Post Evaluation POC.
- Evaluation methodology shall be explained in detail and all tools used in conducting the evaluation such as questionnaires, checklists and discussion guides will be included in an Annex in the final report.
- Limitations to the evaluation shall be disclosed in the report, with particular attention to the limitations associated with the evaluation methodology (selection bias, recall bias, etc.).
- Evaluation findings should be presented as analyzed facts, evidence and data. They should not be based on anecdotes, hearsay or the compilation of people's opinions. Findings should be specific, concise and supported by strong quantitative or qualitative evidence.
- Sources of information need to be properly identified and listed in an annex.
- Recommendations need to be supported by a specific set of findings.
- Recommendations should be action-oriented, practical and specific, with defined responsibility for the action.

The format of the final evaluation report should strike a balance between depth and length. The report will include a table of contents, table of figures (as appropriate), acronyms, executive summary, introduction, purpose of the evaluation, research design and methodology, findings, conclusions, lessons learned and recommendations. Where appropriate, the evaluation should utilize tables and graphs to link with data and other relevant information. The report should include any dissenting views by any team member or by USAID on any of the findings or recommendations in the annex. The report should not exceed 50 pages, excluding annexes. A second version of this report excluding any potentially procurement-sensitive information will be submitted (also electronically, in English) to DEC and for dissemination among implementing partners and other stakeholders.

All quantitative data, if gathered, should be (1) provided in an electronic file in easily readable format; (2) organized and fully documented for use by those not fully familiar with the project or the evaluation; (3) owned by USAID and made available to the public barring rare exceptions. All data should be provided to the USAID/Malawi NAPAS Ex-Post Evaluation POC and electronically submitted in DDL.

The Contractor will address the feedback from the Draft Report and resubmit the final report to USAID/Malawi within 10 working days.

11. Submission of Dataset(s) to the Development Data Library:

The Contractor should upload all datasets on DDL within 5 days after approval of the Final Report by USAID/Malawi.

12. Submission of Final Evaluation Report to the Development Experience

Clearinghouse:

The Contractor should upload the Final Report DEC within 5 days after the approval by USAID/Malawi.

VII. EVALUATION TEAM COMPOSITION

The team will include three experienced evaluators who will work as a team to complement each other in this assignment. Collectively they should be seasoned practitioners with deep knowledge of agricultural, nutrition and natural resources related policies in developing countries. They should have expertise in the following areas: project evaluations and assessments, ideally public sector reforms, policy reviews and formulation, organizational change management and governance.

Team Leader. This one will serve as an evaluation Team Leader. The Team Leader will provide overall leadership for the team, and s/he will coordinate the evaluation activities, arrange periodic meetings, consolidate individual input from team members, and coordinate the process of assembling the final findings and recommendations into a high quality report. S/he will lead the preparation and presentation of the inception report, evaluation design, key evaluation findings and recommendations to the USAID/Malawi team and other stakeholders.

Minimum requirements for the TL:

Qualifications and experience.

- S/he should have a postgraduate degree in International/Development Policy with at least 10 years of evaluation experience of policy and strategic development, organizational change management, governance and public sector reforms. Experience in Malawi or Eastern/Southern Africa preferred.
- Leading evaluations. S/he should have experience in leading at least 5 large evaluations in teams of not less than 5 members and covering at least a region or province or 5 districts.
- Skills. Familiarity with qualitative evaluation tools and broad experience in using quantitative analysis tools. Excellent oral and written skills in English are required. Presentation and facilitation skills are also a requirement for the TL.

Preferably;

- The Team Leader should be familiar with USAID regulations and systems including performance monitoring, gender policies and guidance, project management, budgeting and financial analysis, and reporting.
- Experience in international donor development program management and overseeing multiple program areas simultaneously.
- Experience in preparing documents that are objective, evidence-based, and well organized.

Agriculture Expert: The Agriculture Expert will be responsible for assessing the effectiveness of NAPAS project implementation around agricultural interventions. S/he will provide technical assistance and analytical ideas with respect to agricultural policy development, smallholder commercialization, access to markets, access to finance, and challenges facing the agricultural sector in Malawi. S/he will assess the capacity constraints that impede nutrition and agricultural policy reforms and implementation.

Minimum requirements for the Agriculture Expert;

- A postgraduate degree in agricultural economics or agribusiness management.
- A minimum of 8 years of field experience in evaluating complex agricultural development projects in a developing country context like Southern Africa.
- Familiarity with qualitative and quantitative analysis tools. Excellent oral and written skills in English are required. Presentation and facilitation skills are also a requirement for the Agriculture Expert.
- Experience in managing or evaluating at least 3 governance or agriculture or Natural Resource Management policy related projects.

Natural Resource Management/Forestry Expert: The Natural Resource Management/Forestry Expert will be responsible for assessing the effectiveness of NAPAS project implementation around natural resource management related interventions. S/he will provide technical assistance and analytical ideas with respect to policies relating to natural resource/forest management and resilience. S/he will assess the capacity constraints that impede natural resource management policy reforms and implementation.

Minimum requirements for the Natural Resource Management/Forestry Expert;

- A postgraduate degree in Natural Resource or Forestry management.
- A minimum of 8 years of field experience in evaluating complex natural resource management or agricultural development projects in a developing country context like Southern Africa.
- Familiarity with qualitative and quantitative analysis tools. Excellent oral and written skills in English are required. Presentation and facilitation skills are also a requirement for the Agriculture Expert.
- Experience in managing or evaluating at least 3 governance or agriculture or Natural Resource Management policy related projects.

VIII. EVALUATION SCHEDULE

This evaluation is expected to be executed within 65 working days, but the contractor will be required to develop a realistic detailed schedule based on the proposed methodology.

IX. FINAL REPORT FORMAT

1. Abstract
2. Executive summary
3. Evaluation purpose
4. Background on the context and the strategies/projects/activities being evaluated
5. Evaluation questions
6. Methodology
7. Limitations to the evaluation
8. Findings, conclusions, and (if applicable) recommendations
9. Annexes

X. EVALUATION TIMEFRAME

The evaluation is expected to be conducted from August 2022 to April 2023. The Mission plans to use its soon to be awarded MEL Platform called Learn to Perform (L2P) to conduct this evaluation.

Key Informant Interview Guide - GoM

INTERVIEWEE INFORMATION

Name of Respondent:
Organization:
Position:
Number of Years in the Position:
Contact email address:
Contact phone number:
Name of Interviewer:

QUESTIONS

1. What were the key interventions implemented by NAPAS
2. What were the key results generated?
3. Which of the interventions implemented [or outcomes generated] by are ongoing or continuing?
4. What strategies or measures have been used to keep the activities going?
5. If NAPAS work on agriculture policy reforms has slowed down or is discontinued, what are the obstacles to policy development and implementation? How can these be resolved?
6. What capacities and linkages did NAPAS build? (Who were capacitated and in which areas?
 - a. How have the capacities and linkages built by NAPAS fared over time in accelerating policy reforms and implementation?
 - b. What has led to continued existence of capacity and linkages among the stakeholders?
 - c. What has led to erosion of capacity and a breakdown of linkages since NAPAS closed? How can this be resolved?
7. To what extent has GoM continued to develop and implement policy reforms that were supported by NAPAS?
 - a. To what extent has GoM continued to develop and implement policy reforms that support private sector investment in the agriculture sector?
 - b. What strategies has GoM used to accelerate implementation of policy reforms in the agriculture sector?
 - c. What strategies has GoM used to accelerate policy reforms that are in support of private sector investment in the agriculture sector

- d. What is preventing GoM from fulfilling its policy reform commitments, including those supporting private sector investments in the agriculture sector? How can these be resolved?

Key Informant Interview Guide – Civil Society

INTERVIEWEE INFORMATION

Name of Respondent:

Organization:

Position:

Number of Years in the Position:

Contact email address:

Contact phone number:

Name of Interviewer:

QUESTIONS

1. What were the key results generated by NAPAS? [Relevant to your Sector?]
2. Which of the interventions implemented [or outcomes generated] by NAPAS are ongoing or continuing?
3. If NAPAS work on agriculture policy reforms has slowed down or is discontinued, what are the obstacles to policy development and implementation? How can these be resolved?
4. How have the capacities and linkages built by NAPAS fared over time in accelerating policy reforms and implementation? YOUR SECTOR LINKAGES WITH GoM
 - a. What has led to continued existence of capacity and linkages among the stakeholders?
 - b. What has led to erosion of capacity and a breakdown of linkages since NAPAS closed? How can this be resolved? YOUR SECTOR LINKAGES WITH GoM
5. To what extent has GoM continued to develop and implement policy reforms that were supported by NAPAS? [Reforms relevant to CSOs]
 - a. [IF NOT FULFILLED] What is preventing GoM from fulfilling its policy reform commitments, including those supporting private sector investment in the agriculture sector? How can these be resolved? RELEVANT TO YOUR SECTOR?

Key Informant Interview Guide – Private Sector

INTERVIEWEE INFORMATION

Name of Respondent:
Organization:
Position:
Number of Years in the Position:
Contact email address:
Contact phone number:
Name of Interviewer:

QUESTIONS

1. What were the key results generated by NAPAS? [RELEVANT TO YOU? OR TO THE PRIVATE SECTOR?]
2. Which of the interventions implemented [or outcomes generated] by NAPAS are ongoing or continuing?
3. What strategies or measures have been used to keep the activities going?
4. If NAPAS supported agricultural policy reforms that has slowed down or is discontinued, what are the obstacles to policy development and implementation? How can these be resolved?
5. What capacities and linkages did NAPAS build? [What linkages did NAPAS build between you and MoAFS?]
 - a. How have the capacities and linkages built by NAPAS fared over time in accelerating policy reforms and implementation? [What is the status of the linkages now?]
 - b. What has led to continued existence of capacity and linkages among the stakeholders? [if any]
 - c. What has led to erosion of capacity and a breakdown of linkages since NAPAS closed? How can this be resolved?
6. To what extent has GoM continued to develop and implement policy reforms that were supported by NAPAS? [That are supportive of your industry.]. With what outcomes?
7. To what extent has GoM continued to develop and implement policy reforms that support private sector investment in the agriculture sector? [In your industry].
 - a. IF NOT FULFILLED, what is preventing GoM from fulfilling its policy reform commitments, including those supporting private sector investments in the agriculture sector? How can these be resolved?

Key Informant Interview Guide – Development Partner

INTERVIEWEE INFORMATION

Name of Respondent:

Organization:

Position:

Number of Years in the Position:

Contact email address:

Contact phone number:

Name of Interviewer:

QUESTIONS

1. What were the key results generated?
2. Which of the interventions implemented [or outcomes generated] by NAPAS are ongoing or continuing?
3. What strategies or measures have been used to keep the activities going?
4. If NAPAS work on agriculture policy reforms has slowed down or/is discontinued, what are the obstacles to policy development and implementation? How can these be resolved?
5. What capacities and linkages did NAPAS build? (Who were capacitated and in which areas?
 - a. How have the capacities and linkages built by NAPAS fared over time in accelerating policy reforms and implementation?
6. To what extent has GoM continued to develop and implement policy reforms that were supported by NAPAS?
7. To what extent has GoM continued to develop and implement policy reforms that support private sector investment in the agriculture sector?
8. What strategies has GoM used to accelerate implementation of policy reforms in the agriculture sector?
9. What strategies has GoM used to accelerate policy reforms that are in support of private sector investment in the agriculture sector?
10. What is preventing GoM from fulfilling its policy reform commitments, including those supporting private sector investments in the agriculture sector? How can these be resolved?

Focus Group Guidelines - Civil Society

Instructions

This tool has been created to lead a focus group discussion as part of an ex-post evaluation of the New Alliance Policy Acceleration Support (NAPAS) Activity. The discussion has been designed to last approximately one and a half to two hours, and to gather information surrounding the sustainability of the activities and results of the NAPAS project.

Each discussion question is followed either by follow up questions or a list of probes. These will help you to guide the discussion along the variables of particular interest for the study **if** the discussion is not producing the type of information sought. If participants provide the information in the initial discussion, there is no need to ask these questions.

The discussion will require the participation of two facilitators, the moderator and the note-taker. Both facilitators should have expertise in the NAPAS project area and may therefore both participate at times, if necessary, in order to provoke discussion. Facilitators should refrain from offering any opinions, theirs or others, regarding the program during the discussion.

The session will be recorded to facilitate data collection; however, the second facilitator is responsible for taking notes to capture main points of discussion in case there are issues with the audio recording. The audio recording should not be started until after participants have introduced themselves and have agreed to the recording.

Materials Required

- Facilitator's guide
- Note Taking tools (pen and paper, laptop, etc.)
- Audio recorder

Focus Group Introduction:

(To be read aloud by the moderator)

I would like to thank each of you for participating in this focus group discussion concerning the New Alliance Policy Accelerator Support (NAPAS) Activity. The NAPAS project partnered with the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Water Development (MoAFSIWD) to support policy reforms aimed at increasing investment for improved nutrition and food security.

This group has been organized as part of an ex-post evaluation of the NAPAS activity focused on the sustainability of the approach. Participants have been invited based on their involvement in activities developed or supported by the NAPAS project. This means that you may not have participated directly in the project activity, but were or are currently involved in the types of activities developed by NAPAS. The participants of this group were invited today because of your organization's participation in agriculture policy.

My name is *(please provide a brief introduction of yourself)*. I would also like to ask my colleague who will be taking notes to introduce him/herself *(Co-facilitator provides a brief introduction of him/herself)*.

Before we begin, I would like to establish a few guidelines that will help to facilitate the discussion.

1) Participation in this discussion is voluntary. You have each been given an informed consent form to sign which states that you have volunteered to participate and that you understand the purpose of the evaluation. Are there any questions concerning this form?

2) All information gathered from this discussion will be considered confidential and any resulting data anonymized, meaning no one will be able to attribute it to an individual. I also ask each of you to respect the confidential nature of this discussion, and not to repeat anything discussed today outside of this meeting.

3) Each participant can speak as little or as much as they like. I do ask that everyone respect others, and that only one person talk at a time. Please refrain from interrupting or talking over others.

4) In order to facilitate the evaluation, this session will be recorded. If at any time during the discussion someone would like to have the recording stopped, please simply ask me or (Co-facilitator's name). In order to ensure confidentiality, I would like to ask you to refrain from using other participants' names during the discussion.

Are there any objections to participating in the discussion or being recorded? *(Allow each participant to provide their consent before moving on.)*

Before we start, I would like to take a few moments to allow everyone to introduce themselves. Please provide your name and anything else that you would like to share with the group.

(Group introductions)

Thank you for introducing yourself. I would now like to start the formal part of the discussion group. This means I would like to start recording the session at this time if there are no objections.

(Start recording now)

Focus group questions

1. First, I would like to ask if any of your organizations participated in policy consultations organized by NAPAS? If so, can you talk a bit about your experience and how participation impacted the policy?
 - a) How did it affect your organization?
2. Did your organizations participate in any of the following trainings, and if so, can you talk about your experience using what you learned in the training?
 - Ethical Reporting Training
 - Monitoring and Evaluation Training
 - a) Does the capacity still exist in your organization? *(ask this follow up question for each training discussed)*
 - i. If so, how?
 - ii. If not, why?
3. Were there any other activities not mentioned that you participated in?
(If participants note other activities, ask probing questions to understand the outcomes and sustainability.)
4. A key objective of the NAPAS project was to improve the policy environment for investment and increased food security. Among others, during the project they assisted in the development and adoption of the following policies:
 - National Agriculture Policy
 - National Agriculture Investment Plan (NAIP)
 - Farmer Organization Development Strategy (FODS)
 - Contract Farming Strategy (CFS)
 - National Resilience Plan
 - a) What are your thoughts on the current agriculture policy environment?

Prompts:

 - Have these policies been implemented?
 - Have these policies increased investment or production?
 - Does the government adhere to the new policies?
 - b) What are your thoughts on other policy actions taken by the government over the past few years?
 - National Fertilizer Bill
 - Agriculture Sector Food and Nutrition Strategy (ASFNS)
5. A main objective of the NAPAS project was to increase stakeholder engagement in agricultural policy formulation and implementation. Over the past few years, have you been invited by the MoAFSIWD to discuss any agriculture policy issues? If so, can you talk about your experience?

Prompts:

- Consultations on policy formulation
- Feedback on any existing policies
- Support for policy implementation

6. In the past few years, have any of your organizations initiated engagement on agricultural policy issues with the MoAFSIWD? If so, can you talk about the nature and outcomes of the engagement?
7. What challenges, if any, exist for civil society organizations involved in agricultural policy processes?

Prompts

- Policy Formulation
- Policy Implementation
- Policy Monitoring

- a) How can these challenges be addressed?
8. Based on your experience in the agriculture sector, the NAPAS project, and our discussion today, what are your recommendations for future project design in order to encourage successful implementation?
 - a) What are your recommendations to encourage sustainability of project activities?
 9. Are there any other issues concerning the NAPAS project or civil society participation in the agricultural sector that you would like to share with us before we close the session?

Closing Remarks:

Thank you very much for participating in this focus group. The information you have provided will be very helpful to our team and USAID in better understanding the results and sustainability of the NAPAS project, and will inform future projects as well. Are there any final questions or remarks before we close the session? *(Allow time to respond to any questions)*

Thank you again for your time and assistance.

Focus Group Guidelines - Journalists

Instructions

This tool has been created to lead a focus group discussion as part of an ex-post evaluation of the New Alliance Policy Acceleration Support (NAPAS) Activity. The discussion has been designed to last approximately one and a half to two hours, and to gather information surrounding the sustainability of the activities and results of the NAPAS project.

Each discussion question is followed either by follow up questions or a list of probes. These will help you to guide the discussion along the variables of particular interest for the study **if** the discussion is not producing the type of information sought. If participants provide the information in initial discussion, there is no need to ask these questions.

The discussion will require the participation of two facilitators, the moderator and the note-taker. Both facilitators should have expertise in the NAPAS project area and may therefore both participate at times, if necessary, in order to provoke discussion. Facilitators should refrain from offering any opinions, theirs or others, regarding the program during the discussion.

The session will be recorded to facilitate data collection; however, the second facilitator is responsible for taking notes to capture main points of discussion in case there are issues with the audio recording. The audio recording should not be started until after participants have introduced themselves and have agreed to the recording.

Materials Required

- Facilitator guidelines
- Notetaking tools (pen and paper, laptop, etc.)
- Audio recorder

Focus Group Introduction:

(To be read aloud by the moderator)

I would like to thank each of you for participating in this focus group discussion concerning the New Alliance Policy Accelerator Support (NAPAS) Activity. The NAPAS project partnered with the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Water Development (MoAFSIWD) to support policy reforms aim at increasing investment for improved nutrition and food security.

This group has been organized as part of an ex-post evaluation of the NAPAS activity focused on the sustainability of the approach. Participants have been invited based on their involvement in activities developed or supported by the NAPAS project. This means that you may not have participated directly in the project activity, but were or are currently involved in the types of activities developed by NAPAS. The participants of this group were invited today because of your organization's participation in the Association of Agriculture and Development Journalists.

My name is *(please provide a brief introduction of yourself)*. I would also like to ask my colleague who will be taking notes to introduce him/herself *(Co-facilitator provides a brief introduction of him/herself)*.

Before we begin, I would like to establish a few guidelines that will help to facilitate the discussion.

1) Participation in this discussion is voluntary. You have each been given an informed consent form to sign which states that you have volunteered to participate and that you understand the purpose of the evaluation. Are there any questions concerning this form?

2) All information gathered from this discussion will be considered confidential and any resulting data anonymized, meaning no one will be able to attribute it to an individual. I also ask each of you to respect the confidential nature of this discussion, and not to repeat anything discussed today outside of this meeting.

3) Each participant can speak as little or as much as they like. I do ask that everyone respect others, and that only one person talk at a time. Please refrain from interrupting or talking over others.

4) In order to facilitate the evaluation, this session will be recorded. If at any time during the discussion someone would like to have the recording stopped, please simply ask myself or *(Co-facilitator's name)*. In order to ensure confidentiality, I would like to ask you to refrain from using other participants' names during the discussion.

Are there any objections to participating in the discussion or being recorded? *(Allow each participant to provide their consent before moving on.)*

Before we start, I would like to take a few moments to allow everyone to introduce yourself. Please provide your name and anything else that you would like to share with the group.

(Group introductions)

Thank you for introducing yourself. I would now like to start the formal part of the discussion group. This means I would like to start recording the session at this time if there are no objections.

(Start recording now)

Focus group questions

1. First, I would like to ask if any of your organizations participated in policy consultations organized by NAPAS? If so, can you talk a bit about your experience and how participation impacted the policy?

- a. And how did it impact you or your organization?

2. Did you or your organization participate in training on reporting on agriculture organized by NAPAS? If so, can you talk about your experience using what you learned in the training?

Prompts:

- Nutrition
- Food Security
- Climate change

- a. Do you or your organization still have and use these skills today?

- i. If so, how?

- ii. If not, why?

3. Did you or your organization participate in training on investigative journalism organized by NAPAS? If so, can you talk about your experience using what you learned in the training?

- a. Do you or your organization still have and use these skills today?

- i. If so, how?

- ii. If not, why?

4. Did you or your organization participate in training on ethical reporting and fake news? If so, can you talk about your experience using what you learned in the training?

- a. Do you or your organization still have and use these skills today?

- i. If so, how?

- ii. If not, why?

5. Were there any other activities not mentioned that you participated in?
(If participants note other activities, ask probing questions to understand the outcomes and sustainability.)

6. A main objective of the NAPAS project was to increase communication on agricultural policy formulation and implementation. Did you produce reports or articles on agriculture as a direct result of your involvement with NAPAS?

- a. Over the past few years, have you continued to report on agricultural issues?

- i. If so, how?
 - ii. If not, why?
- 7. Our understanding is that the Association of Agriculture and Development Journalists resulted from activities conducted under NAPAS. Is the association still active today?
 - i. If so, how?
 - ii. If not, why?
- 8. What challenges, if any, exist for journalists reporting on agricultural and development issues?
- 9. Based on your experience in reporting on the agriculture sector and the NAPAS project, what are your recommendations for future project design in order to encourage successful implementation?
 - a. What are your recommendations for encouraging sustainability of project activities?
- 10. Are there any other issues concerning the NAPAS project or journalism focused on agriculture and development that you would like to share with us before we close the session?

Closing Remarks:

Thank you very much for participating in this focus group. The information you have provided will be very helpful to our team and USAID in better understanding the results and sustainability of the NAPAS project, and will inform future projects as well.

Are there any final questions or remarks before we close the session? (*Allow time to respond to questions.*)

Thank you again for your time and assistance.

ATLAS.ti Data Analysis Code List

Category	Code	Description
Organizational Codes		
Evaluation Questions	Q1	Simple code to allow for organization of the information by evaluation question.
	Q2	
	Q3	
Stakeholder	Government	Representative of any government entity including MoAFSWID
	Civil Society	Members of non-governmental organizations
	Private Sector	Representatives of private businesses or investors
	Media	Journalists or other representatives of media
	Farmer's Union	Representatives of any of the farmers unions or organizations
	Academia	University representatives
Results Framework	SIR 1.1 Enhanced Capacity	Simple code to allow for organization of data around SIRs from the result framework. This will be used both for past and current activities.
	SIR 1.2 Policy Formulation	
	SIR 1.3 Policy Environment	
Project	Project Management	Data that refers to the management of the project
	Project Implementation	Data that refers to the implementation of the project
	Project Design	Data that refers to the design of the project
Policy Process	Consultation	Data that refers to consultation of stakeholders on the policy process.
	Engagement	Data that refers to engagement between stakeholders on the policy process.
	Advocacy	Data that refers to advocacy by stakeholders during the policy process.
	Research	Data that refers to research for the policy process. This could be research conducted by GOM, universities, or research groups/projects.
	Analysis	Data that refers to any policy analysis conducted by government or other groups.

Category	Code	Description
	Communication	Data that refers to communication activities conducted by stakeholders on policy. This could include communications by the GOM or by media.
	Capacity	Data that refers to a stakeholder's capacity in policy processes. This can include data on capacity building activities.
	Policy Implementation	Data that refers to any part of the policy implementation process
Other	Joint Sector Review	Data that refers to the agricultural joint sector review
	Journalist Association	Data that refers to the Association of Journalist for Agriculture and Development
	NAMIS	Data that refers to the National Agriculture Management Information System
	TWG	Data that refers to Technical Working Groups
Value Codes		
Sustainability	Sustainable	Data that suggests that an intervention was sustainable.
	Not Sustainable	Data that suggests that an intervention was not sustainable.
Perception of Project	Achievement	Data that suggests an achievement of the project.
	Critique	Data that suggests a critique of the project, or something that should be changed.
	Strength	Data that suggests a strength of the project design
	Weakness	Data that suggests a weakness of the project design
	Recommendation	Data that refers to recommendations for future programming
Other	Challenge	Data that refers to a challenge, barrier, or obstacle

ANNEX IV: EVALUATION MATRIX

NAPAS Ex-Post Performance Evaluation Matrix

Evaluation Question	Sub-question	Source of Data	Data Collection Method	Limitations
To what extent has the Government of Malawi or other actors continued to implement and/or sustain interventions, activities, and/or results generated by NAPAS?	SR1 – Do new information, Knowledge, and practices continue to be produced (Value chain analyses and other research to improve policy development and implementation)? Why or why not? If yes, how? What are the challenges? How can this be supported in the future?	MoAFS officials and staff Official documents Civil Society Journalists Private Sector Actors	KIIs Document review Focus groups	
	SR2 – Are knowledge dissemination and learning events conducted (Policy forums, dialogues, and other events, media reports)? Why or why not? If yes, how? What are the challenges?	MoAFS officials and staff Official documents Civil Society Journalists Private Sector Actors	KIIs Document review Focus groups	

Evaluation Question	Sub-question	Source of Data	Data Collection Method	Limitations
	How can this be supported in the future?			
	SR3 – Are policies, programs, and regulations review and analyzed? Why or why not? If yes, how?	MoAFS officials and staff Official documents Civil Society	KIIs Document review Focus groups	
	What are the challenges?	Journalists		
	How can this be supported in the future?	Private Sector Actors		
	SR4 – Is human resource capacity building ongoing for each stakeholder group? Why or why not? If yes, how?	MoAFS officials and staff Official documents Civil Society	KIIs Document review Focus groups	
	What are the challenges?	Journalists		
	How can this be supported in the future?	Private Sector Actors		
Do the capacity and linkages that NAPAS built among key stakeholders such as smallholder farmers, private sector and civil society with MoAFS still exist?	SIR 1.1 Did the MoAFS implement the five-year strategic plan developed with NAPAS support? Has the planning process continued?	MoAFS officials and staff Official documents	KIIs Document review	

Evaluation Question	Sub-question	Source of Data	Data Collection Method	Limitations
	What are the challenges? How can this be supported in the future?			
	SIR 1.1 Is the NAMIS developed with NAPAS support still functional? How is it used? What are the challenges? How can this be supported in the future?	MoAFS officials and staff Official documents	KIIs Document review	Unclear on the level of support provided for the NAMIS.
	SIR 1.2 Does capacity in budgeting and policy analysis still exist? Why or why not? If so, how? What are the challenges? How can this be supported in the future?	MoAFS officials and staff Official documents	KIIs Document review	This will be based only on perception as there are no baselines or measurements.
	SIR 1.2 Does the MoAFS conduct analysis to support evidence-based policymaking and implementation? What are the challenges?	MoAFS officials and staff Official documents	KIIs Document review	May be difficult to validate information received in KIIs.

Evaluation Question	Sub-question	Source of Data	Data Collection Method	Limitations
	How can this be supported in the future?			
	SIR 1.2 Is the journalist network still functioning and active? Are the members still reporting on agricultural issues? Why or why not? If yes, how? What are the challenges? How can this be supported in the future?	Journalists Documents	KIIs Focus groups Document review	May be difficult to validate information provided in discussions due to documentation challenges.
	SIR 1.2 Do the Farmers Unions still engage on policy issues? Why or why not? If yes, how? What are the challenges? How can this be supported in the future?	Farmers Union Members Documents Reports	KIIs Focus groups Document review	May be difficult to validate information provided in discussions due to documentation challenges.
	SIR 1.2 Do the members of CISANET still engage on policy issues? Why or why not? If yes, how? What are the challenges?	Civils Society members Documents Reports	KIIs Focus groups Document review Policy mapping	May be difficult to validate information provided in discussions due to documentation challenges.

Evaluation Question	Sub-question	Source of Data	Data Collection Method	Limitations
	How can this be supported in the future?			
	<p>SIR 1.2 Do private sector actors still engage on policy issues? Why or why not? If yes, how?</p> <p>What are the challenges?</p> <p>How can this be supported in the future?</p>	<p>Private Sector Actors</p> <p>Documents</p> <p>Reports</p>	<p>KIIs</p> <p>Focus groups</p> <p>Document review</p>	May be difficult to validate information provided in discussions due to documentation challenges.
To what extent has GoM demonstrated commitment towards implementation of policy reforms supported by NAPAS, including those affecting the private sector?	<p>SIR 1.3 Have remaining policies been drafted? Why or why not?</p> <p>What are the challenges?</p> <p>How can this be supported in the future?</p>	<p>MoAFS officials and staff</p> <p>Official documents</p> <p>Civil Society</p> <p>Journalists</p> <p>Private Sector Actors</p>	<p>KIIs</p> <p>Focus groups</p> <p>Document review</p>	
	<p>SIR 1.3 Does the GoM adhere to the policies that are finalized? Why or why not? If so, how?</p> <p>What are the challenges?</p> <p>How can this be supported in the future?</p>	<p>MoAFS officials and staff</p> <p>Official documents</p> <p>Civil Society</p> <p>Journalists</p> <p>Private Sector Actors</p>	<p>KIIs</p> <p>Focus groups</p> <p>Document review</p>	This will be based only on perception as there are no measurement systems in place.

Evaluation Question	Sub-question	Source of Data	Data Collection Method	Limitations
	<p>SIR Outcome: Have drafted policies progressed in the implementation process? Why or why not? If so, how?</p> <p>What are the challenges?</p> <p>How can this be supported in the future?</p>	<p>MoAFS officials and staff</p> <p>Official documents</p> <p>Civil Society</p> <p>Journalists</p> <p>Private Sector Actors</p>	<p>KIIs</p> <p>Focus groups</p> <p>Document review</p>	
	<p>SIR Outcome: Has the policy environment for agricultural investment improved? Why or why not? How?</p> <p>What are the challenges?</p> <p>How can this be supported in the future?</p>	<p>MoAFS officials and staff</p> <p>Official documents</p> <p>Civil Society</p> <p>Journalists</p> <p>Private Sector Actors</p>	<p>KIIs</p> <p>Focus groups</p> <p>Document review</p>	<p>This will be based only on perception as there are no measurement systems in place.</p>

ANNEX V: SOURCES OF INFORMATION

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Development Partner						
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Roman Malumero	DCAFS	Coordinator	Lilongwe	Development Partners		0999873578
Farmer Organization						
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Government						
Grace Kaudzu	DARS	Director	Lilongwe	Government		0993706339

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Geofrey Mwepa	Irrigation	D. Director	Lilongwe	Government		0993443456
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Annie Mapulanga	DoDMA	Principal Economist,	Lilongwe	Government	anniemapulanga@gmail.com	0999268933
Solomon Mkumbwa	POLSAT	Coordinator	Lilongwe	Government		0998639765
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Charles Chinkhuntha	MoAFS	Chief Economist	Lilongwe	Government	cchinkhuntha@gmail.com	0999180269 0888676484
Getrude Kambauwa	MoAFS	Director	Lilongwe	Government		0888321562
Jerome Nkhoma	MoAFS	Controller for Agriculture Services	Lilongwe	Government		0996760503
Readwell Musopole	MoAFS (DAPS)	Deputy Director	Lilongwe	Government		0888307368
Rodwel Mzonde	MoAFS	Director	Lilongwe	Government		0992139526
Private Sector						

Name	Organization	Position	Location	Categories	Email Address	Phone
	Universal Industry			Private Sector		
Chancellor Kaferapanjira	MCCCI	Chief Executive	Blantyre	Private Sector	ckaferapanjira@mccci.org	0999788177
Tonda Chinangwa	Tea Association	CEO	Blantyre	Private Sector		0999577684
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ANNEX VI: DISCLOSURE OF ANY CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Signed disclosures of conflicts of interest from evaluation team members. Recommended USAID evaluation team disclosure of conflict of interest forms can be found [here](#).

ANNEX VII: EVALUATION TEAM MEMBERS

The Evaluation Team was composed of an international consultant, Sandra Basgall (Team Leader) and two national consultants, Tamani Nkhono-Mvula (Agriculture Expert) and Welton Phalira (Natural Resources Management/Forestry Expert). A second Team Lead, Chavanne Peercy, was recruited during the analysis component of the evaluation.

Sandra Basgall is an international development professional with over 20 years of experience in research, monitoring and evaluation, and gender. She has led MEL projects and departments in Africa and Asia, and been a team leader on eleven evaluations and managed nine more. She has a master's degree from New Mexico State University in Agricultural Extension and an ABD (PhD) in mass media from the University of Iowa, USA. She was Chief of Party in Iraq and Bangladesh; M&E Director in Nigeria, South Sudan, and Central Africa; and consulted for numerous agencies on programs and projects around the world. As a mixed methods researcher, she is as comfortable with qualitative as well as quantitative methodology and knows when to use which to obtain good evaluation results.

Tamani Nkhono-Mvula is a development practitioner with 20 years of experience with expertise in agricultural policy and development. He holds a PhD in Development Studies obtained from the University of Malawi, MA in Development Studies from the Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex, a BSc in Agricultural Economics, and a Diploma in Rural Development from the University of Malawi. His research interests are on institutionalism and agrarian transformation. Currently, Dr. Nkhono-Mvula is working part-time as an Agricultural Policy and Institutional Reforms Advisor for the Millennium Challenge Corporation for Malawi, Zambia, Lesotho, and Mozambique. He previously worked as Chief of Party for the Inclusive Agriculture Development Program in Malawi, as a Technical Advisor in the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development in Malawi, and as the National Director of the Civil Society Agriculture Network, among others. Additionally, over the past 15 years, he has consulted for several international NGOs, the GoM, European Union, the World Bank, and the UN among other organizations on different topics around agricultural policy and rural development.

Welton Phalira is a development expert with MSc in environmental sciences (University of Malawi, 2007) and qualifications in natural resources management, climate change, disaster risk management, international cooperation and development, and program/project management and evaluation. He has over 20 years' experience in environment and natural resources management and over 10 years in program and projects evaluations.

Chavanne Peercy is a research and governance specialist with over 20 years of experience in international policy and development. She has extensive experience in both qualitative and quantitative research, and has conducted field research in Cambodia, Democratic Republic of Congo, and Liberia, and completed a Fulbright Teaching and Research Fellowship in Guinea. In addition to her research activities, Dr. Peercy has held leadership positions in governance programming in several USAID projects, including as Chief of Party for the USAID/DRC Monitoring, Evaluation, and Coordination Contract and the USAID/Niger Sahel Human Voice in Governance Activity (SHIGA). She holds a PhD in International Development with a concentration on Political Development from Tulane University.

ANNEX VIII: STATEMENT(S) OF DIFFERENCE

If submitted by USAID, other funders, implementers, and/or members of the evaluation team regarding significant unresolved differences of opinion.

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