

Global Food Security Strategy Technical Guidance Policy Programming

This is one of 18 technical guidance documents for implementing the U.S. Government's Global Food Security Strategy. The entire set of documents can be found at www.feedthefuture.gov and www.agrilinks.org.

Country leadership is essential to achieving Feed the Future's objectives, which are guided by the U.S. Government's <u>Global Food Security Strategy</u> (GFSS). It also is a core principle of the <u>Sustainable</u> <u>Development Goals</u>. Evidence-driven and transparent policy agendas, capable and accountable institutions, and adequate public and private resources provide the foundation for country leadership. It is for that reason that Cross-Cutting Intermediate Result 5 (CC-IR) prioritizes effective governance, policy, and institutions across all Feed the Future's objectives.

There are many examples of the power of governance and policy change in the fight against global hunger, malnutrition, and poverty. Policies that promoted technology adoption and improved resource governance, access to credit and insurance, and food grain markets opened the door for the Green Revolution in Asia.⁴ More recently, and with U.S. Government support, Ethiopia's policies to secure smallholder farmers' land rights increased incentives for on-farm investments while expanding women's access to land.⁵ Senegal's seed law and standards expanded farmer access to more productive seeds.⁶ Bangladesh's food safety law provides consumer protection in response to widespread fears of food contamination and poisoning.⁷

The guidance below describes how to design and implement activities to promote evidence-based policies that advance Feed the Future's objectives and yield high returns on investment. Effective policy activities hinge on partnering with governments, the private sector, civil society, universities, other development partners, and across the U.S. Government to advance shared policy priorities. Sustainability also requires a focus on strengthening the functioning of the institutions responsible for policymaking (the "institutional architecture") and accountability to fulfilling commitments and using resources effectively. Country teams and regional missions should consider how to improve policy to mobilize, incentivize, and better use public and private resources, both foreign and domestic, to sustainably transform agriculture and food systems at a scale that achieves inclusive agriculture-led growth, resilience, and improved nutrition.

Terminology

Understanding the following terms is fundamental to effective design and implementation of policy-related activities.

- <u>Governance</u> is the exercise of economic, political, and administrative authority to manage a country's affairs at all levels.⁸
- <u>Policy</u> consists of laws, treaties, regulations, statements, administrative actions, and funding priorities. Policy includes the approaches, implementation processes, activities, and accountability mechanisms that guide government actions and enforcement at all levels.⁹
- Institutions are the social and legal norms and rules that underlie economic and social activity.
- <u>Institutional architecture</u> refers to the entities and processes for policy formulation and implementation.
- <u>Mutual accountability</u> is a process that aims to ensure actors follow through on commitments and use resources effectively.

Designing Activities

Policy activities must start with a strong understanding of the stakeholders, context, incentives, and process of policy change — from agenda setting to implementation to evaluation. Many of the tools listed under Additional Resources and Tools can help when analyzing the local system, political economy, and enabling environment to inform this understanding and design programming that is the best fit for a given region or country. Reviewing past policy-related programming (what has and has not worked and why) can shed light on effective approaches, windows of opportunity, reform champions inside and outside of government, strong reform coalitions, and more.

Collaboration should be a top priority from the start. To support policies and processes that are important to local stakeholders, we must engage government, the private sector, civil society, ¹³ academia, media, and other actors to decide on priorities and jointly chart the path to policy change. Using <u>systems</u> and <u>facilitation</u> approaches are essential. ¹⁴ Additionally, collaboration across the U.S. Government and international community to leverage resources, relationships, and expertise can increase the effectiveness of policy-related activities and advance shared objectives.

Programming should include all three elements of an effective policy system outlined in the GFSS: 1) a country-owned, prioritized policy agenda; 2) strengthened institutional architecture; and 3) mutual accountability. Drawing on past Feed the Future experience, this three-element approach emphasizes that, beyond individual policies, strong policy systems are necessary to formulate and implement evidence-based policies, hold stakeholders accountable for commitments, and continuously improve policy in response to the challenges and opportunities presented by a dynamic agriculture and food sector. With a strong understanding of the local context and strong collaboration, focusing on these three elements can unlock policy progress that will have a sustainable impact on food security and nutrition objectives.

Global Food Security Strategy Policy Elements Country-led Evidence-based Effective national investments Prioritized Improved enabling Agenda environment Inclusive Dialogue Institutional Predictable policy making Architecture Strengthened policy institutions Mutual Transparent Regular review Accountability Multi-stakeholder

1. A country-owned, prioritized policy agenda: The policy agenda defines target policy actions to be implemented by local stakeholders with U.S. Government support. Country teams will develop an interagency policy matrix¹⁵ that identifies a select number of policy actions that are politically feasible and manageable within a reasonable period of time, based on expected availability of Feed the Future, local and other development partner resources, and will have the greatest impact on partner country and Feed the Future's objectives. Priority policy actions ideally should be decided jointly with local stakeholders inside and outside of government. The matrix also should align with regional or partner government investment plans and/or strategies related to agriculture (including fisheries), food security, resilience, and nutrition. The matrix should document the theory of change through interlinked policy actions for achieving the highest priority results and serve as a monitoring tool to report on progress toward targets, major barriers/challenges, and the greatest factors for success.

Some questions to ask when identifying policy priorities to include in the matrix include:

- What are the policy priorities for local stakeholders across the government, private sector, civil society, and producer households that are most likely to sustainably reduce hunger, malnutrition, and poverty?
- What policy opportunities can advance Feed the Future and country/regional programming objectives?
- (If applicable) Are policy priorities previously identified in a Feed the Future or New Alliance policy matrix still strategic and aligned with local priorities?
- Which policy areas are country priorities: 1) Institutional Architecture; 2) Resilience and Agricultural Risk Management; 3) Agricultural Inputs; 4) Enabling Environment for Private Sector

Policy agenda programming will focus on advancing specific policy actions by, for example, advising key stakeholders, supporting relevant data collection and analysis, and engaging reform coalitions. In Uganda, local stakeholders identified losses from counterfeit agricultural inputs as a policy priority. In turn, Feed the Future supported the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries and the Ugandan National Bureau for Standards to implement an ambitious new e-verification system, AgVerify, which uses scratch tags to authenticate agricultural inputs on the market. Private input firms have embraced the system, and it gives producers confidence that they are buying authentic inputs because their purchases are guaranteed by the government.

Investment; 5) Nutrition; 6) Land and Natural Resources Tenure Rights and Governance; 7) Agricultural Trade; 8) Other? Also consider cross-cutting issues that shape opportunities for women and youth in the sector, public sector investments, food and water safety, and science and technology. ¹⁶

- What policy priorities and constraints do other policy-related documents identify, such as the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) policy priorities, the World Bank Enabling the Business of Agriculture (EBA) report, or policy papers developed by country agencies, universities, think tanks, and other development actors?
- Are policies or proposed policies in conflict with multilateral obligations, such as trade agreements?
- What factors exist that contribute to effective policy change, such as politically influential reform
 champions inside or outside of government, pressing problems or crises, international or regional
 pressure, and/or a strong evidence base of policy impact? What factors exist that are barriers to
 policy change, such as fiscal constraints, powerful veto players, lack of a sense of urgency or
 outside pressure, or lack of a strong evidence base? (For help analyzing these factors, see,
 Kaleidoscope Model under Additional Resources and Tools.)
- How do informal rules or social norms affect the enabling environment or other policy areas?
 How could programming address them, if at all?
- If countries have approved but not implemented policies, how can we support local stakeholders in holding governments accountable for implementation?
- How do/will policies affect different population segments, such as women, youth, or marginalized groups?
- 2. <u>Strengthened institutional architecture:</u> Institutional architecture refers to the country's capacity to undertake transparent, inclusive, predictable, and evidence-based policy change. Country teams need to understand the status of the country's institutional architecture and how they might support its improvement. Country teams can use <u>Institutional Architecture Assessments</u> (IAA) to inform local policymakers, key stakeholders, and development partners about possible institutional constraints that could stymie the policy change process if left unaddressed. The IAA examines six "building blocks" of the policy formulation and implementation process: 1) the *Guiding Policy Framework* measures whether the overall policy framework is consistently applied and transparent; 2) *Policy Development and*

Coordination measures the capacity to use evidence-based analysis, coordinate across sectors, and ultimately to lay the groundwork to support policy implementation; 3) *Inclusivity and Stakeholder Consultation* measures the degree of inclusivity and stakeholder consultation involved in the policy development process; 4) *Evidence-based Analysis* measures the research, data, and statistics available to support government policies related to agriculture and food security; 5) *Policy Implementation* measures whether implementation plans have been developed, priorities align with the work plans of line ministries, and a system is in place to understand impact; and 6) *Mutual Accountability* measures the effectiveness of a country's mutual accountability systems, described more below.¹⁷

While this element aims to strengthen the policy system to achieve and sustain gains over time, it also helps advance specific policy objectives and promotes policy alignment around sector priorities and investments. For example, inadequate consultation with the private sector and civil society during policy formulation may result in policy changes that have unintended consequences or weak modalities for implementation. When designing activities to strengthen institutional architecture, country teams should consider:

- What gaps and deficiencies exist in the current architecture that will impede the country's ability to advance high-impact policy priorities, e.g., lack of data to inform policy options, inadequate financing for implementation, timing vis-a-vis budget or election calendar, etc. (IAA)
- What human and institutional capacity constraints hinder performance of the country's policy system, e.g., research capabilities, coordination between national-local government (e.g., Organizational Capacity Assessment, Problem-Driven Iterative Adaptation approaches, causal loop diagramming; for capacity development monitoring, see also the Performance Index)18
- **Institutional architecture programming** increases the capacity of people, systems, and processes to manage policy reform, often through strategic engagement, coalition building, and technical partnerships.
- In Bangladesh, the government, with donor support, has invested heavily in its Food Planning and Monitoring Unit because of the vital role it plays in collecting information, conducting evidence-based policy analysis, and coordinating with stakeholders.
- In Malawi, technical policy training for journalists and editors is helping bridge gaps between researchers and media in order to better drive and support food security policy change.
 - In Ethiopia, the Rural Economic Development and Food Security Sector Working Group, a joint government-donor coordination group led by the Minister of Agriculture, has provided needed oversight and cross-ministerial accountability to implement the National Agriculture and Investment Plan.
- What is the extent and source of political and public will to strengthen the institutional architecture?
- 3. <u>Mutual accountability:</u> Mutual accountability in this context refers to the process to improve alignment, contribution, and accountability of all stakeholders to accelerate inclusive growth it is about governments, the private sector, and citizens holding each other accountable to their food security commitments. It has four components: 1) a country-owned sector plan; 2) voluntary stakeholder commitments; 3) verifiable self-reporting on the responsible execution of individual commitments; and 4) joint responsibility to ensure progress. Without mutual accountability, investment, policy, and other commitments may never translate into policy and systems change that contributes to ending extreme poverty and hunger. When designing mutual accountability activities, country teams should consider:

- What accountability processes exist? Are they effective? Why, or why not?
- Is there a biennial and/or Joint Sector Review (JSR) or equivalent process? (IAA, JSR assessment tool¹⁹)
- Are the processes sufficiently inclusive, transparent, and evidence-based? (JSR assessment)
- Is there a national food security plan that includes financial and policy commitments and allows for aligned commitments from civil society and the private sector²⁰? (National Agricultural Investment Plan appraisal toolkit)
- Does the mutual accountability process include reporting out on all commitments to the national plan, including joint impact on sector progress?
- What is the extent and source of political and public will to strengthen mutual accountability processes?

systems and mechanisms, such as Joint Sector Reviews (JSR), and will increase the capacity of key stakeholders to engage effectively in the process. In 2013, Senegal, with Feed the Future support, hosted an event to strengthen the African Union's JSR process. Before that, mutual accountability was not on the radar in Senegal. In 2017, the local private sector, with civil society input, will organize the annual agricultural JSR in Senegal. A key discussion point will be imported agricultural machinery taxes as a hindrance to private sector agricultural investment. The U.S. Government supported local partner participation throughout the process, which will serve as a model for how other countries can use JSRs to increase the returns on public and private investment in agriculture.

Mutual accountability programming will support relevant

Additionally, the U.S. Government and other development actors have identified several lessons learned to consider when designing policy-related activities:

Lesson 1: *Policy programming should be flexible and adaptive.* When progress stagnates and challenges arise, stay engaged to be ready to respond when opportunities emerge, support reform champions and coalitions, and/or focus on less politically charged activities, such as data capacity or implementation of existing policies. While maintaining commitment to achieving policy priorities is important, the policy matrix will evolve over time. Be flexible and adaptive to respond to changing local priorities, shift approaches to overcome roadblocks and achieve programming goals, and provide the space to "Think and Work Politically."²¹

Lesson 2: Enduring, effective policies are the product of transparent, participatory, and inclusive policy processes and promote inclusive, sustainable, and resilient growth. Analyzing the potentially different effects of policies on certain segments of the population, especially women, youth, and other marginalized groups, and using participatory feedback loops when implementing policies can help to ensure policies have their intended impact.²²

Lesson 3: *Policy activities can be stand-alone activities or integrated in other food security projects.* Deciding which course to follow depends on the policy issue at hand, the extent of political and public will for policy change, the capacity of the institutional architecture, the policy impact on programming priorities, and available resources.

Lesson 4: The complex, long-term nature of policy change heightens the importance of monitoring, evaluation, and learning to ensure activities meet their objectives and measure impact. Policy matrix and institutional architecture indices capture policy and policy system results, but other tools, such as Complexity Aware Monitoring and social network analysis, can help measure progress toward results. A strong learning agenda that quantifies and articulates the value of good policy is critical to sustaining positive change and showing results. Commissioning case studies of specific policy changes at the

national and regional level and their effects on private sector investment/activity, supporting data collection on policy-relevant issues (e.g., tracking employment along priority value chains), and tracking systemic change in policy and other relevant systems can improve policy dialogue and mobilize change agents for further improvement in the policy system.

Programming in Practice

These examples demonstrate that policy-related activities can catalyze and accelerate private sector-led agriculture and food system transformation. Specific policy changes can produce food security and nutrition breakthroughs, while strengthening the policy system can lay the foundation for sustaining positive change well after an intervention ends.

Regional Trade Integration Policy in Practice: In Central America, since 2005, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), in partnership with USAID, has worked with the Central America-Dominican Republic Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA-DR) countries to help resolve sanitary and phytosanitary issues (SPS) affecting trade. Two-way trade has more than doubled since the start of the CAFTA-DR trade agreement in 2005. USDA has supported partner countries to implement 10 laws improving SPS system efficiencies, as well as nine other regulations, standards, and protocols. Fresh fruit and vegetable exports to the United States have increased from \$1.13 billion in 2011 to over \$1.6 billion in 2016, an increase of over 41 percent. Policy support complements other U.S. Government work with smallholder farmers in Guatemala and Honduras to produce export products and increase incomes.

Land Tenure Policy in Practice: In Tajikistan, local stakeholders identified secure land tenure as a critical constraint to agricultural growth with particularly adverse effects on women. In response, USAID continues its longstanding efforts to support national and local government to reform land policies and effectively develop, monitor, and implement the land reform process to improve the lives of Tajik farmers in the near and long term. USAID also partners with local civil society to expand awareness of land-use rights and provide legal aid services. A recent project focused on strengthening women's property rights, with women representing 49 percent of the 56,000 project beneficiaries who gained documented property rights. A new activity launched in late 2016 is building on previous successes and working with national and local governments to establish a land market in Tajikistan.²⁴

Institutional Architecture in Practice: In Kenya, USAID partnered with the Agricultural Council of Kenya (AgCK) to increase its organizational capacity and convene non-state actors across value chains. Today, AgCK has become a leader in the Kenyan agriculture sector and is a voice for and bridge between non-state actors across the sector as well as a close advisor of the Minister of Agriculture. AgCK is participating in the multi-stakeholder National Agriculture and Investment Plan (NAIP) appraisal and formulation process, which aims to increase Kenya's agricultural productivity from 4.8 percent to 6 percent in line with its CAADP goals. The value placed on AgCK's participation demonstrates the government's increasing recognition that inclusive processes produce stronger policies that enjoy local support and reflect constituent and private sector priorities.

Mutual Accountability in Practice: Feed the Future partnered with the Alliance for Commodity Trade in Eastern and Southern Africa, an agency of Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), to convene two Seed Policy Harmonization Implementation Plan (COMSHIP) Review Meetings. With participants from up to 19 COMESA countries, the meetings brought together key seed sector actors (government, farmer and trade associations, companies, research institutions, media, regional economic communities, and development partners) to promote mutual accountability among actors and discuss next steps to implement COMSHIP. The meetings spurred seed regulation reform, training and capacity building, and policy sensitization efforts across COMESA countries.²⁷

Additional Resources and Tools

<u>Applied Political Economy Analysis</u> (PEA) explores the interaction of political and economic processes in a society; the distribution of power and wealth between different groups and individuals; and the processes that create, sustain, and transform these relationships over time.²⁸ PEA can help identify reform champions, incentives, and disincentives.

The <u>Kaleidoscope Model</u> synthesizes experience from many countries in the formulation and implementation of policy change and analyzes drivers of change in the food security arena.²⁹ The model identifies factors that promote and inhibit policy change and can help analyze policy priorities and the political economy for policy change.

The <u>Political and Public Will (PPW) Toolkit</u> outlines how to build political and public will for social or public policy change in a way that also produces mutual accountability.³⁰ It provides change agents with tools to answer: 1) Who are the key political and public stakeholders in the issue area? 2) How do those stakeholders view the problem and potential solutions? 3) What can be done to align stakeholder views of problems and solutions? 4) How can we produce meaningful mutual accountability among stakeholders around clear, shared goals?

The <u>Guide to Promoting Productive Policy Dialogue in the Agricultural Sector</u> provides tools and strategies for improving the effectiveness of policy engagement.³¹

Commercial Legal and Institutional Reform (CLIR) assessments examine the enabling environment legal framework and its implementation, supporting institutions, and social dynamics. AgCLIR 3.0, an updated version of the AgCLIR methodology, analyzes the business enabling environment constraints to the startup and operation of agribusiness, focusing on systemic issues that raise the costs of doing business throughout the agricultural sector and incorporating factors from the World Bank Enabling the Business of Agriculture report. Smaller-scale tools borrowing from this methodology include SeedCLIR for the seed sector and Value Chain CLIR (VcCLIR) for a single value chain.

The **World Bank** Enabling the Business of Agriculture report measures and monitors regulations that affect the functioning of agriculture and agribusiness in more than 60 countries.³⁴

For further assistance related to these Technical Guidelines, please contact ftfguidance@usaid.gov.

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⁵ USAID Land Links. Ethiopia Country Profile. <u>https://www.land-links.org/country-profile/ethiopia-2/.</u>

⁶ Feed the Future. "2016 Progress Report: Growing Prosperity for a Food-Secure Future." 2016. Page 16. Retrieved April 12, 2017, from https://feedthefuture.gov/sites/default/files/resource/files/2016%20Feed%20the%20Future%20Progress%20Report_0.pdf; Oehmke, James, et al. "Rural Economic Transformation in the Senegal River Delta." Working Paper. Research Gate. March 2017. Retrieved April 12, 2017, from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/315477828 Rural Economic Transformation In the Senegal River Delta

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⁸ USAID. "Strategy on Democracy, Human Rights and Governance." Page 37. June 2013. Retrieved April 6, 2017, from http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/pdacx557.pdf

- ⁹ U.S. Government Interagency. "Feed the Future Policy Plan (draft)." December 31, 2012.
- ¹⁰ World Bank. "The Political Economy of Policy Reform: Issues and Implications for Policy Dialogue and Development Operations." November 10, 2008. Retrieved April 11, 2017, from
- http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EXTSOCIALDEV/Resources/The_Political_Economy_of_Policy_Reform_Issues_and_Implications_for_Policy_Dialogue_and_Development_Operations.pdf
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- ¹³ Civil society includes producer organizations, non-governmental organizations, faith-based organizations and others. The Feed the Future Civil Society Engagement Handbook provides useful principles and tools for working with civil society. Feed the Future. "Strengthening Civil Society's Role in Development: A Handbook for Engagement." April 19, 2017. Retrieved April 19, 2017, from https://feedthefuture.gov/resource/strengthening-civil-societys-role-development-handbook-engagement
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- ¹⁵ Feed the Future countries have used policy matrices to identify priority policy actions since 2013. Interagency country teams report on the matrices annually.
- ¹⁶ Feed the Future previously identified these priority policy areas and cross-cutting issues based on ongoing programming, although they may change under the GFSS. U.S. Government Interagency. "Feed the Future Guide to Supporting Sound Policy Enabling Environments." August 16, 2013.
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- ¹⁹For more information on mutual accountability, including published JSR assessments and best practices, *see* Regional Strategic Analysis and Knowledge Support System (ReSAKSS). "Mutual Accountability," Retrieved April 6, 2017, from http://www.resakss.org/node/2
- ²⁰ For examples of where the private sector can engage in African mutual accountability processes, *see* Oehmke, James. "Mutual Accountability Opens Private-Sector Opportunities in African Agriculture." Choices. Quarter 4 (2017). Retrieved April 6, 2017, from http://www.choicesmagazine.org/
- $\underline{choices-magazine/submitted-articles/mutual-accountability-opens-private-sector-opportunities-in-african-agriculture\#s thash. S2RUEDV d.dpuf}$
- ²¹ "Thinking and Working Politically" focuses on analyzing and responding to the local context through flexible, adaptive programming. It recognizes that development is political and technical solutions often fall short and uses Applied Political Economy Analysis to . Development Leadership Program. "The case for thinking and working politically: The implications of 'doing development differently.'" Retrieved April 6, 2017, from http://publications.dlprog.org/TWP.pdf
- ²² There are many useful inclusive development tools. For example, the Gender Integration Framework examines gendered challenges and opportunities in a country context against existing programming across key dimensions that contribute to women's empowerment in agriculture. Feed the Future. "Gender Integration Framework (GIF) 101."Retrieved April 6, 2017, from https://agrilinks.org/gender-training/GIF101. Positive Youth Development provides opportunities for young people to engage directly in development programming, build skills and exercise leadership in their communities. Youth Power. "Promoting Positive Youth Development." Retrieved April 6, 2017, from https://www.youthpower.org/positive-youth-development
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²⁷ USAID Africa Lead. "Feed the Future: Building Capacity for African Agricultural Transformation Program (Africa Lead II): Annual Report for Project Year 3, Fiscal Year 2016." January 2017, Retrieved May 17, 2017, from http://www.africaleadftf.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/AL-FY16-Annual-Report_public.pdf

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