



MwAPATA Institute Research

The MwAPATA Institute Launch

Bingu International Convention Centre (BICC)

October 1st 2020

MwAPATA Research Agenda

The MwAPATA Institute's research falls into three broad categories:

- i. **Demand-driven**- responds to policymakers' *specific requests* for studies to fill in information gaps around specific policy actions
- ii. **Reactive/rapid response**- response to *specific urgent requests* from policymakers, the private sector, and/or development partners
- iii. **Supply-driven**- analysis geared towards *anticipating major challenges* and alerting stakeholders about the need to respond proactively rather than reactively

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EXAMPLES:

Demand driven research

- i. Unlocking Implementation Challenges: Lessons from the Agricultural Sector
- ii. The Future of Smallholder Farming in Malawi
- iii. Agricultural Input Support Programmes: Best practices and Challenges
- iv. Manufacturing and industrialization in Malawi: Trends, opportunities, and strategies
- v. Food Imports Profiles for Malawi

EXAMPLES:

Reactive/rapid response research

- i. An Early Assessment of the Impact of COVID-19 on Agri-food Systems in Malawi
- ii. Agricultural Input Support Programmes: Best practices and Challenges

KEY HIGHLIGHTS:

Unlocking implementation challenges [1]

- i. Make policy making processes more inclusive and transparent by bringing in key stakeholders such as farmers, private sector and civil society
- ii. Align governments' funding and allocations to priority programs as set out and approved in national and sectoral plans
- iii. Streamline agricultural policies and laws to eliminate conflicts and contradictions

KEY HIGHLIGHTS:

Unlocking implementation challenges [2]

- iv. Embrace evidence-based policy, projects and programs formulation
- v. Continuously improve the capacity of policymakers and technical officers to interpret and use evidence in policy making and implementation
- vi. Integrate M&E frameworks and implementation plans in policy, programs and projects design

KEY HIGHLIGHTS:

The future of smallholder farming

- i. Invest in increased agricultural productivity and improved soil health
- ii. Invest in irrigated agriculture
- iii. Strengthen the land rights and tenure laws
- iv. Enhance farmers' access to agricultural finance
- v. Make the policy environment more predictable for agribusiness
- vi. Diversify off-farm employment opportunities

KEY HIGHLIGHTS:

Impact of COVID-19 in Malawi

- i. Closely monitoring food prices could be an early warning system for economic impacts
- ii. Thorough investigation of the drivers of food price spikes could help mitigate the negative welfare impacts of COVID19
- iii. Social safety nets for those suffering from spread mitigation measures could improve compliance
- iv. If the pandemic persists, the impacts on transportation, especially for inputs, could be most detrimental to the economy
- v. The most effective economic strategy will likely be containing the spread of the disease.
- vi. Current monitoring may not be capturing the true scope of the spread and impact of COVID-19

EXAMPLES:

Supply driven research

i. Agricultural Transformation in Malawi: Call to Action

The specific objectives of this paper are:

- Raise awareness of how business as usual, including maintaining Malawi's agricultural sector dependence on tobacco, is unsustainable and will create ever-increasing problems for the country
- Compellingly explain why there is an urgent need for action
- Make the case for assembling a coalition of the willing for action
- Outline a comprehensive transformational strategy

KEY HIGHLIGHTS:

Agricultural Transformation in Malawi: A Call to Action [1]

- i. A large chunk of Malawi's challenges are well-known with known solutions, but resolving them is hampered by an unpredictable policy environment and implementation challenges
- ii. There exists a huge potential to revitalize farming amid the pre-existing (e.g. low productivity) challenges and the new megatrends (e.g. high population densities) that are threatening smallholder farming in Malawi
- iii. Malawi should begin to implement policy reforms that will promote private investment and smallholder farmers' access to markets, services and technologies

KEY HIGHLIGHTS:

Agricultural Transformation in Malawi: A Call to Action [2]

- iv. Political will for transformative reforms: Effective and development-focused leadership is the single-most important factor in driving the agenda for change
- v. Leadership needs to be buttressed by a “coalition of the willing”, representing parliamentarian, public, private, donor and NGO interests, that can help mobilize and sustain political support for the agenda over election cycles, and contribute to its effective implementation
- vi. Malawi can prosper, but not without deliberate and informed efforts to guide the process and the willingness of stakeholders not to take sides but to come together and do what is right

Conclusions

- i. The Agricultural Transformation: Call to Action
 - Appeals for a *home-grown institution* capable of generating new knowledge as the basis for public policies
 - A policy think tank to support public debate, facilitate consensus-building, and creation of politically feasible solutions on critical issues of national development to move the transformation agenda forward
- ii. This is a role that the MwAPATA Institute is set to play
- iii. In collaboration with partners to champion the generation of effective home-grown solutions to local challenges





Partners



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