

MwAPATA supports CISANET with developing the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) Issues Paper



Participants (MwAPATA staff and Value Chain Stakeholders) pose for a group photo after the validation workshop

MwAPATA is supporting CISANET in organizing a National Annual Policy Conference for 2021, tentatively scheduled to take place before end of November. The theme of the conference is the “Africa Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA): Opportunities and Challenges for Agriculture in Malawi”. Relatedly, the Institute, in collaboration with CISANET, will prepare an Issues Paper on the AfCFTA's opportunities, threats and challenges for agriculture in Malawi to be presented at the Conference. Recently Malawi ratified the African Continental Free Area agreement, where 54 countries will be trading among each other.

As part of the development process of the Issues paper, on Friday 12th November 2021, MwAPATA organized a validation workshop for various stakeholders in the sector to provide input. The event included presentations of different sections of the Issues paper which were followed by discussions led by Ministry of Trade official and MITC as moderators. Participants

included key stakeholders in the agricultural value chains with export potential, especially those that could be harnessed under the new AfCFTA agreement and other regional trade blocs.

Malawi is one of the world's most agriculture-dependent economies where rural poverty, malnutrition, inequality and social exclusion remain major challenges. Consequently, efforts have been made to develop value chains so that the country can export more and diverse value-added products.