



2020 - 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN

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Thank you all and may God bless you.

FOREWORD

The establishment of MwAPATA Institute is a major milestone in the history of agrarian discourse and practice in Malawi. For the first time we now have an independent and home-grown policy think-tank. For those of us who believe that Africa is on a path towards rapid economic transformation, powered by agriculture and agri-food systems, we are confident that the rising Africa narrative will be sustained in the coming decades. However, Malawians risk missing out on the power of agriculture and the rising Africa narrative unless we take responsibility over our own policy choices. The hour has come for Malawi to generate its own policy-relevant research to feed into national planning processes. MWAPATA Institute has come to champion home-grown policies, instead of solely relying on international research institutes to support national processes.

Let me hasten to add that my experience in leading the Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) has also taught me that support from global experience and expertise remains vitally important for the success of local institutes. African research institutes should take advantage of global knowledge generated elsewhere and global expertise. African institutes such as MwAPATA need however to take leadership in owning the processes of generating policy relevant evidence. MwAPATA, therefore, needs to carefully manage the global support, as a necessary ingredient for the creation of the research partnerships needed to drive forward Malawi's agricultural transformation agenda.

The establishment of MwAPATA Institute would not have been possible without the indispensable support of several individuals and institutions. In this regard, my gratitude goes to all those who have helped, in one way or the other, in the establishment of MwAPATA Institute. In a special way, I would like to thank Michigan State University (MSU), especially Prof. Thomas Jayne, University Foundation Professor, for his wholehearted support of MwAPATA. Likewise, my sincere gratitude goes to the Agricultural Transformation Initiative (ATI) and Foundation for a Smoke-Free World (FSFW) for their financial support. Without these three institutions, MSU, ATI and FSFW, MwAPATA Institute could not have been established. Locally, I would like to thank the Government of Malawi, and the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security (MoAFS) for its support. Special thanks also go to the National Planning Commission (NPC) for hosting MwAPATA Institute during its formative period, and for affiliating MwAPATA as one of the Commission's think-tanks. I am indebted to Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources (LUANAR) for affiliating and embracing MwAPATA as a technical partner. I wish to applaud MODA-PLUS for ably facilitating the process of developing this Strategic Plan.

This Strategic Plan stipulates the MwAPATA Institute's vision, mission and the core values that define the direction that the Institute is taking as a think-tank. Being the first Strategic Plan, it focuses on consolidating, and instituting, as well as, defining the programs that will set it apart from other players in the policy research space. Among the critical strategies defined in the Strategic Plan is the Sustainability Strategy. This is defined by not only being able to generate the funds necessary to run MwAPATA, but also by being relevant to its stakeholders via conducting demand-led research.

In order to become a home-grown policy, think-tank of choice, MwAPATA shall assemble the best brains available in the country. It will also establish impeccable institutional standards in order to deliver on the outputs that have been identified in this Five-Year Strategic Plan. As the inaugural Chairman of the MwAPATA Institute Board of Directors, I commit to ensure its success. I call upon the Institute's Executive Officer and staff, and all well-meaning partners to make MwAPATA Institute a key driver of agricultural transformation we are all seeking to achieve in Malawi.

Prof. Richard M. Mkandawire.

Chairman

MwAPATA Institute Board of Directors

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This is the first Strategic Plan 2020-2025 for the MwAPATA Institute. MwAPATA is a non-partisan policy think-tank dedicated to conducting empirical policy research in the agricultural, natural resources and rural development. To achieve the Institute's goals, the Strategic Plan is aligned with the ongoing major policy processes such as contributing to the formulation of the country's National Transformation 2063. MwAPATA Institute is positioning itself as the "must go to indigenous think-tank" for empirical research and advice to inform formulation of policies in the broad agricultural sector. MwAPATA's affiliation to institutions that are at the forefront of driving social and economic transformation agenda of the country, such as, the National Planning Commission (NPC) and LUANAR, attests to that commitment.

The Vision of MwAPATA is to be a world-class, credible, and respected local agricultural policy research think tank in Malawi, among the most respected in the world. MwAPATA Mission is to conduct independent, objective, and high-quality research that provides practical recommendations to inform and improve agricultural, food systems, and rural development policies in Malawi while the Institutes Motto is "Evidence matters for transformational impact".

In order to achieve its Mission, the MwAPATA Strategic Plan has two strategic pillars, namely, Institutional Establishment, and Programmatic Strategy (Appendix Table 1). While the first pillar outlines how the Institute is established, the second focuses on the Institute's 2020-2025 core programs. The first pillar constitutes five themes, which include the following: (i) establishment of MwAPATA Institute; (ii) managing the growth of MwAPATA Institute; (iii) sustainability of MwAPATA Institute; (iv) visibility of MwAPATA Institute; and (v) partnerships. The second pillar constitutes three themes that include: (i) research and data quality improvement; (ii) support policy and regulatory reforms; and (iii) foster institutional policy coordination and outreach. Under the research theme, MwAPATA will focus on three types of research: *Demand-driven*- responds to policymakers' specific requests for studies to fill in information gaps around specific policy actions; *reactive/rapid response*- response to specific urgent requests from policymakers, the private sector, and/or development partners; and *supply-driven*- analysis geared towards anticipating major challenges and alerting stakeholders about the need to respond proactively rather than reactively.

The implementation of the Plan will be conducted by the MwAPATA Secretariat under strategic guidance and oversight by Institute's Board of Directors. The five-

member Board is the highest authority of MwAPATA Institute. MwAPATA has also a nine (9) member Advisory Board that supports and gives advice to the Board of Directors and the Secretariat by extension. Members of the Advisory Board are drawn from key state and non-state stakeholders in the broad agricultural sector and bring on board a diverse skills, knowledge, and experience.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Setting the Context

Rural poverty, malnutrition, inequality and social exclusion remain major challenges in Malawi. It is widely understood that sustained agricultural productivity growth will be necessary to address these challenges, transform the economy, and raise living standards because of extensive forward and backward linkages between agriculture and the rest of Malawi's economy. In order to attain the level of agricultural growth that can transform the Country's economy, the Country will need to reduce its overreliance on tobacco, a crop facing declining international demand, and transition its farming and economy toward more profitable commodity value chains and livelihoods alternatives. Many agricultural value chains have great unmet potential. A second major challenge is to eliminate the unpredictable policy environment that inhibit private investment in Malawian agri-food systems¹, including *ad hoc* and frequently changing marketing and trade policies that create a high-risk environment for farmers and all private firms, large and small.

Redressing these challenges is necessary to create a hospitable enabling environment for inclusive, broad-based, and sustained agricultural sector² growth. Success will require major commitment and dedication from the Government of Malawi to implement supportive policies and make well-targeted public investments toward alternative agri-food systems.

While many of the constituent parts of an effective and comprehensive strategy for Malawi's agricultural sector are known, others remain unknown. For example, there is broad agreement that alternative agricultural value chains will need to be supported and developed to reduce Malawi's reliance on tobacco as a cash crop. Continued reliance on tobacco despite shrinking global demand, makes the Country's economy vulnerable. However, there remains a dearth of evidence that can guide government and the private sector to determine: (1) which value chains provide the greatest potential and in which areas of the Country? (2) which types of investment and in which physical infrastructure would provide the greatest benefits per dollar spent, depending on which commodity value chains are

¹ Agri-food systems refer to farm and off-farm activities along agricultural value chains from *farm to folk*. It includes agricultural production, agricultural markets, farm inputs and output distribution, value addition, food security, nutrition, and agricultural research and development.

² Agricultural Sector is broadly defined to include -- crop production; animal production; forestry and logging; and fishing, hunting and trapping

prioritized? And (3) which specific policies are needed to support and accelerate public and private investments in these value chains and infrastructure?

While it is widely agreed that there is a need for action to address the challenge of tobacco, little evidence or consensus exists on how to do this. Therefore, this can most effectively be addressed through coalition building led by a respected national policy think-tank. While many countries in the region have built highly active, credible, and respected local agricultural policy think-tanks that play the role of organizing and consensus-building (e.g., [the Indaba Agricultural Policy Research Institute \(IAPRI\)](#) for Zambia), Malawi has no such institution. Therefore, another overarching challenge facing the Country is to build a home-grown Malawian institution capable of generating new knowledge as the basis for evidence-based policies, to support public debate and build consensus on the way forward, and to build a coalition capable of driving the process for policy reforms.

It is against this backdrop that Michigan State University (MSU) entered into partnership with the National Planning Commission (NPC) and Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources (LUANAR) with funding from the Agricultural Transformation Initiative (ATI) to build a self-sustaining Malawian agricultural policy think-tank, MwAPATA Institute. The Institute is now fully operational and engaging the Government of Malawi, private sector, and civil society stakeholders in a program of applied policy analysis, policy outreach, capacity building, and policy coordination. The ultimate goal of MwAPATA Institute is to accelerate the adoption of more effective Malawian-led policies and programs to drive broad-based agricultural sector growth, diversification and improvement of smallholder incomes from the development of alternative commodity value chains, and improved household food security and nutrition in Malawi.

MwAPATA's development is in two phases. In Phase I (January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2021), Michigan State University is responsible for the development of the Institute and maintains overall management authority. In Phase II, starting January 1, 2022, the Institute will be fully autonomous. The MwAPATA Institute will be headed by an Executive Officer, a highly respected and trusted Malawian with clout and extensive experience in agricultural policy who is capable of establishing strategic and systematic partnerships for true, catalytic transformation. The Executive Officer will be supported by a core management and implementation team composed of Malawian, and international experts if need be.

1.2. Achievements to date

Below are some of the milestones that MwAPATA Institute has accomplished to date:

- (a) Drafted the articles of association and subsequent registration of MwAPATA Institute as a private company limited by guarantee;
- (b) Recruitment of staff including, the Executive Officer (EO), Research Officer (RO), Research Fellows (RFs), Research Assistant (RAs), Finance and Administration Officer (FAO), and Communications Specialist (ES).
- (c) Secured and occupied permanent offices in Area 10/446 along Chilanga Drive, off Blantyre Street, Lilongwe;
- (d) Established a nine (9) member Advisory Board and a broad Steering Committee;
- (e) In collaboration with NPC, MwAPATA has prepared five (5) thought-pieces to serve as background papers to the National Transformation 2063, the Successor to Vision 2020;
- (f) In collaboration with other partners, MwAPATA embarked on a research program researching on soil health, sustainable intensification, insect farming, alternative sources of energy, land reforms and land rental markets, and responses to address the emerging COVID-19 pandemic in Malawi.
- (g) Acquired a Post Office Box at P.O Box 30883, Capital City. Lilongwe 3; and
- (h) Partnered with the National Statistical Office (NSO), Tegemeo Institute (Kenya) and IAPRI (Zambia) to conduct the Malawi Rural Agricultural and Livelihood Survey (MRALS) 2019. The survey covered about 3500 households from eight (8) districts.

1.3.Strategic Plan development

A number of key steps are necessary in order to for MwAPATA Institute to fully deliver on its institutional and programmatic mandate. These include: (1) establishing the Institute to become a fully functional entity that can deliver on its programmatic mandate including recruitment and retention of highly qualified and experienced staff, and installation of modern information and communication technologies (ICT); (2) defining a path to institutional sustainability; (3) developing an impactful policy-oriented research program; and (4) establishing close partnerships with public sector, private sector, civil society, and development partner entities to mobilize a coalition of support for implementing needed

programs and policies to transform Malawian agri-food systems. Hence, the development of the MwAPATA Institute Strategic Plan.

The Plan defines the MwAPATA Institute's strategy and guides the Institute's decisions on the allocation of its resources to fully deliver on its mandate. It is a roadmap that the Institute will follow to achieve on its mandate. This is the Institute's first Strategic Plan, covering the period 2020 to 2025 and it will be reviewed thereafter in order to incorporate updates deemed necessary by the Institute's management, Board, and the stakeholders.

In developing the Strategic Plan,³ various approaches and methods were employed in order to cultivate a sense of ownership of the Plan by the Institute and its partners and key stakeholders'. The process of developing this SP included: **step 1:** project mobilisation that involved the Client (MwAPATA Institute) and the Consultant (MODA-PLUS) holding a mutual discussion at inception to, among other things, agree on expectations and share initial literature for review; **step 2:** undertaking initial project activities, including literature review, stakeholder mapping, readiness assessment for strategic planning and inception reporting culminating into an inception report; **step 3:** data gathering, which involved stakeholder consultations, undertaking a diagnostic and planning workshop; **step 4:** production of a zero draft; **Step 5:** internal and external review and fine-tuning the SP.

Some of the methods employed in the SP development process included: (1) key informant interviews; (2) focus group discussions (FGDs); and (3) situational analysis workshop that brought together MwAPATA staff and stakeholders. The following tools were used to conduct the situational analysis:

- (1) Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Environmental, Legal and Demographic (PESTELD) analysis: The PESTELD analysis is a systematic collection and evaluation of past and present political, economic, social, technological, environmental, legal and demographic data aimed at identifying internal and external forces that may influence MwAPATA's performance and choice of strategies.
- (2) Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis: A SWOT analysis assessed the Institute's current and future strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.

³MODUS-PLUS consultants facilitated the MwAPATA Institute Strategic Plan development process. The firm, led by Dr. John Mataya, a highly experienced Consultant in strategic planning, was competitively recruited. The draft Plan was subsequently fleshed out by MSU and MwAPATA with input from its Advisory Board and from ATI.

The situational analysis facilitated the identification of actions, strategies, entry points, and strategic partnerships to make MwAPATA effective in achieving its mandate. The specific objectives of the situational analysis were:

- a. Explore the nature and extent of data and evidence needs in the agriculture, natural resources and rural development policy arena;
- b. Map the perceptions and experiences of key stakeholders in relation to the policy problems;
- c. Identify existing strategies and activities which address the policy problems;
- d. Establish the actors and organizations that are already active in the policy arena that MwAPATA may want to partner with to achieve desirable results and to avoid duplication;
- e. Identify the actors and organizations that could be important partners; and
- f. Establish gaps in existing strategies and activities so as to address the policy problems.

2. SITUATION ANALYSIS RESULTS

2.1. PESTELD Analysis

In this section, we present the situational analysis results from the PESTELD analysis. As already mentioned, the aim of the PESTLED was to identify internal and external forces that may influence MwAPATA's performance and choice of strategies.

Political Environment

MwAPATA Institute is coming at an opportune time in the history of the Country. First, the Institute is taking off after a presidential election that brought in a new regime into leadership. There are unmistakable signs that the new administration would want to do things differently by coming up with better and well thought out policies to revitalize the Country's economic growth for improved livelihoods. Second, there is an emerging crop of well-educated and knowledgeable Parliamentarians who are looking for and are keen to support and endorse policy processes that are backed by solid empirical evidence. Third, there is a paradigm shift in Malawi whereby, the populace is increasingly questioning the basis of some policies and why some policies are not being implemented.

MwAPATA Institute can take advantage of this prevailing political environment by proactively conducting empirical policy research to respond to new administration's information needs to guide new policy making process. MwAPATA could also conduct research that anticipates major challenges and alerting the government about the need to respond proactively. The Institute could effectively market itself, through interactions with the Parliamentary Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources, and brand itself as a go-to reference point for empirical research on agro-food systems.

The Institute is being formed amid the COVID-19 pandemic, a global crisis, that threatens to wreak havoc in Malawi if not well contained through well informed policy actions on agri-food systems. A crisis of this nature, while painful, is also an opportunity for MwAPATA to inform short- and long-term strategic responses to the pandemic that will make the Country's agri-food systems resilient. Therefore, MwAPATA Institute should be well positioned to play a pivotal role in generating timely evidence to respond to unexpected internal and external shocks affecting the agri-food systems.

Economic Environment

While Malawi economy is agro-based, with over 80 percent of the population depending on agriculture for livelihoods and contributing over 80 percent of the country's exports, the sector is heavily depended on tobacco. The crop is currently facing declining international demand, a process that is likely to affect the livelihoods and the economy adversely. Thus, there is urgent need for the country to restructure the agriculture sector by strategizing on how to gradually exit from tobacco dependency while exploring and supporting other feasible value chains.

The sector is also bedevilled by low productivity, a problem associated with factors such as overreliance on rain-fed agriculture with only one growing season; limited irrigation; limited use of improved agricultural technologies, especially improved seeds, fertilisers and mechanization services, resulting from the lack of access to agricultural finance; lack of land tenure security hindering investment in land improvement technologies and the adoption of sustainable agricultural practices; existence of a nexus of high input-low output prices due to the predominance of informal input/output markets; and the unpredictable weather patterns associated with climate change.

The search for alternative value chains and ways to improve agricultural productivity, will call for research and empirical evidence that will support the new value chains. Therefore, MwAPATA Institute should strategically position itself as a centre of excellence in empirical research to guide formulation of policies aimed at increasing agricultural productivity and commercialization.

Social Environment

Socially, Malawi is characterised by rural poverty and malnutrition. Inequality and social exclusion also remain major challenges. Moreover, Gender related barriers limit the capacity of women to generate incomes and build assets. These daunting socio-cultural challenges impede the country's development progress and need to be addressed urgently. The success of future programs will require understanding and addressing women, youth and young adult's unique needs in agricultural and rural development programs. Towards this end, MwAPATA Institute has the potential to be a major source of disaggregated data to inform policies aimed at overcoming inequalities in the agri-food systems.

Technological Environment

The situation analysis established that there is a lot of potential for using modern technologies in MwAPATA Institute. Using social media including Facebook, Twitter, Google, LinkedIn, WhatsApp and Instagram would be good for branding and quick dissemination of information, as well as, enhancing internal communication and security, e.g. films, radio, websites, interactive CDs, newspapers, cartoons, video conferencing facility and CCTV.

Natural Resource and Physical Environment

Malawi is endowed with fertile soils, abundant freshwater bodies, generally good weather and Lake Malawi has the most diverse range of fish species and a source of irrigation waters. However, the country is facing changes in climatic conditions and environmental degradation from several fronts:

- (a) Unreliable/erratic rainfall (droughts/erratic rainfalls and), flooding, and prolonged high temperatures (heat waves) (e.g. Karonga and the Shire Valley area);
- (b) Increasing incidences of pests and diseases resulting into pre- and post-harvest losses and reduced fish stocks.
- (c) Increasing incidences of upwelling of the lake due to strong winds, likely caused by climate change;
- (d) Destruction of fish breeding areas due to human catchment encroachment, as well as, destruction of ponds or loss of fish habitats due to increasing incidences of flooding;
- (e) Deforestation due to agricultural expansion, charcoal burning, firewood, and human settlement (e.g. Dzalanyama forest reserve);
- (f) Soil degradation as a result of nutrient mining with minimal replenishment and soil erosion (e.g. Malawi was said to be losing 29MT of soil due to soil erosion in 2014 (source: DLRC & FAO, 2014); and
- (g) Undeveloped and inadequate physical infrastructure (poor state of roads and telecommunication infrastructure in the country).

The public and private sector will need timely information to respond to these challenges associated with adverse environmental trends. MwAPATA could position itself as the source of cutting-edge research on environmental and natural resources issues.

Legal Environment

Agricultural policies outline what government intends to do and the goals it intends to achieve in the agricultural sector. Policies also stipulate what the government does not intend to do. Policies are effective and successful if backed up by a solid legal framework to support the implementation. A quick review by MwAPATA showed that quite several agricultural policies, laws and regulations were enacted soon after the country's independence. These policies and laws reflected the political spirit that prevailed at that time which was self-determination. While some of the factors motivating the enactment of these policies are still relevant, others are now dated and unable to cope with the realities of a liberalized economy. Consequently, there is need to repeal or amend some of the laws governing the agri-food systems. Research will be needed to assess the benefits and costs, and winners and losers of the intended changes. MwAPATA Institute will be able to support these processes with empirical research to inform policy and legal framework changes.

Demographic Environment

Malawi has one of the fastest growing population in the World and the population of Malawi mostly consists of the youth and young adults - the *youth bulge*. Very soon this group will be starting families and will need employment to feed their families. There is an urgent need for strategies that will enable Malawi to arrest this rapid growth in population, while creating meaningful employment opportunities for the youth. The logical starting point for job creation is the agriculture and natural resources sectors. Therefore, MwAPATA has the potential to be the leading source of this knowledge on demographic changes and its impacts on employment, and on agri-food systems.

2.2. SWOT Analysis

The situation analysis included a SWOT analysis which aimed at understanding the current strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of MwAPATA Institute. MwAPATA should aim to build on the prevailing strengths and harness the opportunities while at the same time converting the weaknesses into strengths and threats into opportunities. The results from the SWOT Analysis are presented in Appendix Table 2.

2.3. Conclusion

From the foregoing situational analysis, it is clear that there is a place for a home-grown policy think-tank, MwAPATA Institute, to champion agricultural

transformation in Malawi. MwAPATA Institute should position itself as the “must go to reference point” for empirical research to support policy processes in the agricultural sector in the country. The MwAPATA entry point to the ongoing policy process is through its affiliation to the NPC’s National Transformation 2063 (the Successor to Vision 2020) and LUANAR’s research and training agenda.

For MwAPATA to be accepted and earn trust and respect from the local political process and the general public, the Institute must establish itself as an autonomous and objective policy think-tank, even while it maintains affiliations with other Malawian and international institutions.

3. VISION, MISSION AND VALUE STATEMENTS

3.1. Preamble

The MwAPATA Institute is a centre of excellence in agricultural, natural resources and rural development policy research, which provides constructive policy guidance and implementation support for agricultural transformation in Malawi.

3.2. Vision Statement

Our vision is to be a world-class, credible, and respected local agricultural policy research think tank in Malawi, among the most respected in the world.

3.3. Mission Statement

Our mission is to conduct independent, objective, and high-quality research that provides practical recommendations to inform and improve agricultural, food systems, and rural development policies in Malawi.

3.4. Motto

#Evidence matters for transformational impact

3.5. Values

MwAPATA is anchored on a set of core values, beliefs, and principles that guide the Institute's programs and staff actions. These values, that go by the acronym **P.R.I.M.E.**, are:

- (a) *Professionalism/Integrity*: We disclose our methods, resources, and processes and provide free access to our publications to all interested parties.
- (b) *Relevance*: We provide information that is responsive to both immediate and long-term demands of the country's agricultural sector policymaking.
- (c) *Independence*: We pride ourselves on rigorous research that is non-partisan and objective. We report findings and recommendations that are based on unbiased empirical inquiry.
- (d) *Mutual Respect*: We are committed to a workplace that offers collegiality, collaboration, and inclusiveness.

(e) *Excellence*: We strive to produce high-quality research and information for policymakers. We seek to recruit and retain top talent.

3.6.Objectives of MwAPATA Institute

1. *Policy research*: Generate cutting-edge empirical research to inform policy debates and policy making processes in agriculture, natural resources, and rural development.
2. *Data quality improvements*: Provide technical support to public data agencies to improve agricultural data quality and ensure effective tracking of agricultural transformation indicators.
3. *Capacity building*: Improve local experts and policymakers' capacity to conduct policy analysis and use of evidence to make better-informed decisions in the agricultural sector.
4. *Policy coordination*: Build a coalition of the most important public and private stakeholders in the agricultural sector to generate consensus on needed actions (e.g. policies, programs, bills, acts, investments, etc.) for agricultural transformation and to drive these actions forward into implementation.

To achieve these objectives, the Institute undertakes:

- a) Policy-oriented research
- b) Dissemination of research findings
- c) Coalition building for policy implementation support
- d) Policy analysis capacity building
- e) Public education

4. STRATEGIC PILLARS, THEMES, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

The Strategic Plan contains two strategic pillars for MwAPATA Institute, namely, *Institutional establishment*, and *Programmatic strategy*. While the first pillar outlines how the Institute is established, the second focuses on the Institute's 2020-2025 core programs. Next, we provide more details on the Institute's strategic pillars.

4.1. Pillar One: Institutional Establishment and Development

MwAPATA Institute's strategic aspiration is to be a highly visible, sustainable, well-governed, universally recognized, respected, independent and performance-oriented think-tank, that works in collaboration with stakeholders. In order to achieve this aspiration, MwAPATA Institute has identified a number of key themes, objectives and activities.

Theme 1: Establishment of MwAPATA Institute

As a newly established think-tank that aims at showcasing and inspiring home-grown but world-class evidence-based solutions that promote development, MwAPATA Institute must have a robust institutional mechanism capable of delivering integrated policy research, planning, monitoring and evaluation, as well as, effectively collaborating with stakeholders and partners. Thus, the Institute will need an effective and efficient strategic leadership, governance and administration in place.

Strategic Objective 1: To set up of the Institute and establish its institutional organs

The Institute will undertake the process of establishing key institutional organs and management operational procedures that are essential to the effective functioning of the Institute. Also, as it develops, the Institute shall refine its organizational structure and the associated terms and conditions of service, the human resources management policies and developing the human resources management system.

Strategic Objective 2: To formalise best business practices

MwAPATA Institute will put in place and implement best business practices in order to ensure compliance with statutory, good governance, and legal provisions of the Country.

Strategic Objective 3: To procure and manage physical resources

The major assets of MwAPATA Institute include vehicles, furniture and office equipment (projector, camera, laptops, etc.). The Institute will develop a Procurement and Assets Disposal Policy. The assets will be inventoried, managed and disposed of in line with this Policy.

Theme 2: Managing the Growth of MwAPATA Institute

The continued development of MwAPATA Institute will greatly depend on its ability to continuously learn and adapt to its environment. The Institute will need to have institutional procedures favourable to the development of an organization of its nature and remain agile and adaptable as the context in which it operates continues to change and as experience of working toward the strategic objectives is built.

Strategic Objective 1: To continuously recruit and retain high quality human resource

The quality of output delivered by the MwAPATA is primarily dependent on the quality of the Institute's human resource. For successful achievement of MwAPATA objectives, especially its research program, the Institute must hire and retain high quality human resource. In this regard, all positions at MwAPATA will be filled through a competitive process guided by objective criteria. To remain competitive, and attract and retain high quality human resource, the Institute shall develop a human resource policy that recognizes the exceptional needs of the organization. MwAPATA will develop remuneration (salary and benefits) package that is sufficiently competitive to attract, motivate and retain the calibre of employees that the Institute needs. The Institute is an equal opportunity employer. By this it means that the Institute does not discriminate in the employment, development and advancement of any Malawian National or any legally employed foreign staff based on ethnic group, sex, age, political affiliation, social status or religion.

Strategic Objective 2: To continuously enhance the internal capacity of members

MwAPATA will invest in the Institute staff member's professional development to enhance their knowledge and skills, while at the same time improving the performance of the Institute as the whole. The Institute shall develop a Training and Staff Development Policy. All staff shall have equitable access to training and

development opportunities, appropriate to their role and development needs. In this regard, MwAPATA shall make every effort so far as resources permit, to ensure that all staff are able to develop professionally through investment in staff training and development as part of its overall human resource management and development strategy. The training activities will be in form of long- and short-courses, internal retooling seminars, and mentorships.

Strategic Objective 3: To develop the capacity to adapt to policy ecosystems

MwAPATA Institute's performance will be influenced by the behaviour of other actors in the larger policy ecosystem that include organizations such as, public institutions, international development agencies, foundations, farmer groups, local universities, international universities and research institutes, civil society organizations, among others. As such MwAPATA Institute will work on building its capacity and positioning itself within this ecosystem.

Theme 3: Sustainability of MwAPATA Institute

Sustainability of MwAPATA Institute is defined by three facets. First, MwAPATA is affiliated to the National Planning Commission (NPC) and LUANAR. This is expected to enhance the credibility of the Institute and expedite its institutionalization beyond the current phase supported by MSU/ATI. Second, to be relevant to its key stakeholders by designing and implementing research that is demand-driven. Third, MwAPATA needs to develop a smart, creative and robust resource mobilization strategy capable of attracting new donors and diverse funding sources to cater for its operations in an effort of bridging research and policy.

Strategic Objective 1: To develop and implement a smart and creative resource mobilization strategy by December 2021.

To ensure that funding is available to conduct cutting-edge research and advocate for policy implementation, MwAPATA Institute will engage transparently to solicit additional funding from partners. This will ensure the continued operation of MwAPATA Institute beyond the current funding by Agricultural Transformation Initiative (ATI) and to reduce the risk of dependency on a single donor.

Strategic Objective 2: To design a business continuity plan by January 2021.

MwAPATA Institute will outline potential impact of 'disaster situations' and put in place systems of prevention and recovery to deal with potential threats to the Institute. This will be done to help the Institute to adapt and respond to risks

Theme 4: Visibility of MwAPATA Institute

For MwAPATA to be relevant, effective and attractive to stakeholders including public, private, and development partners, the Institute will need to craft a program to enhance and sustain its visibility. MwAPATA Institute will promote visibility, media citations and recognition in public policy discourse, through strategic branding and targeted communication.

Strategic Objective 1: To continuously develop institutional arrangements to enhance the visibility of MwAPATA Institute

MwAPATA Institute will invest time and resources in strategic communication to enhance its reputation and raise interest in policy research to influence and support public policy processes.

Strategic Objective 2: To continuously enhance communication with stakeholders and partners

As a think-tank, MwAPATA Institute is expected to conduct research and analysis, to develop policy ideas and communicate them directly to policy makers, as well as, indirectly to policy influencers, like the media, civil society organizations (CSOs) scholars and citizens. As such, MwAPATA Institute will create a fully-fledged and active communications division that will aim at reaching a wide audience, with right message packages for various stakeholders, and using both traditional and modern communication systems.

Strategic Objective 3: To continuously promote multimedia communications relevant to the policy audience

To enhance its presence on social media platforms, MwAPATA Institute will produce and disseminate multimedia communication materials to relevant policy communities.

Strategic Objective 4: To continuously conduct Outreach programs

In order to reach a broad audience, MwAPATA Institute will engage in outreach programs through the following activities:

Theme 5: Partnerships

MwAPATA Institute's commitment to long-term, inclusive, and transformational partnerships is of paramount importance to its success, as well as, sustained policy influence. MwAPATA will position itself as the leading policy knowledge hub

in Malawi, supporting agricultural production and rural development through generation of empirical evidence to inform policy making processes and implementation.

The Institute will partner and strengthen its relations and communication with all the key stakeholders along the research cycle. The partnerships with stakeholders will be done through Partnership Agreements (PAs) and Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs). Also, MwAPATA will support national capacity for policy research through innovative partnerships with public and private sector partners. Thus, MwAPATA will build an efficient and effective organizational structure that enables its research programs to deliver on a timely basis, as well as, facilitate effective collaboration with partners.

Strategic Objective 1: To conduct stakeholder identification, analysis and mapping by December 2020

MwAPATA Institute will conduct stakeholder identification, analysis and mapping, targeting those that were not consulted during the consultations that were carried out during the process of developing this Strategic Plan. Additionally, MwAPATA Institute will consult stakeholders when a new research program is being developed.

Strategic Objective 2: To create institutional arrangements to support partnerships and networks by December 2020

MwAPATA Institute is fully aware of the importance of networking with others who have complementary skills rather than try to cover all tasks themselves. As such, MwAPATA Institute will cultivate and nurture an environment for partnerships.

Strategic Objective 3: To formalise the partnerships and affiliations by December 2020

MwAPATA Institute will endeavour to formalise relations with organizations and individuals whose active participation and support are essential for the success of MwAPATA Institute. These formalised relations will secure long-term commitments of key organizations and individuals for a continued support of the Institute.

Strategic Objective 4: To foster multi-sectoral partnerships for policy influence by August 2021

MwAPATA Institute will further broaden its partnership base to include the private sector, non-governmental organizations, and development partners. Thus, the

Institute will engage and mobilise civil society organizations, as well as, convene multi-stakeholder groups in policy dialogue. Furthermore, MwAPATA Institute will, engage government ministries and agencies, farmers, fishers, private sector, and civil society in order to leverage on their experiences in supporting policy processes in the Country.

4.2. Pillar Two: Policy Research and Implementation Support

The core business of MwAPATA Institute is to undertake impactful research to inform agricultural sector policy formulation and support implementation of programs and policies to improve living standards of Malawians. The Institute will not only be a centre of excellence in empirical research to support policy making but also will play a catalytic role in supporting implementation of transformative policies and innovations in the agricultural sector. MwAPATA will conduct research in collaboration with partners such as Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources (LUANAR), National Statistical Office (NSO), and other national and international organizations conducting research and policy engagement in the agricultural sector. The second pillar focuses on four main thematic areas: (1) research and data quality improvement; (2) policy and regulatory reforms support; and (3) policy institutional architecture and capacity strengthening.

Theme 1: Conduct Research and Engage in Data Quality Improvement

MwAPATA research themes and areas will be identified in consultation with stakeholders and approved by the Institute's Board. The Institute's research falls under three broad categories:

1) Demand-driven research: This will constitute about 50 percent of MwAPATA research. Demand-driven research will aim to respond to policymakers' specific requests for studies to fill in information gaps around specific policy actions that the government is considering in the agricultural sector. This will involve interacting with policy makers to learn their priority policy challenges and responding to these priorities.

2) Supply-driven (supplier induced demand) research: This will constitute about 30 percent of the Institute's research activities. Supply-driven falls into two strands. The first strand will be analysis geared towards overcoming known and entrenched barriers to policy change, which may not necessarily be demanded by government, but are believed by private stakeholders and civil society to warrant serious consideration in policy discourse. The second strand will be anticipating major challenges coming down the pike and alerting the agricultural sector stakeholders about the need to respond proactively rather than reactively. This

research will seek to identify megatrends that will seriously affect the Country's agricultural transformation and fore-sighting the future challenges and opportunities associated with these trends.

3) Reactive/rapid response: This will constitute about 20 percent of the Institute's research. Reactive studies are short-term 'fire-fighting' analysis in response to specific urgent requests from policymakers, the private sector, and/or development partners. This will also include research to unravel the impacts of emerging issues such as COVID-19 pandemic.

Strategic Objective 1: To identify research areas and undertake empirical research

To carry out policy analysis, the findings and lessons of which can feed into the ongoing policy debates, formulation and implementation, MwAPATA will develop an initial work plan covering the September 1, 2020 to December 31, 2021 period. After that, MwAPATA will develop 2-year work plans consistent with its vision and mission statements. These research agenda and work plan will be shared with key sectors in the agricultural sector for feedback and will be subject to Advisory Board's approval before implementation.

Strategic Objective 2: To collate, package and disseminate research findings

In order to disseminate research findings in a timely manner and to systematically inform stakeholders, MwAPATA will develop research information sharing and communication platforms. This platform will not only inform the masses about the new research emerging at MwAPATA but also promote the uptake of research by various stakeholders. The Institute will use traditional (conferences, breakfast meetings, workshops, etc.) as well as modern communication technology (Twitter, Google, Instagram, Facebook, etc.) to disseminate research findings and policy lessons emanating from the research. MwAPATA will develop policy briefs and information management systems for easy access of policy information.

Strategic Objective 3: Organize public lectures

The Institute in collaboration with the NPC and LUANAR are hosting the Ndizotheka Eminent Speaker Series events on quarterly basis. The aim of The Eminent Speaker Series is to promote a positive mind-set on Malawi's development possibilities. It welcomes speakers from a diverse range of disciplines and backgrounds seeking to impact and transform Malawi's development landscape. The events are promoting candid and honest public interaction/dialogue with distinguished thinkers both within Malawi and beyond to

generate implementable solutions for accelerating Malawi's socio- economic transformation.

Strategic Objective 4: Support data quality improvements

Research and by extension quality of policy advice is as good as the quality of data that the advice is derived from. Improving the quality of agricultural data to better inform policy making processes is a high priority to MwAPATA. The National Statistics Office (NSO) conducts national sample surveys to collect data on agricultural production, food security, and nutrition. MwAPATA will provide technical support to strengthen the capacity of NSO, and ministries in charge of agriculture and trade to improve the quality of data collection, data management, and data analysis processes. The Institute will work closely with NSO to review the agricultural indicators collected by NSO to ensure that they are comprehensive and capable of tracking agri-food systems and rural sector transformation in Malawi.

Theme 2: Support Policy and Regulatory Reforms

MwAPATA Institute will work closely with Policy Support for Agricultural Transformation (PoSAT) project to support policymakers' capacity to interpret and use evidence for better-informed decisions in the agricultural sectors. The Institute will generate evidence to inform constructive, multi-stakeholder policy debates on agricultural reforms.

Strategic Objective 1: "Push beyond research" to inform and support policy implementation

MwAPATA will strive to go beyond the generation of cutting-edge empirical research to supporting policymakers' interpretation and comprehension of research findings to aid evidence-based policy making. This will be done in collaboration with PoSAT and other partners.

Strategic Objective 2: To continuously support review of agricultural policies and laws

MwAPATA will work closely with PoSAT and other partners to support the ministries responsible for agriculture and trade to review some of the dated laws governing the agri-food systems to ensure that they are supportive of private sector investment and consistent with the demands of a liberalized economy. MwAPATA will conduct empirical research to support the review processes. This will include conducting studies to assess the benefits and costs, as well as, winners and losers of the intended changes.

Strategic Objective 3: Support harmonization of policies

MwAPATA Institute will work closely with other partners to support the ministries responsible for agriculture to harmonize of policies in order to eliminate policy duplications, inconsistencies, conflicts and wastage of resources.

Strategic Objective 4: To support policymakers in the agricultural sector by conducting strategic evaluation of ongoing policy reforms.

MwAPATA will support the ministries responsible of agriculture and trade to continuously monitor and evaluate the rolling out of policy reforms. For example, MwAPATA will work closely with PolSAT and other partners to develop a White Paper on best practices in agricultural input support programs to support the implementation of the ongoing Agricultural Inputs Program (AIP) and well as in monitoring the implementation of the AIP.

Strategic Objective 5: Strengthening of institutional policy architecture

MwAPATA is committed to strengthening both policy-making institutions and policy processes resulting in transparent evidence-based policy processes and predictable policies. The Institute will strive to strengthen policy institutional architecture by building and bringing into agricultural policy space a critical mass of independent voices (private sector and civil society) that are armed with evidence and new perspectives. The Institute will also conduct institutional architecture seminars to policy makers including parliamentary committee on agriculture.

Theme 3: Foster Institutional Policy Coordination and Outreach

This component aims at strengthening policy coordination and outreach. Towards this end, MwAPATA will develop a robust stakeholder engagement structure to be named Malawi Agriculture Reform Mechanism (MAREM). MAREM initiative will promote partnership for development, adoption, implementation, and monitoring of policy and governance reforms aimed at transforming Malawi's agri-food systems.

Strategic Objective 1: Establish a coherent framework for national partnerships

MwAPATA will institute MAREM, a coherent framework for national partnership in the development, adoption, implementation and monitoring of Malawian-led policy and governance reforms in the agri-food sector. The objective of MAREM is to enhance coordination of policy activities to avoid duplication of effort and promote

synergy. MAREM will coordinate policy dialogue among stakeholders on reforms to avoid conflicting messages to the ministries responsible for agriculture and trade.

5 INSTITUTIONAL AND IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

The structure of the MwAPATA Institute is laid out in the Institute's Articles of Incorporation. The Institute has five (5) Guarantors, who will constitute a Board of Directors with the same membership as the Guarantors plus any additional individuals added following procedures described in the Articles. The Institute also has a Secretariat that manages the daily affairs of the Institute and is accountable to the Board. The Institute also has a nine (9) member Advisory Board upon which the Board of Directors may draw to seek advisory guidance.

5.1 MwAPATA Board of Directors

The Institute's Board of Directors is made up of five (5) members from key stakeholders from the agricultural sector. The Board, being the highest authority of MwAPATA Institute, will be properly balanced in terms of skills, knowledge and experience. The Board of Directors provide strategic guidance and management oversight to the MwAPATA Secretariat, which manages and implements the day-to-day activities of the Institute.

5.2 Secretariat of Institute

MwAPATA Institute is headed by an Executive Officer who is supported by the Research Officer (RO) and the Finance and Administration Officer (FAO). The Secretariat is an important part of the institutional arrangements and a crucial determinant of efficiency and effectiveness in the delivery of the Strategic Plan. The Executive Officer is responsible for all the activities of MwAPATA, including coordinating mechanisms, planning and budgeting, financial management, procurement, provision of technical and implementation support, monitoring and evaluation, reporting, and finally communication and knowledge management.

Through the Executive Officer, MwAPATA Institute is responsible for mechanisms that facilitate interaction between program staff on the one hand and on the other hand beneficiaries, stakeholders and partners. Furthermore, through the Executive Officer, the Institute is also responsible for exploring opportunities and innovations for implementing the Strategic Plan.

During the initial Phase I of the Institute's development, ending December 31, 2021, MwAPATA Institute is managed by Michigan State University (MSU). MSU utilizes resources provided by ATI to hire all staff and operations to date. After ATI and Advisory Board approval of the Strategic Plan, the 2020/2021 Work Plan, the

Articles of Incorporation, Financial Management and Personnel Guidelines, MSU and MwAPATA will enter into a sub-agreement to transfer resources to the Institute to manage its operations for the remainder of Phase I. MSU remains responsible for the Institute's management until the end of Phase I. Starting January 1, 2022, it is envisaged that a new Phase II will begin with direct funding from ATI to the fully autonomous MwAPATA Institute.

5.3 Advisory Board

The nine (9) member Advisory Board is constituted to provide guidance and support to the Board of Directors, and thus indirectly to the Secretariat. Members of the Advisory Board participated in the development of the 2020-2025 Strategic Plan and provide strategic guidance in the implementation of the Strategic Plan. Advisory Board meetings are initiated by the Chair of the Board of Directors, who also serves as the Chair of the Advisory Board. The Advisory Board is envisioned to meet once per quarter of the year. However, the Chair, in consultation with the Executive Officer, may from time to time call for meetings outside the prescribed schedule, whenever need arises.

6. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The monitoring and evaluation (M&E) function of the Strategic Plan (SP) will be played by the MwAPATA Advisory Board and the Secretariat. The Board will monitor the implementation of the Strategic Plan quarterly. The Secretariat will actively monitor the implementation of day to day activities and periodically evaluate the processes laid down for realising the strategic outputs and outcomes of the SP and their overall quality. A comprehensive evaluation will be done both at mid-term and end of the lifespan of the Strategic Plan. An external Consultant is expected to undertake the external evaluation task. The Secretariat will facilitate the M&E activity by formulating an outcome-based monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework at the onset of implementation.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk analysis is a management function. It is recommended that it be done regularly in order to take care of emerging and systemic risks to policy development and implementation.

8. LESSONS LEARNED

In the course of implementing the Strategic Plan, management will gain new insights. It is therefore recommended that lessons learned be carefully recorded, as well as, regularly highlighted by management during Board and Management meetings. Wherever possible, the lessons learned should also directly inform and improve the implementation process of the Strategic Plan.

9. RESULTS FRAMEWORK

The Results Framework connects the themes, strategic objectives and activities to an individual responsible for implementation. MwAPATA Results Framework is aligned with the overall FSFW's Results Framework, therefore, the timelines shown facilitate the monitoring and evaluation of the strategic plan.

Appendix Table 1. Summary of Pillars, Themes and Strategic Objectives

	PILLAR 1: INSTITUTIONAL ESTABLISHMENT AND DEVELOPMENT					PILLAR 2: POLICY RESEARCH AND IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT		
	Theme 1:	Theme 2:	Theme 3:	Theme 4:	Theme 5:	Theme 1:	Theme 2:	Theme 3:
	<i>Establishment of MwAPATA Institute</i>	<i>Managing the Growth of MwAPATA Institute</i>	<i>Sustainability of MwAPATA Institute</i>	<i>To enhance visibility of MwAPATA Institute</i>	<i>To build partnerships</i>	<i>Conduct Research and Engage in Data Quality Improvement</i>	<i>Support Policy and Regulatory Reforms</i>	<i>Foster Policy Institutional Policy Coordination and Outreach</i>
Strategic Objective 1:	To set up of the Institute and establish its institutional organs	To continuously recruit and retain high quality human resource	To develop and implement a smart and creative resource mobilization strategy by December 2021	To continuously develop institutional arrangements to enhance the visibility of MwAPATA Institute	To conduct stakeholder identification, analysis and mapping by December 2020	To identify research areas and undertake empirical research	“Push beyond research” to inform and support policy implementation	Establish a coherent framework for national partnerships
Strategic Objective 2:	To formalise best business practices	To continuously enhance the internal capacity of members	To design a business continuity plan by January 2021	To enhance continuously communication with stakeholders and partners	To create institutional arrangements to support partnerships and networks	To collate, package and disseminate research findings	To continuously support review of agricultural policies and laws	

					by December 2020			
Strategic Objective 3:	To procure and manage physical resources			To continuously promote multimedia communications relevant to the policy audience	To formalise partnerships and affiliations by June 2021	Organize public lecturers	Support harmonization of policies	
Strategic Objective 4:				To continuously conduct Outreach programs	To foster multi-sectoral partnerships for policy influence by August 2021	Support data quality improvements	To support policymakers in the agricultural sector by conducting strategic evaluation of ongoing policy	
Strategic Objective 5:							Strengthening of institutional policy architecture	

Appendix Table 2. SWOT ANALYSIS RESULTS

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MwAPATA Institute has funding from the FSFW before it is fully established. Therefore, it can come up with sustainability strategies before the current funding comes to an end. • MwAPATA Institute has highly qualified and experienced Staff. • The Institute has linkages with other renowned researchers at MSU, who can provide it with world-class science backstopping. • The Institute has linkages with locally recognized institutions such as ATI, LUANAR, NPC, etc. • There is a demand for credible policies, therefore, policy research can be a potential source of funding, to ensure sustainability of the Institute. • MwAPATA Institute is unique because it focuses on both policy research and implementation guidance to support needed policy and programmatic reforms. 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MwAPATA is a new institution, hence this is weaknesses because it has not established a track record necessary to create confidence of stakeholders and donors.
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Availability of a large pool of potential funders that are keen to support a search for viable policies. • Large pool of partners/stakeholders that are willing to work with MwAPATA Institute. • Large pool of existing research from which lessons can be drawn, or results synthesized at minimal cost. • Large pool of existing good unimplemented policies, strategies, whose implementation can be facilitated. • Potential partnership with existing local institutions of higher learning and research, e.g. LUANAR, Centre for Agricultural Research and Development (CARD), Malawi University of 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historically, there is low uptake of policy research outputs in the Country, hence, MwAPATA may not have much impact. • Some research findings might not be palatable to policy makers. • The potential failure to secure project funding may paralyze MwAPATA Institute's operations in the future. • Multilateral and Bilateral Relationships: if relationships between Malawi and other bilateral/multilateral partners are soured, it might affect funding for MwAPATA Institute. • There are many policy research outfits whose credibility with government is questionable. MwAPATA may risk being bundled

<p>Science and Technology (MUST) and the Centre for Social Research, provides further scope for implementing joint research, proposals for funding, hosting joint outreach activities such as conferences and open days.</p>	<p>in that category unless the quality and integrity of its work is consistently high.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The affiliation with ATI might deter other partnerships who are reluctant to work with recipients of funding from tobacco organizations.
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Appendix Table 3. Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

Appendix Table 4. Logical Framework

PILLAR I	INSTITUTIONAL ESTABLISHMENT AND DEVELOPMENT			
MwAPATA’s strategic aspiration is to be a highly visible, sustainable, well governed, locally and internationally recognised and respected as well as an independent and performance-oriented think-tank that works in collaboration with key stakeholders.				
THEME1	ESTABLISHMENT OF MWAPATA			
Objective 1: To finalise registration of the Institute by 30th April 2020	Activities	Responsible	KPIs	Timing
	Finalise the draft articles of association.			30 th April 20-20
	Clear the use of the name “Malawi” with Government.			
	Clear the registration with the Board of Directors			
	Register with the Registrar of companies			
	Publicise the registration of MwAPATA Institute			
Objective 2: To establish Institutional Organs	Activities	Responsible	KPIs	Timing
	Establish the Board of governance.			
	Establish committees of the Board of Governors.			
	Finalise establishing the Secretariat.			
	Recruit the remaining personnel			
Objective 3: To finalise HRM issues by 30th June 2020	Activities	Responsible	KPIs	Timing
	Delineate an organogram for MwAPATA Institute.			30th June 2020
	Determine the establishment for MwAPATA Institute.			
	Develop terms and conditions of service.			
	Develop other HRM policies; Salary, gender, leave etc.			
	Develop HRM management system.			

PILLAR I	INSTITUTIONAL ESTABLISHMENT AND DEVELOPMENT			
MwAPATA’s strategic aspiration is to be a highly visible, sustainable, well governed, locally and internationally recognised and respected as well as an independent and performance-oriented think-tank that works in collaboration with key stakeholders.				
THEME1	ESTABLISHMENT OF MWAPATA			
Objective 4: To clarify and formalise best business practices	Activities	Responsible	KPIs	Timing
	Implement measures that ensure compliance with statutory requirements.			
	Implement measures that ensure compliance with good governance practices.			
	Manage intellectual property rights.			
	Develop a fraud and anti-corruption policy			
	Institutionalise a procurement system.			
	Develop a risk management system.			
	Implement measures that ensure compliance with statutory requirements.			
Objective 5 To procure and manage physical resources	Activities	Responsible	KPIs	Timing
	Develop a master plan for the Institute’s infrastructure.			
	Implement a framework for managing institutional assets.			
	Develop physical resources accounting systems.			
	Develop physical resources disposal systems.			
	Develop and operationalise policy systems for sharing physical resources.			

PILLAR I	INSTITUTIONAL ESTABLISHMENT AND DEVELOPMENT			
MwAPATA's strategic aspiration is to be a highly visible, sustainable, well governed, locally and internationally recognised and respected as well as an independent and performance-oriented think-tank that works in collaboration with key stakeholders.				
THEME2	GROWTH OF MwAPATA INSTITUTE			
Objective 6: To develop the Board of Directors	Activities	Responsible	KPIs	Timing
	Develop a board charter.			
	Engage a consultant to identify the right people to be Board Directors.			
	Orient Board Members to articles of Association.			
	Institute external assessment of Board of Directors every two years.			
	Introduce annual self-assessment for Directors.			
	Organise study tours for board Members to other think-tanks.			
	Conduct training needs assessment of Board of Directors.			
	Design, develop and implement training programs.			
Objective 7: To enhance the internal capacity of members of staff	Activities	Responsible	KPIs	Timing
	Conduct capacity building needs identification.			
	Design, develop and implement group and individual capacity building interventions.			
	Institute an endowment fund for research by individual staff members.			
	Recognise contribution by individuals through awards.			
	Implement further education programs for members of staff.			
	Organise study tours and attachments.			
	Develop and implement a staff appraisal system			

PILLAR I	INSTITUTIONAL ESTABLISHMENT AND DEVELOPMENT			
MwAPATA’s strategic aspiration is to be a highly visible, sustainable, well governed, locally and internationally recognised and respected as well as an independent and performance-oriented think-tank that works in collaboration with key stakeholders.				
THEME2	GROWTH OF MwAPATA INSTITUTE			
Objective 8: To develop institutional capacity	Activities	Responsible	KPIs	Timing
	Clearly define the duties and responsibilities of positions in the organogram.			
	Identify, recruit, develop and retain appropriately skilled personnel.			
	Establish and update regularly human resource management system.			
	Develop a system for performance management monitoring and appraisal.			
	Implement an apprenticeship program.			
	Development a staff succession plan.			
Objective 9: To develop capacity of eco-systems	Activities	Responsible	KPIs	Timing
	Conduct a policy support identification exercise for institutions.			
	Engage with the identified Ministries, NGOs and private sector.			
	Engage technical advisors for specialised research programs.			
	Engage in collaborative research with other research institutions.			
	Translate research-based research into local languages.			
	Develop a cross country database			

PILLAR I	INSTITUTIONAL ESTABLISHMENT AND DEVELOPMENT			
MwAPATA’s strategic aspiration is to be a highly visible, sustainable, well governed, locally and internationally recognised and respected as well as an independent and performance-oriented think-tank that works in collaboration with key stakeholders.				
THEME 3:	SUSTAINABILITY (CONTINUITY)			
Objective 10: To develop and implement a smart and creative resource mobilization strategy	Activities	Responsible	KPIs	Timing
	Establish a resource mobilization unit to deal with quality, diversity and stability of funding.			
	Develop a resource mobilisation plan.			
	Identify potential donors.			
	Implement a donor conference.			
	Manage donor relations well.			
Objective 11: To ensure reliable and diversified sources of funding	Activities	Responsible	KPIs	Timing
	Fund raise and solicit funding from donors.			
	Establish MwAPATA Institute consultancy wing.			
	Lobby government for increased allocation to agricultural research.			
	Undertake commissioned research.	MwAPATA		
	Design and sell memorabilia.			
Objective 12: To design a business continuity plan	Activities	Responsible	KPIs	Timing
	Identify the scope of the plan.			
	Identify key business areas.			
	Identify critical functions.			
	Identify dependences between various business areas and functions.			
	Determine acceptable down time for each function.			

	Create a plan to maintain operations.			
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PILLAR I	INSTITUTIONAL ESTABLISHMENT AND DEVELOPMENT			
MwAPATA’s strategic aspiration is to be a highly visible, sustainable, well governed, locally and internationally recognised and respected as well as an independent and performance-oriented think-tank that works in collaboration with key stakeholders.				
THEME 4:	VISIBILITY			
Objective 13: To develop institutional arrangements to enhance visibility of MwAPATA	Activities	Responsible	KPIs	Timing
	Focus on issues to do with the country’s development agenda.			
	Brand and design memorabilia.			
	Maintain good communication between MwAPATA Institute and key stakeholders (policy makers, DPs, private sector, CSOs, NGOs etc.).			
	Develop promotional materials.			
	Conduct quality assurance initiatives			
Objective 14: To consolidate a Communications Department	Activities	Responsible	KPIs	Timing
	Further rationalise the Communications Departments.			
	Procure and commission communications suite (computers, cameras, etc).			
	Identify additional skilled communications specialists to create and send news releases.			
	Develop tools that guide planning and creative efforts of the team.			
	Develop capacity of the communications desk.			
Objective 15: To develop a communications strategy for MwAPATA	Activities	Responsible	KPIs	Timing
	Review previous communications strategies.			
	Set objectives to be achieved.			

	Share responsibilities.			
	Identify key audiences.			
	Draft key messages.			
	List suitable channels and tools.			
	Develop brief budget spreadsheets and note of resources.			
	Set timelines.			
	Assess impact against objectives.			
PILLAR I		INSTITUTIONAL ESTABLISHMENT AND DEVELOPMENT		
MwAPATA’s strategic aspiration is to be a highly visible, sustainable, well governed, locally and internationally recognised and respected as well as an independent and performance-oriented think-tank that works in collaboration with key stakeholders.				
THEME 4:		VISIBILITY		
Objective 16: To promote multimedia communications	Activities	Responsible	KPIs	Timing
	Develop and maintain a state-of-the-art website.			
	Implement targeted email messaging campaigns.			
	Promote working paper series.			
	Produce newsletters.			
	Provide video, photo and livestream coverage for MwAPATA Institute events.			
	Produce advertorials.			
	Produce documentaries.			
	Implement social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram, etc.).			
Objective 17: To conduct Outreach programs	Activities	Responsible	KPIs	Timing
	Set dissemination goals.			
	Develop and operationalise a dissemination strategy.			
	Plan policy research consultatively.			

	Small meetings to present findings to senior leaders.			
	Conduct conferences, workshops and policy briefs.			

PILLAR I	INSTITUTIONAL ESTABLISHMENT AND DEVELOPMENT			
MwAPATA’s strategic aspiration is to be a highly visible, sustainable, well governed, locally and internationally recognised and respected as well as an independent and performance-oriented think-tank that works in collaboration with key stakeholders.				
THEME 5:	PARTNERSHIPS			
Objective 18: To conduct stakeholder identification, analysis and mapping	Activities	Responsible	KPIs	Timing
	Identify relevant stakeholders.			
	Define stakeholder roles and expectations.			
	Map stakeholders into appropriate engagement levels.			
	Engage with stakeholders to win their support and understanding.			
	Manage partnerships.			
Objective 19: To create institutional arrangement to support partnerships	Activities	Responsible	KPIs	Timing
	Set aside a team that deals with relations with partners.			
	Create a framework to govern partnerships.			
	Ensure funding for partnership co-ordination.			
	Put in place admission mechanisms especially of requested admission.			
	Ensure two-way communication with partners to build trust.			
Objective 20: To create a networking strategy	Activities	Responsible	KPIs	Timing
	Put in place a flexible framework to allow for all necessary changes and adaptations.			
	Define the conditions and scope of each partnership.			
	Clarify the obligations, responsibilities and restrictions on capacity of each partnership.			
	Reflect on roles and functions regularly.			
	Build consensus and acceptance on issues to foster ownership.			
	Prune, renew, and reshape networks frequently.			

PILLAR I	INSTITUTIONAL ESTABLISHMENT AND DEVELOPMENT			
MwAPATA's strategic aspiration is to be a highly visible, sustainable, well governed, locally and internationally recognised and respected as well as an independent and performance-oriented think-tank that works in collaboration with key stakeholders.				
THEME 5:	PARTNERSHIPS			
Objective 21: To formalise the existing partnerships and affiliations	Activities	Responsible	KPIs	Timing
	Draft MOUs and agreements.			
	Sign programme implementation agreements (PIAs);			
	Conduct key stakeholder consultations.			
	Prepare and implement joint programs.			
	Maintain list of key partners.			
Objective 22: To foster multi-sectoral partnerships	Activities	Responsible	KPIs	Timing
	Close collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture and the country’s Planning Unit (National Planning Commission);			
	Harmonise support across multiple government ministries with jurisdiction over a policy issue.			
	MOUs with key local institutes and regional bodies.			
	Joint research activities with partners.			
	Develop and operationalise the embedded technical advisor model.			

PILLAR II	PROGRAMMES			
MwAPATA programmes aim at generating evidence- based ideas to inform policy formulation, advocacy, implementation tracking, and capacity building				
THEME6	Research			
Objective 23: To Isolate knowledge gaps on policy effectiveness once a year.	Activities	Responsible	Key Performance Indicators	Timing
	Organise seminars	Research Director.	Number of seminars completed.	
	Carry out stakeholder surveys	Research Director.	Number of surveys completed.	
Objective 24: To Conduct policy analysis -	Activities	Responsible	Key Performance Indicators	Timing
	Assess why existing policies are not being implemented	Research Director.	Assessment reports.	
	Policy reviews	Research Director.	Policy review reports.	
	Provide recommendations	Research Director.		
Objective 25: To support implementation of policies.	Activities	Responsible	Key Performance Indicators	Timing
	Stakeholder engagement workshops	Research Director.	Number of workshops per quarter.	
	Prioritise few policies to work on	Research Director.	Number of policies.	
	Piloting of policy implementation	Research Director.	Number of pilots completed.	
	Upscaling successful strategic options	Research Director.	Number of strategic options upscaled and percentage of upscale.	
	Publicity of successful stories	Communications specialist	Number of stories published.	
Objective 26: To develop tools for support of policy implementation.	Activities	Responsible	Key Performance Indicators	Timing
	Engage expertise to develop tools	Research Director.	Number of tools developed.	
	Coaching leadership in tool use.	Research Director.	Number of participants who completed the courses.	

	mentoring leadership in tool use	Research Director.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of coaching and mentoring sessions. - Number of mentees who undergo the coaching. 	
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PILLAR II	PROGRAMMES			
MwAPATA programmes aim at generating evidence- based ideas to inform policy formulation, advocacy, implementation tracking, and capacity building				
THEME6	Research			
Objective 27: To implement policy knowledge activities.	Activities	Responsible	Key Performance Indicators	Timing
	Train stakeholders on how to utilise the tools.	Research Director.	Number of trainings completed'	
	Set up knowledge management system.	Research Director.	Management Information System in place and functional.	
	Collate policies	Research Director.	Number of policies collated	
	Track policies	Research Director.	Updated policy tracking.	
	Create a database (repository, retrieval and access mechanisms)	Research Director.	Number of policies deposited and accessed	
	Set up user access platforms that will enable MwAPATA to generate income from those requesting information.	Research Director.	Revenue collected	

PILLAR II	PROGRAMMES			
MwAPATA programmes aim at generating evidence- based ideas to inform policy formulation, advocacy, implementation tracking, and capacity building				
THEME7	Advocacy			
Objective 28: To conduct policy information, education and communication activities	Activities	Responsible	Key Performance Indicators	Timing
	Undertake policy dialogues sessions.			
	Develop policy briefs/ policy advisory notes, reports, working papers.			
	Use print media.			
	Use electronic platforms.			
	Use social media.			
	Publish magazines.			
	Publish in journals.			
	Organise eminent speaker series.		-	
Objective 29: To lobby for specific policy changes	Activities	Responsible	Key Performance Indicators	Timing
	Identify policies that need to be changed.			
	Develop a plan for each policy to be changed.			
	Mobilise resources.			
	Identify people to implement the lobbying.			
	Lobby the targeted people.			

PILLAR II	PROGRAMMES			
MwAPATA programmes aim at generating evidence- based ideas to inform policy formulation, advocacy, implementation tracking, and capacity building				
THEME7	Advocacy			
Objective 30: To influence policy uptake. (advisory)	Activities	Responsible	Key Performance Indicators	Timing
	Provide high level technical advice to decision makers.			
	Provide evidence to CSOs for informed lobbying.			
	Communicate viable strategies.			
	Communicate viable policy strategies.			
	Document key policies for monitoring and evaluation.			
Objective 31: To evaluate policy advocacy	Activities	Responsible	Key Performance Indicators	Timing
	Draw terms of reference.			
	Search for and engage a consultant.			
	Conduct the policy review.			
Objective 32: To implement targeted advocacy	Activities	Responsible	Key Performance Indicators	Timing
	Lobby the Parliamentary Committee on Agriculture.			
	Lobby the Ministry of Agriculture.			
	Lobby development partners.			
	Lobby NGOs.			

	Reach out to communities.			
	Lobby for support from other research units including universities and government.			

PILLAR II	PROGRAMMES			
MwAPATA programmes aim at generating evidence- based ideas to inform policy formulation, advocacy, implementation tracking, and capacity building				
THEME7	Advocacy			
Objective 33: Activism	Activities	Responsible	Key Performance Indicators	Timing
	Identify the policies that require activism to change them.			
	Develop plans for activism interventions.			
	Organise activism activities.			
	Target the people to engage in activism.			
	Engage in activism.			
Objective 34: To advocate for new policies	Activities	Responsible	Key Performance Indicators	
	Identify new policies that require advocating for.			
	Develop an advocacy strategy.			
	Mobilise resources.			
	Identify the team to engage in advocacy.			
	Identify the target audience for advocacy.			
	Implement advocacy.			

PILLAR II	PROGRAMMES			
MwAPATA programmes aim at generating evidence- based ideas to inform policy formulation, advocacy, implementation tracking, and capacity development				
THEME 8	Capacity Development			
Objective 35 To build capacity in policy formulation and implementation.	Activities	Responsible	Key Performance Indicators	Timing
	Identify stakeholders for training.	Research Director.	Number of stakeholders identified.	
	Conduct needs assessment.	Research Director.	Stakeholders needs assessment report.	
	Design learning modules.	Research Director.	Training modules developed.	
	Develop learning materials.	Research Director.	Training materials developed for each module.	
	Deliver the learning.	Communications Specialist.	Number of stakeholders trained in policy formulation. Training reports.	
	Evaluate the learning.	Research Director.	Evaluation report.	
Objective 36 To co-enhance capacity of	Activities	Responsible	Key Performance Indicators	Timing

MwAPATA and collaborating partners in policy research.	Organise problem solving seminars.	Research Director.	Number of seminars completed.	
	Identify the skills gaps	Research Director.	Capacity needs assessment report.	
	Identify reciprocal partners	Research Director.	Partners identified report.	
	Develop/establish a research fellowship programme.	Research Director.	Research fellowship programme document.	
	Place staff in reciprocal institutions.	Research Director.	No. of staff seconded.	
	Evaluate the secondment.	Research Director.	Semi-annual evaluation reports.	

PILLAR II	PROGRAMMES			
MwAPATA programmes aim at generating evidence- based ideas to inform policy formulation, advocacy, implementation tracking, and capacity building				
THEME 9	Implementation Support			
Objective 37: To identify policies that are ready for implementation	Activities	Responsible	Key Performance Indicators	Timing
	Take stock of policies that are ready for implementation.			
	Prioritise the policies for implementation.			
Objective 38: To facilitate policy harmonisation. Activities	Activities	Responsible	Key Performance Indicators	Timing
	Develop a tool for identifying policy gaps.			
	Identify policy misalignments.			
	Engage stakeholders to harmonise policy misalignments.			

Objective 39: To support partners conduct demand driven policy research.	Activities	Responsible	Key Performance Indicators	Timing
	Develop guidelines to partners for conducting demand-driven policy research.			
	Conduct policy research.			
	Prepare a report on research findings.			
	Disseminate policy research findings.			
Objective 40: To support partners document innovative best practices to support transformation.	Activities	Responsible	Key Performance Indicators	Timing
	Develop a standard operating procedures (SOPs) for providing support.			
	Document the innovation/best practice.			
	Disseminate the innovation.			
Objective 41: To backstop partners in policy implementation	Activities	Responsible	Key Performance Indicators	Timing
	Develop a standard operating procedures (SOPs) for providing support.			
	Develop guidelines to facilitate policy implementation.			
	Conduct periodic implementation reviews.			

