

Drivers of Success Understanding why African countries succeed in agricultural development



Impact Stories

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Over several years, Future Agricultures has engaged with the Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Programme (CAADP) institutions to strengthen CAADP policy processes.

In 2013, Future Agricultures was invited to participate in the 'Drivers of Success in African Agriculture'

study, commissioned by the African Union Commission. The study covered seven countries and involved a number of researchers from our network. Completed in November 2013, it was shared with senior officials and African Agricultural Ministers in the lead up to the African Union Heads of State Ministerial conference in June 2014.



What is 'Drivers of Success'?

2014 is the African Union Year of Agriculture and Food Security and the 10th Year of the Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Programme (CAADP), which was established by the AU Assembly to focus on improving food and nutrition security and increasing incomes in Africa's largely farming-based economies.

CAADP aims to do this by raising agricultural productivity by at least 6% per year and increasing public investment in agriculture to 10% of national budgets per year. Ten years after its introduction, 40 countries have successfully signed up to country-level agricultural policy and strategy commitments and a proportion have followed through to investment.

The Drivers of Success study¹ catalysed considerable energy from senior officials and agricultural ministers, by bringing to the fore a political, rather than a purely technical, understanding of why some countries are meeting their AU/CAADP commitments while others are falling behind.

Future engagements

Future Agricultures' Policy Processes theme convenor was able to draw heavily on a trusted network of Future Agricultures researchers in several countries to implement the Drivers study. It built on FAC's Political Economy of Agricultural Policy in Africa (PEAPA) research, adding speed and coherence.

Under this momentum, the Declaration of the African Union Heads of State meeting restated and extended its CAADP commitments for the coming decade. This engagement has brought FAC's frame of analysis into the CAADP process, garnering interest from the AUC and member states and laying the groundwork for our researchers to be involved in future policy analysis and capacity building.

This engagement has also translated into an agreement between the African Union and Future Agricultures to produce country briefs out of the country studies.

Looking forward, there is also an expectation from AUC of continued engagement: "the research has thrown up problems which [Future Agricultures] can help us to answer."²

More generally, this case points to a growing interest of both donors and African policy makers in understanding the political economy of agricultural policy processes. Evidence for donor interest in this theme includes a training session organised by GIZ (the German Federal Enterprise for International Cooperation) for agricultural policy advisers in Accra. This included a focus on political economy, which the Future Agricultures theme convenor involved in the Drivers of Success study was invited to lead. Future Agricultures members were also invited to speak to donors on this issue during 2014.

¹ Read the Synthesis Report at: bit.ly/driversofsuccess

² Key informant interview, quoted in Evaluation of Future Agricultures, December 2014.

This is one of a series of impact case studies drawn from an independent evaluation of the Future Agricultures, which was carried out by Upper Quartile for the UK Department for International Development and published in 2015. Find out more at future-agricultures.org/impact