



Presentation for the Africa College International
“Food Security, Health and Impact” Knowledge Brokering Conference
Leeds, UK
22-24 June 2011
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Political Economy of Agricultural Policy in Africa

The state, in its multiple manifestations, is a key player in efforts to achieve food security and agricultural development, through the maintenance of political stability, its responsibility for macroeconomic and sectoral policies, investment in infrastructure, investment incentives for (and regulation of) the private sector as well as direct involvement in delivery of some goods and services. Development practice often assumes that the state exists to further some “public interest”, then is confronted by its failure to do this. This session reports on work undertaken by Future Agricultures Consortium in eight African countries that seeks to understand how political factors drive state incentives for agricultural performance and policy making.

Figure 1: Linking the Political System and Agricultural Performance

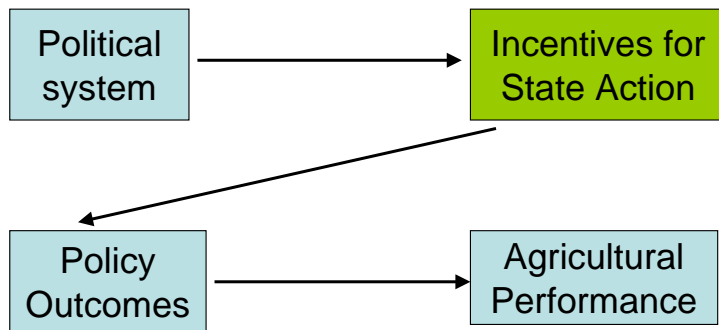


Table 1: Policy Scenarios in a Neo-Patrimonial State

		Technocratic Support?	
		No	Yes
Political Backing?	No	-	1. Inertia
	Yes	2. Anti-poor policy	3. Success Stories 4. Distorted Policy