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## THE QUALITY OF AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SECURITY POLICY PROCESSES AT NATIONAL LEVEL IN MALAWI RESULTS FROM THE 2017/18 MALAWI AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SECURITY POLICY PROCESSES END LINE SURVEY

By

Todd Benson, Zephania Nyirenda, Flora Nankhuni, and Mywish Maredia



## ***Food Security Policy Research Papers***

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The NAPAS:Malawi project provides technical support to the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Water Development (MoAIWD) of the government of Malawi as it leads many of the high-level policy reforms that the government committed to in 2013 under the G8's New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition in Malawi. NAPAS:Malawi is implemented by MSU, IFPRI, and the University of Pretoria under the Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Food Security Policy, an applied global agriculture and food security policy research project funded by USAID.

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## ABSTRACT

A study was conducted in Malawi to assess the quality of national policy processes around agriculture and food security and the institutional framework through which they are conducted. The study involved twice administering the same survey questionnaire to a diverse set of over 50 national stakeholders on the issues. The survey was first administered in 2015 and then again in 2017/18.

Overall, the initial survey showed that, while some positive developments had been achieved and elements of the policy processes were quite strong, improvements were still needed both in the quality of those processes and in the quality of the institutions involved. However, contrary to expectations, the survey completed in 2017/18 showed an increase in pessimism among respondents as to the quality of the processes and the institutions involved in them. Indices on both the quality of the processes and on the quality of the institutions had dropped significantly from the baseline survey.

This result was unexpected, as policy developments around agriculture and food security in Malawi between 2015 and 2017/18 were quite positive—several important agricultural policy achievements had been realized. In addition, a 2018 biennial review on agricultural growth and transformation across Africa rated Malawi as having a strong performance on policy processes. However, Malawi also experienced recurrent widespread food insecurity crises over this period, the management of which required significant humanitarian assistance. Consequently, there is a significant disconnect between the reasonably high quality of the policy documents developed through these policy processes and the results obtained—the quality of policy implementation so far has not met the aspirations of those policies. Hence, in responding to the survey a second time, respondents were somewhat more skeptical than anticipated of the quality of the policy processes in which they are engaged. Better quality policy processes make an important, but certainly not sufficient, contribution to achieving better outcomes in Malawi’s agricultural sector and to ensuring the food security of Malawi’s citizens is optimal. Effective implementation of the policies developed through these processes also is necessary.

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## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ADD	Agricultural Development Division
ADMARC	Agricultural Development and Marketing Corporation
Africa Lead	Africa Leadership Training and Capacity Building Program
ASWAp	Agriculture Sector Wide Approach
ASWG	Agricultural Sector Working Group
CAADP	Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme
CSOs	Civil society organizations
DCAFS	Donor Committee on Agriculture and Food Security
EAT	Enabling Agricultural Trade
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FSP	Feed the Future Innovation Laboratory for Food Security Policy
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute
MDGS	Malawi Development and Growth Strategy
MoAIWD	Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Water Development
MSU	Michigan State University
NAIP	National Agriculture Investment Plan
NAPAS:Malawi	New Alliance Policy Acceleration Support-Malawi
NGOs	Non-governmental organizations
TWG	Technical Working Groups
USAID	United States Agency for International Development



# 1. INTRODUCTION

Over the past ten years, there have been several initiatives in Malawi to strengthen the processes through which the design and content of policies, strategies, and programs in the agriculture sector that affect the nation's food security are established. In this report we present results of a study to assess the quality of these policy processes and the institutional framework through which they are conducted and how perceptions of the quality of those processes and institutions is changing over time. The study is based on a two-round survey of national stakeholders in Malawi on issues centered on agriculture or food security that was conducted in 2015 and 2017/18.

Broadly linked to the operationalization in Malawi of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) of the African Union, about ten years ago the government of Malawi led a multi-stakeholder effort to develop the Agriculture Sector Wide Approach (ASWAp). This served as the CAADP agricultural sector investment plan for the country for the period 2011 to 2015. In late-2016, the National Agriculture Policy was adopted by government following a two-year process of development involving significant stakeholder consultation. To replace the earlier ASWAp, in 2017 the National Agricultural Investment Plan (NAIP) was developed, drawing its priorities from those of the National Agriculture Policy.<sup>1</sup> The NAIP was launched in January 2018, as the endline survey for this research was being fielded.

The technical implementation of the earlier ASWAp was guided by multi-stakeholder Technical Working Groups (TWG), of which there were seven.<sup>2</sup> The TWGs report to a higher-level Agricultural Sector Working Group (ASWG), whose membership is drawn from across the full range of stakeholders in Malawi's agriculture sector. The ASWG has onward links to the political leadership of Malawi. This hierarchy constitutes the basic institutional framework at national level for agriculture and food security policy processes in Malawi. A key component of the implementation of the ASWAp and now the NAIP is a mutual accountability framework for monitoring and evaluating progress made. The regular meetings of the TWGs and the ASWG are components of this, while an annual agricultural Joint Sector Review report provides a formal accounting of progress achieved and challenges that remain.

Because of these developments in the overall governance of the sector, there has been a broadening in who participates in agriculture and food security policy processes. In addition to the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Water Development (MoAIWD), which continues to coordinate these processes, a broader and more diverse range of civil society and non-governmental organizations, firms or representatives of sub-sectoral umbrella organizations from the private sector, other agencies from within the public sector, and agriculture and food policy researchers from various institutions all now engage in these processes more regularly. Development partners remain engaged, primarily through the Donor Committee on Agriculture and Food Security (DCAFS), which provides a consensus perspective of donors on the issues at hand.

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<sup>1</sup> The National Agriculture Policy can be found at [http://foodsecuritypolicy.msu.edu/uploads/files/Malawi/Malawi\\_National\\_Agriculture\\_Policy\\_25.11.16.pdf](http://foodsecuritypolicy.msu.edu/uploads/files/Malawi/Malawi_National_Agriculture_Policy_25.11.16.pdf). The Malawi National Agricultural Investment Plan can be found at [http://foodsecuritypolicy.msu.edu/uploads/files/Malawi/NAIP\\_2018\\_Final\\_Signed.pdf](http://foodsecuritypolicy.msu.edu/uploads/files/Malawi/NAIP_2018_Final_Signed.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> Eight Technical Working Groups will guide implementation of the current National Agricultural Investment Plan. See footnote 10.

## 2. NAPAS:MALAWI AND THE QUALITY OF POLICY PROCESSES STUDY

The New Alliance Policy Acceleration Support-Malawi (NAPAS:Malawi) project has been funded by the Malawi mission of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) since 2014 to work particularly with MoAIWD on an agenda of policy reforms in the agriculture sector. The reforms are those which the government of Malawi committed to in late-2013 under the Country Cooperation Framework for the New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition in Malawi. The processes through which these policies are developed or reformed necessarily involve the participation of a broader range of stakeholders in the sector than just government. In consequence, one of the objectives of the NAPAS:Malawi project is to support efforts to improve the quality of agriculture and food security policy processes in terms of the institutional architecture within which these processes take place, the value of the discussions on various policy, strategy, and program options being considered, and the degree to which objective evidence is used to guide decision making.

Two of the NAPAS:Malawi project monitoring indicators are indices, first, of the quality of the agriculture and food security policy processes in Malawi and, secondly, of the quality of the institutional architecture within which those processes proceed. These indices are to be computed based on the results of baseline and project endline surveys of national level stakeholders in agriculture and food security policy processes in Malawi.

A baseline survey was done by NAPAS:Malawi in mid-2015. The results of the analysis of this first survey were published in the Feed the Future Innovation Laboratory for Food Security Policy (FSP) Working Paper 13 in January 2016 and summarized in a related brief.<sup>3</sup> The survey was administered between June and August 2015 to a purposively selected survey sample made up of about 100 stakeholders in these policy processes. These individuals were asked to complete an on-line questionnaire that captured their opinions on a range of questions related to the quality of agriculture and food security policy processes at national level in Malawi. At the end of the baseline survey administration period, responses had been obtained from 86 individuals.

For the endline survey, the 86 individuals who made up the analytical sample for the baseline survey were contacted again and asked to complete an on-line questionnaire that replicated three of the five modules from the baseline survey. Completed endline survey questionnaires were submitted by respondents between mid-November 2017 and mid-February 2018. In total, 55 respondents completed the endline questionnaire. Of these, 43 were the same respondents, while the other 12 endline survey respondents were replacements for baseline survey respondents who no longer participate in agriculture and food security policy processes in Malawi. These replacements generally are the current holders of the institutional positions held by the earlier baseline survey respondents.

This report examines results from the endline survey and compares them to those of the baseline survey. It replicates in many ways the initial report on the baseline survey. However, while we remain interested in different perceptions of specific stakeholder groups—government, civil society, the private sector, donor agencies, and researchers—of the quality of those processes, here we also are interested in whether there are significant changes in perceptions of the quality of policy processes around agriculture and food security in Malawi between 2015 and late-2017.

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<sup>3</sup> FSP Working Paper 13 on the baseline survey is available at [http://foodsecuritypolicy.msu.edu/uploads/resources/FSP\\_Research\\_Paper\\_13.pdf](http://foodsecuritypolicy.msu.edu/uploads/resources/FSP_Research_Paper_13.pdf). The brief based on the Working Paper is available at [http://foodsecuritypolicy.msu.edu/uploads/resources/Policy\\_Brief\\_10.pdf](http://foodsecuritypolicy.msu.edu/uploads/resources/Policy_Brief_10.pdf).

### 3. POLICY CONTEXT

The quality of policy processes around agriculture and food security are dependent in part on how active those processes are. During the period since 2014, several such policy reform processes have been operating with differing levels of dynamism and progress. These efforts reflected in part the dedicated technical support that MoAIWD received from the NAPAS:Malawi project to enable it to fulfill its policy reform commitments under the New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition. The policy reform processes around agriculture and food security included:

- National Agriculture Policy – The development of this overarching sectoral policy started in 2009. A first full draft of the new policy was disseminated in early-2011, but was not endorsed due to what was viewed as insufficient stakeholder consultations and an inadequate evidence base. The process to develop the Policy was restarted in 2014 with a totally revised draft policy. This draft incorporated the results of substantial sectoral and sub-sectoral analyses and was the subject of extensive consultations across the country.<sup>4</sup> The policy was endorsed by Cabinet and formally launched in late-2016 by the President of Malawi.
- National Agriculture Investment Plan (NAIP) – As the development of the National Agriculture Policy progressed and the ASWAp document expired in 2015, the NAIP was developed under the leadership of MoAIWD with technical assistance from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) through a consultative and participatory process involving all major stakeholder groups. The NAIP is the implementation plan for the National Agriculture Policy and is consistent with CAADP guidelines for national agricultural investment plans. It was formally launched in January 2018.
- Several sub-sectoral strategies or legislation have been under development, including a revised National Seed Policy; a National Fertilizer Policy; a Contract Farming Strategy; an Agricultural Extension and Advisory Services Strategy; a Farmers Organization Development Strategy; and an Agricultural Sector Food and Nutrition Strategy. Legislation has been passed regarding Warehouse Receipts as a component of agricultural marketing, and investigations to determine the value of commodity exchanges for the development of Malawi’s agricultural sector are now being done. Also, work is underway to determine whether revisions are needed to two key agricultural laws—the Special Crops Act (1963) and the Agricultural (General Purposes) Act (1987)—so that they are more conducive to meeting the agricultural development priorities of Malawi.
- National Resilience Strategy – With specific attention to food security, the Resilience Strategy is now in its final stages of formulation. The strategy has an explicit focus on accelerating Malawi’s transition to a food and nutrition secure future. The widespread food insecurity experienced in southern and central Malawi in 2016-17 added impetus to the formulation of a sustainable means to break a cycle of recurrent widespread food insecurity in the country.
- Malawi Development and Growth Strategy (MDGS) III (2017 to 2022) – This is the latest version of the master mid-term development framework for Malawi. Formulated under the leadership of the Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning, and Development, like earlier versions of the MDGS, it places significant emphasis on agriculture with ‘Agriculture, Water Development and Climate Change’ being one of five key priority areas under the strategy.

Much of the current institutional architecture for multi-stakeholder policy processes around agriculture and food security and accountability mechanisms within the public agriculture sector in Malawi has

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<sup>4</sup> A description of the consultative process used in the formulation of the National Agriculture Policy for Malawi can be found at [http://foodsecuritypolicy.msu.edu/uploads/files/Malawi/Policy\\_Process\\_-Dec\\_2017.pdf](http://foodsecuritypolicy.msu.edu/uploads/files/Malawi/Policy_Process_-Dec_2017.pdf).

been developed over the past 10 years or so through initiatives that are linked to the continental CAADP process and the formulation of sector-wide approaches to development, including in agriculture—in the case of Malawi, the development of the ASWAp plan. Africa-wide, Malawi has been one of the star countries in terms of meeting CAADP commitments—a 2018 biennial review, for example, rated Malawi as among the top ten countries on course for achieving continental agricultural policy reform and budget allocation targets. However, the review also stated that Malawi was unlikely to achieve the targets for agricultural growth and improved food security and nutrition that these policy reforms and budget allocations are to foster.<sup>5</sup> This implies increasing skepticism about whether these initiatives are sufficiently innovative and effective for stimulating increased growth and development of the sector and the economy in general.

Possibly in consequence of moving now well beyond the launch of these continental agricultural development initiatives and with increasing recognition of the size of the hurdles that must be surmounted to achieve their targets, our analysis here shows a growing sense of discouragement. This broader context for policy processes around agriculture in Africa and how it has evolved is an important contextual element to understanding recent trends in perceptions of the quality of policy processes around agriculture and food security in Malawi.

Moreover, at a practical level, the ASWAp, which was at the center of many of the institutional reforms, is now being replaced by the NAIP. Under the ASWAp both government and development partner resources were provided to the policy processes and the institutions involved to facilitate broad discussions and mutual accountability among the broad set of stakeholders involved in agriculture and food security issues in Malawi. With the winding up of the ASWAp, several respondents to the endline survey reported that the funding that enabled the regular holding of Agricultural Sector Working Group and Technical Working Group meetings is no longer in place, rendering these policy processes less effective.

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<sup>5</sup> African Union. 2018. Inaugural Biennial Review Report of the African Union Commission on the Implementation of the Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods. Assembly of the Union, 30<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session, 28-29 January 2018, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Addis Ababa: African Union. <http://www.resakss.org/sites/default/files/BR%20English%20Draft%20Print.pdf>

## 4. DATA AND ANALYTICAL METHODS

### 4.1 Survey Instrument

The questionnaire for the endline survey closely replicated that which was used for the baseline survey (Table 1). As was the case with the baseline survey, the questionnaire for the endline survey was designed to capture from each respondent their assessment of the quality of national-level policy processes on agriculture and food security in Malawi. However, two modules from the baseline survey were dropped for the endline survey—one exploring factors that affect agenda-setting within policy processes on agriculture and food security and the other on the recent participation by the respondent in agriculture and food security policy process events. The survey was implemented on-line using the Ona data platform (<http://ona.io>) and was made up of three modules with a total of about 50 questions. (The complete questionnaire is presented in Appendix 1.)

All the questions in modules B and C were four-level Likert scale questions in which respondents specified their level of agreement or disagreement with a statement relating to aspects of policy processes on agriculture and food security in Malawi. No ‘neutral’ or “neither agree nor disagree” option was offered, forcing the respondent to make a judgment on the statement in question. Each of the questions had an option for respondents to provide an explanation of their response in a following comment box.

Definitions were provided in the questionnaire for two terms: ‘stakeholder’ and ‘policy’.

- ‘Stakeholder’ is used to collectively include representatives from the public sector, private sector, civil society organizations, non-governmental organizations, research organizations, the donor community, producer organizations, citizen’s groups, etc. that are active in Malawi on agriculture and food security policy issues.
- ‘Policy’ as used in the questionnaire includes the content of master development frameworks for Malawi, sector strategies, sub-sector strategies, public investment plans, legislation and regulations (both enacted and proposed), and the design of public programs.

These were provided to assist the respondent to more precisely identify the context to which the questions referred.

### 4.2 Sample

A purposive sample was chosen for the initial baseline survey in 2015. The aim was to develop a reasonably representative sample of involved individuals from the institutions that constitute the institutional architecture of agriculture and food security policy processes in Malawi. In 2013, the Africa Leadership Training and Capacity Building Program (Africa Lead) and the Enabling Agricultural Trade

**Table 1. Content of Malawi Agriculture and Food Security Policy Processes Endline Questionnaire**

Section	Contents
A	Respondent details; influence of institution within policy processes
B	Opinion on quality of agriculture and food security policy processes in Malawi
C	Opinion on quality of institutional architecture for agriculture and food security policy processes in Malawi

Source: Authors.

(EAT) projects of USAID published a report in which they mapped out the institutional architecture of these policy processes and how mutual accountability is achieved within them.<sup>6</sup> The network of institutions described in the report was used to define the sampling frame and thus the broad outline of the population of stakeholders in agriculture and food security policy processes in Malawi from which the survey sample and its sub-samples were chosen.

### 4.3 Sample Selection

The specific individuals included in the original sample were drawn primarily from lists of participants in two large national level events in which agricultural policy was the focus—the July 2014 symposium on the Farm Input Subsidy Program and the March 2015 national consultation on the content of the draft National Agriculture Policy. Representation in the sample was sought from five different categories of stakeholders—government, civil society, the private sector, donor agencies, and researchers (Table 2).

**Table 2. Samples for the 2017/18 (Endline) and 2015 (Baseline) Malawi Agriculture and Food Security Policy Processes Surveys and Attrition between Samples**

Institutional category	2017/18 endline survey sample, frequency and match to 2015 respondents					2015 baseline survey sample, frequency			Attrition between 2015 baseline and 2017/18 endline surveys, percent		
	All	Female	Male	Same as 2015	Replacement	All	Female	Male	All	Female	Male
Government	21	2	19	15	6	38	6	32	-45	-67	-41
Senior	7	0	7	4	6	9	3	6	-22	-100	+17
Technical	11	2	9	8	3	16	3	13	-31	-33	-31
Legislative	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	4	-100	na	-100
Statutory body	3	0	3	3	0	9	0	9	-67	na	-67
Civil society	10	1	9	9	1	13	3	10	-23	-67	-10
Civil society org.	6	1	5	5	1	8	3	5	-25	-67	0
Non-governmental org.	4	0	4	4	0	5	0	5	-20	na	-20
Private sector	11	1	10	10	1	16	4	12	-31	-75	-17
Donor agency	7	2	5	6	1	9	3	6	-22	-33	-17
Research	6	1	5	3	3	10	1	9	-40	0	-44
Non-government respondents	34	5	29	28	6	48	11	37	-29	-55	-22
<b>Total</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>-36</b>	<b>-59</b>	<b>-30</b>

Note: Analysis of module A from the 2017/18 endline and the 2015 baseline surveys. ‘na’ = not applicable.

<sup>6</sup> Africa Leadership Training and Capacity Building Program project & Enabling Agricultural Trade project (Africa Lead & EAT). 2013. *Institutional Architecture Systems Assessment for Food Security Policy Change: Malawi*. Report for United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Washington, DC: USAID. <http://africleadftf.org.s79942.gridserver.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/Malawi-IA-Assessment-Report-111113-USAID.pdf>

Within the ‘Government’ and ‘Civil society’ institutional categories, sub-categories were created to ensure that the study sample was sufficiently broad in representation across the institutions in the category, as there might be differences in how the quality of policy processes is viewed by sub-category. Initially, four government subcategories were identified. Senior and technical government officials came from line ministries, primarily MoAIWD, but also some other ministries. Members of the ‘Senior officials’ sub-category are department directors, Agricultural Development Division (ADD) Programme Managers, or more senior civil servants. Legislative and statutory body respondents came from the National Assembly (members of the Parliamentary Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources) and from statutory institutions (Agricultural Development and Marketing Corporation (ADMARC), Smallholder Farmers Fertilizer Revolving Fund of Malawi, and the like), respectively. ‘Civil society’ was used as the overall category for the two sub-categories of ‘Civil society organizations’ and ‘Non-governmental organizations’ (NGO). Civil society organizations are more involved in policy advocacy, stakeholder institution building, and the policy processes that are the focus of the study here, while members of the NGO sub-category are oriented more towards direct implementation of agriculture and economic development activities.

The ‘Private sector’ sub-sample was drawn from representatives of larger private sector agri-businesses in Malawi, including commercial farming operations. Also included in the private sector category were respondents from the leadership of several national associations of smallholder farmers, both generic and commodity specific. The ‘Donor agency’ category is made up of representatives of the members of the Donor Committee on Agriculture and Food Security (DCAFS), both international and senior locally hired staff. Individuals involved in policy research on agriculture and food security in Malawi make up the ‘Research’ category of the sample. These individuals come from academic and research institutions or consultancy firms, both domestic and international.

Although there are some significant differences in opinions on some questions between sub-categories under the ‘Government’ and ‘Civil society’ institutional categories, we do not report these differences in this report.<sup>7</sup> Except in Table 7 and Table 8 on the two NAPAS:Malawi performance monitoring indices, only the aggregate results for the five main stakeholder institutional categories are given in the other tables in this report.

For the baseline survey, 99 potential informants were contacted to seek their participation in the survey. Six individuals were not available during the survey period, while two informed us that they did not wish to participate in the survey. Despite following up individually with potential informants, we never received responses from five other individuals contacted. Our final analytical sample size for the 2015 baseline survey was 86 respondents (Table 2).

For the endline survey in late-2017 and early-2018, our prospective sample was restricted to the 86 respondents who had completed the baseline survey in 2015. However, at the outset it was determined that several of the respondents to the baseline survey were not available or no longer engaged in agriculture or food security policy processes due to being transferred to new unrelated positions, having left the country (particularly staff of international agencies), retirement, or death. Replacements were identified by contacting the individuals who now hold the same institutional positions as the baseline survey respondents who were no longer available. If these individuals could not be identified, replacements were chosen by seeking other individuals with similar roles within the analytical institutional category (government, civil society private sector, donor, researcher) of the baseline survey respondent no longer available. In the end, 12 respondents to the endline survey had not been a part of the baseline survey (see Table 2, 4th and 5th columns).

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<sup>7</sup> Tabulations of results by sub-categories are available upon request.

#### 4.4 Sample Attrition

Significant attrition in our samples occurred between the 2015 baseline and the 2017/18 endline – responses were obtained from 55 respondents for the endline as against 86 in the baseline. By institutional category, the highest rates of attrition were seen in government and research. Among respondents from government, the highest attrition rates were seen among legislators and staff of statutory corporations—notably, none of the four legislators who were respondents for the baseline survey participated in the endline (Table 2). Female respondents for the baseline were also more likely to not have been enumerated in the endline survey.

This report is based on the responses that the 55 members of the endline sample provided. Comparisons are made between these responses and the responses to the same questions in the baseline survey for the 43 members of the endline survey sample who were enumerated in the baseline. For the other 12 members of the endline sample, their responses are compared to the baseline survey responses of the individuals that they were judged to have replaced, as described earlier. Although the earlier report on the baseline survey was based on analysis of the information obtained from all 86 respondents in that sample, we ignore in this report the information obtained from the 31 baseline survey respondents who did not participate in the endline survey or were not replaced by a comparable respondent in the endline survey.

An important analytical consideration is whether significant bias was introduced into our sample through the significant attrition between the baseline and endline samples. Perspectives on dimensions related to the quality of agriculture and food security policy processes may differ between those who participated in both rounds of the survey and those who only participated in the baseline survey. That is, the results presented in the report on the baseline survey using the information from the 86 respondents may not be consistent with the baseline survey results derived from the 55 respondents who completed the endline survey. To determine how this loss from the baseline sample affects the representativeness of the results presented in the earlier report, means comparisons were done on the responses in the baseline survey to all questions in module B on the quality of the agriculture and food security policy processes in Malawi—and module C on the quality of the institutional architecture for those policy processes.

Two separate means comparisons were done, the results of which are presented in Appendix 2. The first compared the mean responses from the baseline survey for the 43-member baseline survey sub-sample who participated in both surveys to the mean responses of the 43 baseline survey respondents who did not participate in the endline survey. No statistically significant differences are seen between the two baseline survey sub-samples in their mean responses to any of the questions in Module B. The only statistically significant differences in mean responses are seen in three questions in Module C—C8 and C9 on Technical Working Groups and C18 on donor coordination. The sub-sample of respondents that participated in the endline survey has a slightly more positive assessment on all three questions that does the sub-sample of respondents who did not participate in the endline survey.

The second means comparison is done between those of the full 86 respondent baseline sample and the 55-member baseline sub-sample that is defined by the endline survey analysis, i.e., the 43 respondents who participated in both surveys, plus the 12 baseline survey respondents who were replaced for the endline survey. In essence, this comparison provides guidance on whether the results presented in the report on the baseline survey that was developed from the 86-member baseline survey sample would have been generally the same if the analyses had been based on the 55-member sub-sample. As presented in Appendix 2, the comparison of assessment scores between the full baseline sample and the sub-sample shows no statistically significant differences on any of the questions in either module. We



conclude that the baseline survey report reasonably represents the results that would have been obtained if we had used only information provided by the 55-member sub-sample.

In brief, we see very few differences between the baseline survey sub-samples examined in their mean responses to the 40 questions in Modules B and C. Mean responses for the sub-samples differ at most for any question by three decimal points on a scale of 0 to 3 and for all except three questions, the mean differences are not statistically significant. This suggests that very limited, if any, bias was introduced by constraining the analysis in this report on the two surveys to the information provided by the restricted sample of 55 respondents, excluding from the analysis any information obtained from those baseline survey respondents who did not participate in the endline survey and were not among the 12 respondents replaced.

#### 4.5 Profile of Sample

Our analytical sample of 55 endline survey respondents shows that policy processes in Malawi remain strongly male-dominated—only 13 percent of the respondents are female, with technical officers in government, civil society organizations, and donor agencies having slightly higher female membership in their sub-samples (Table 3). The attrition in female participation between the survey samples is seen in that 20 percent of the baseline survey sample was female (Table 2). The analytical sample generally is quite experienced in policy processes on agriculture and food security in Malawi, with the average length of participation of respondents in such policy processes being 13.5 years at the time of the endline survey.

**Table 3. Institutional Category of Endline Survey Respondents, by Sex, Experience, and Membership in Technical Working Groups on Agriculture and Food Security Topics**

Institutional category	2017/18 endline survey sample, frequency			Row percentages		Years engaged in policy processes, mean	Membership in Technical Working Groups, average number
	All	Female	Male	Female	Male		
Government	21	2	19	10	90	10.9	2.0
Senior	7	0	7	0	100	15.3	2.2
Technical	11	2	9	18	82	7.5	2.9
Statutory body	3	0	3	0	100	14.5	1.0
Civil society	10	1	9	10	90	16.8	3.8
Civil society organization	6	1	5	17	83	12.8	4.4
Non-governmental organization	4	0	4	0	100	22.7	1.0
Private sector	11	1	10	9	91	12.8	1.8
Donor agency	7	2	5	29	71	16.0	4.1
Research	6	1	5	17	83	14.7	2.6
<i>Non-government respondents</i>	34	5	29	15	85	15.0	3.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>13.5</b>	<b>2.7</b>

Note: Analysis of module A from 2017/18 survey. There are seven TWGs in the agriculture sector in Malawi: Food Security & Risk Management; Sustainable Land & Water Management; Institutional Strengthening & Capacity Building; Monitoring & Evaluation; Commercial Agriculture, Agro-processing & Value Addition; Technology Generation & Dissemination; and Gender Empowerment, HIV Prevention, & AIDS Impact Mitigation.

At the time of the endline survey, there were seven Technical Working Groups (TWG) on agriculture and food security issues in Malawi. Although led by government, these have broad stakeholder membership. Highest levels of participation in these TWGs were seen in respondents who are in civil

society organizations or in donor agencies (Table 3). Generally, non-governmental respondents are involved in more TWGs than are those in government.

Table 4 provides a summary of the answers to the multiple-choice question asking respondents to assess the level of influence of their own institution on recent agriculture and food security policy change processes. In general, members of the analytical sample view their own institution as having moderate to high influence on the direction that the policy processes take. There is no statistically significant difference between different institutional categories of respondents in this regard, although respondents from senior or technical posts in government and from civil society organizations are somewhat more likely than respondents from other categories and sub-categories to have reported that their institution has a high degree of influence.

By examining the mean scores by category across the baseline and endline surveys, some changes can be seen between 2015 and 2017/18 in the level of influence the respondents feel their institution has in these processes. Both private sector and donor respondents feel that their influence has improved over the period between the two surveys. Respondents from the non-governmental organization and senior government sub-categories also feel that their influence has increased. Only a handful of respondents reported a lower sense of their influence in 2017/18 than in 2013—while 31 percent of respondents reported an improvement in the level of influence of their institutions, only 7 percent reported a decline, with the balance reporting no change.

**Table 4. Assessment of Influence of Own Institution on Agriculture and Food Security Policy Change Processes in Malawi in 2017/18, Percent of Respondents by Institutional Category**

Institutional type	No influence	Limited influence	Moderate influence	High influence	Mean score, 2017/18	Mean score, 2015	Observations
Government	4.8	9.5	14.3	71.4	2.5	2.4	21
Senior	0.0	0.0	14.3	85.7	2.9	2.3	7
Technical	0.0	9.1	18.2	72.7	2.6	2.7	11
Statutory body	33.3	33.3	0.0	33.3	1.3	1.7	3
Civil society	0.0	0.0	30.0	70.0	2.7	2.5	10
Civil society organization	0.0	0.0	16.7	83.3	2.8	2.8	6
Non-governmental organization	0.0	0.0	50.0	50.0	2.5	2.0	4
Private sector	9.1	9.1	36.4	45.4	2.2	1.5	11
Donor agency	0.0	16.7	16.7	66.7	2.5	1.8	6
Research	0.0	16.7	66.7	16.7	2.0	2.0	6
<i>Non-government respondents</i>	3.0	9.1	36.4	51.5	2.4	1.9	34
<b>Total</b>	<b>3.7</b>	<b>9.3</b>	<b>27.8</b>	<b>59.3</b>	<b>2.4</b>	<b>2.1</b>	<b>54</b>
Statistical test of differences between responses for the five main institutional categories of respondents (Kruskal-Wallis rank test)					p=0.1705 (ns)		

Note: Survey question A9. ns=not significant, \* p<0.05, \*\* p<0.01, \*\*\* p<0.001.

The mean score is the average of the four assessment levels, assigning a score of 0 to 'No influence', 1 to 'Limited influence', 2 to 'Moderate influence', and 3 to 'High influence'.

## 5. RESULTS

Modules B and C of both the 2015 baseline and 2017/18 endline surveys for the study on the quality of agriculture and food security policy processes at national level in Malawi consisted of 19 and 21 questions, respectively. The questions in Module B probed the respondent's opinion on the general quality of the policy processes, while those in Module C examined the institutional architecture through which these processes were conducted.<sup>8</sup> The four-level Likert scale questions were framed as generally positive statements on various dimensions of the policy processes or the associated institutional architecture. Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement with the statement: 'Completely disagree'; 'Somewhat disagree', 'Somewhat agree', and 'Completely agree'. No 'neutral' or "neither agree nor disagree" option was offered.

Each of the questions had space for the respondent to provide an explanation of their response if he or she so desired. For module B, an average of 20 percent of respondents in the baseline survey and 29 percent in the endline provided comments on each question to supplement their multiple-choice response, while for module C an average of 15 percent of respondents in the baseline survey and 19 percent in the endline provided additional detail on each question. In both survey rounds, most respondents who added an explanation to their response disagreed to some degree with the statement posted or sought to qualify their answer in some way.

To analyze the results from the Likert scale multiple-choice responses to the questions in the two modules of the endline survey, the four possible responses were assigned integer values: 0 for a 'Completely disagree' response; 1 for 'Somewhat disagree', 2 for 'Somewhat agree', and 3 for 'Completely agree'. Mean responses to the questions were then computed overall and by the five categories of respondents. In addition, the responses made in the baseline survey in 2015 for the 55 respondents were retrieved to enable comparison with the 2017/18 endline survey responses. All of these results are presented for Module B in Figure 1 and Table 5 and for Module C in Figure 2 and Table 6.

To test statistically whether the aggregate responses to a question for each of the five sub-sample categories differed significantly between any of the groups or whether the mean response to a question in the baseline survey differed significantly from the mean response in the endline survey, a Kruskal-Wallis rank test was used with each set of responses to each question. The implication of a significant result to the test between categories of respondents is that at least one of the five categories of respondents had pointedly different assessments from other categories of respondents on the quality of the dimension of agriculture and food security policy processes being explored in that particular question in the endline survey. Similarly, a significant result for the test between the survey rounds for a particular question is that opinions expressed by the respondents in the endline survey differed significantly from their responses to the same question in the baseline survey.

The rightmost column of Table 5 and Table 6 for the pair of rows for each question presents the p-values for the Kruskal-Wallis rank tests for the responses to that question. The results for the test comparing responses by category of respondent is presented in the first row, while the results for the test comparing responses across the two survey rounds is presented in the second row of the pair.

Considering the results for the Kruskal-Wallis rank test comparing responses by category of respondent, in the endline survey statistically significant Kruskal-Wallis rank test results were obtained

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<sup>8</sup> The last question in Module C asks the respondent for a general assessment of the quality of agriculture and food security policy processes in Malawi. The responses to this question were used to generate the first of the two NAPAS:Malawi project performance monitoring indices from the survey. In this report, these two indices are discussed separately from the responses to the other 20 questions in the module.

for 5 of the 19 questions in Module B and 8 of the 21 questions in Module C—32.5 percent of the 40 questions. In the baseline survey of 2015, the number of questions with significantly different responses across categories was 10 in Module B and 7 in Module C—42.5 percent of all questions. That the number of questions with significant test results declined between the baseline and the endline survey suggests some convergence of opinion across categories of respondent stakeholders over this period. However, the patterns of which specific questions had significantly different responses across categories were not consistent across the two survey rounds. This implies that the dimensions of the policy processes or aspects of the institutions involved on which there was disagreement between respondents changed between 2015 and 2017/18.

Examining the results of the Kruskal-Wallis rank test comparing responses by survey round, for most of the 40 questions in the two modules there is a significant decline in the mean score. For module B, a statistically significant decline in the mean Likert score is seen for 17 of the 19 questions, suggesting significant erosion across all respondents in their perceptions of the quality of agriculture and food security policy processes over the period between the two survey rounds. For module C, statistically significant declines in the mean Likert score is seen in 13 of the 21 questions. While this pattern is consistent with the pattern in Module B, that fewer questions showed a significant decline implies that many respondents still view elements of the institutional architecture for these policies processes—the focus the questions in Module C—to be relatively effective. For none of the questions in either module was an improvement seen in the mean Likert scores between the baseline and endline. Significantly greater cynicism about the quality of agriculture and food security policy processes in Malawi is seen in 2017/18 relative to 2015.

### **5.1 Quality of Agriculture and Food Security Policy Processes in Malawi (Module B)**

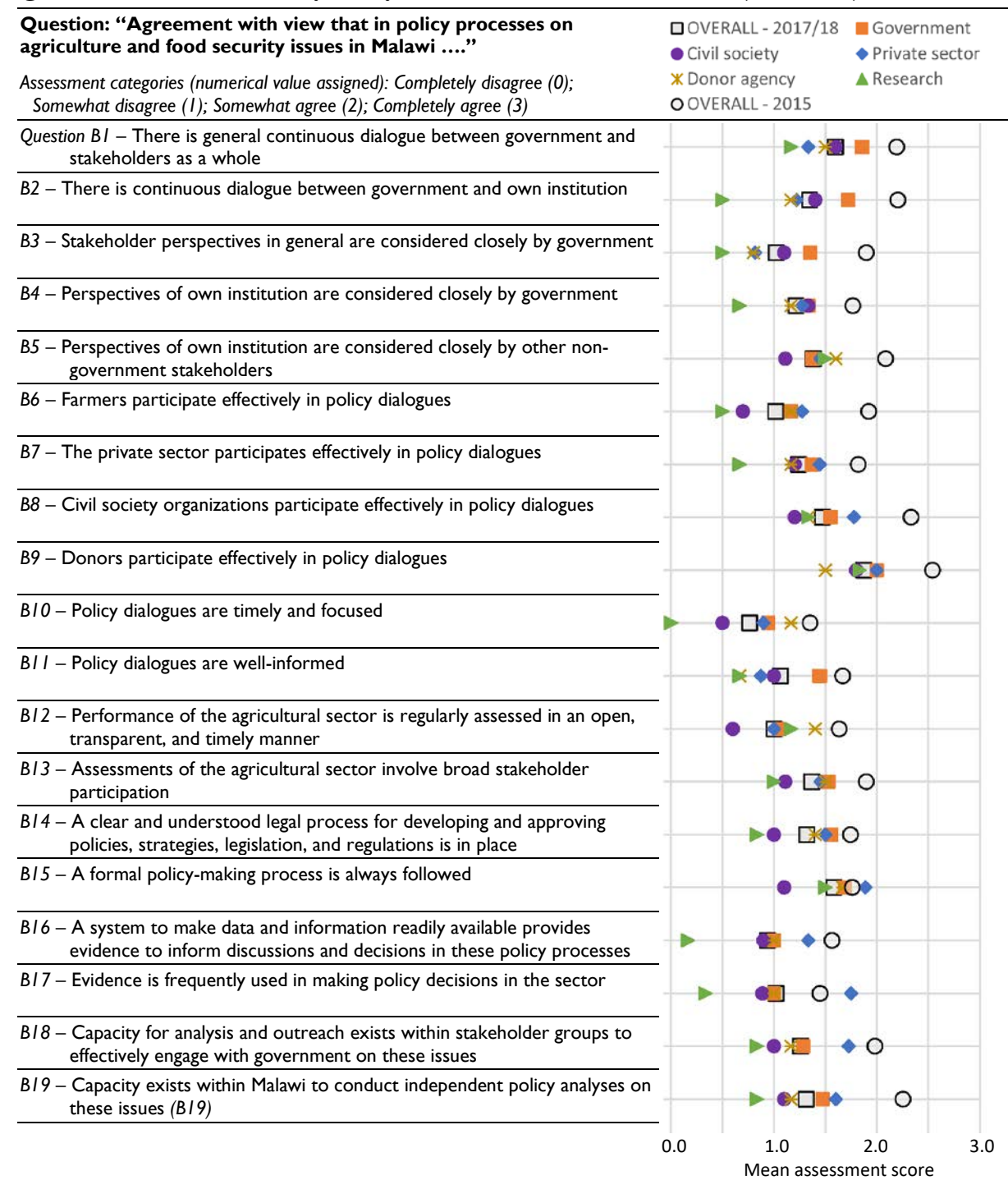
Module B primarily focuses on the quality of the content and inclusiveness of the discussions and debate in agriculture and food security policy processes in Malawi. An underlying assumption to the questions is that government is the principal convener and organizer of these processes, a role it has long played. Starting from this assumption, the questions investigate the degree to which the perspectives of other stakeholder groups are brought into these government-led processes, how well structured the processes are, and the degree to which evidence has been or could be used to inform the dialogues and debates inherent to them.

The questions in Module B are made up of generally positive statements on various dimensions of the policy processes. The overall question response patterns seen in Figure 1 shows that the average response to the statements posed in the endline survey fall around the ‘Somewhat disagree’ response, with an average assessment score for all questions in Module B for all respondents of 1.25. This pattern contrasts to the pattern of responses in the baseline survey of 2015 where the respondents were generally appreciative of the quality of the processes, while recognizing that there is still considerable room for improvement—the average assessment score for the baseline survey was 1.93, close to the value of 2.0 assigned to ‘Somewhat agree’ responses.<sup>9</sup> Figure 1 depicts this negative trend clearly—the mean rating by respondents in the 2015 baseline survey, depicted by the ‘○’ symbol in the figure, for all questions is consistently to the right of the mean rating by respondents in the 2017/18 endline survey, depicted by the symbol ‘□’ in the figure. Table 5 shows that these differences between the two survey rounds are statistically significant for all except two of the 19 Module B questions.

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<sup>9</sup> The results from the baseline survey reported here are drawn from the baseline survey responses of the 43 individuals who participated in both surveys, plus the responses of the 12 baseline survey sample members who were replaced in the endline sample because they no longer participated in agriculture and food security policy processes in Malawi.

**Figure 1. Summary of Mean Assessment Scores Concerning Perceptions on the Quality of Agriculture and Food Security Policy Processes in Malawi in 2017/18 (Module B)**



Source: Analysis of survey module B.

Note: The mean assessment score is the average of the four assessment levels, assigning a score of 0 to ‘Completely disagree’, 1 to ‘Somewhat disagree’, 2 to ‘Somewhat agree’, and 3 to ‘Completely agree’. An equal distribution of assessment levels will have a mean score of 1.5.

**Table 5. Summary of Mean Assessment Scores Concerning Perceptions on the Quality of Agriculture and Food Security Policy Processes in Malawi in 2017/18 (Module B)**

Question: “Agreement with view that in policy processes on agriculture and food security issues in Malawi ....”								Test of differences in responses between categories in 2017/18 and between the two surveys for all
	OVER-ALL	Government	Civil society	Private sector	Donor agency	Re-search	Non-government	
Assessment categories (numerical value assigned): Completely disagree (0); Somewhat disagree (1); Somewhat agree (2); Completely agree (3)								
Question B1 – There is general continuous dialogue between government and stakeholders	1.6	1.9	1.6	1.3	1.5	1.2	1.4	Ctgries: 0.022*
B1 – change between 2015 and 2017/18	-0.6	-0.6	-0.5	-0.7	-0.5	-0.7	-0.6	Srvys: 0.000***
B2 – There is continuous dialogue between government and own institution	1.3	1.7	1.4	1.2	1.2	0.5	1.1	Ctgries: 0.007**
B2 – change between 2015 and 2017/18	-0.9	-0.6	-0.9	-0.4	-1.0	-2.0	-1.0	Srvys: 0.000***
B3 – Stakeholder perspectives in general are considered closely by government	1.0	1.4	1.1	0.8	0.8	0.5	0.8	Ctgries: 0.048*
B3 – change between 2015 and 2017/18	-0.9	-1.0	-0.8	-0.5	-1.2	-1.2	-0.8	Srvys: 0.000***
B4 – Perspectives of own institution are considered closely by government	1.2	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.2	0.7	1.2	Ctgries: 0.185
B4 – change between 2015 and 2017/18	-0.6	-0.9	-0.6	0.2	-0.7	-1.0	-0.4	Srvys: 0.002**
B5 – Perspectives of own institution are considered by other non-government stakeholders	1.4	1.4	1.1	1.5	1.6	1.5	1.4	Ctgries: 0.929
B5 – change between 2015 and 2017/18	-0.7	-0.7	-1.0	-0.7	-0.6	-0.3	-0.7	Srvys: 0.000***
B6 – Farmers participate effectively in policy dialogues	1.0	1.2	0.7	1.3	1.2	0.5	0.9	Ctgries: 0.145
B6 – change between 2015 and 2017/18	-0.9	-1.2	-1.1	-0.3	-0.2	-1.5	-0.7	Srvys: 0.000***
B7 – Private sector participates effectively	1.2	1.4	1.2	1.4	1.2	0.7	1.2	Ctgries: 0.123
B7 – change between 2015 and 2017/18	-0.6	-0.9	-0.2	-0.1	-0.2	-1.3	-0.4	Srvys: 0.002**
B8 – Civil society organizations participate effectively in policy dialogues	1.5	1.6	1.2	1.8	1.3	1.3	1.4	Ctgries: 0.071
B8 – change between 2015 and 2017/18	-0.9	-0.9	-0.8	-0.6	-0.7	-1.5	-0.8	Srvys: 0.000***
B9 – Donors participate effectively	1.9	2.0	1.8	2.0	1.5	1.8	1.8	Ctgries: 0.792
B9 – change between 2015 and 2017/18	-0.7	-0.5	-0.7	-0.5	-0.8	-1.2	-0.8	Srvys: 0.000***
B10 – Policy dialogues are timely and focused	0.8	0.9	0.5	0.9	1.2	0.0	0.7	Ctgries: 0.023*
B10 – change between 2015 and 2017/18	-0.6	-0.9	-0.7	0.1	0.3	-1.3	-0.4	Srvys: 0.000***
B11 – Policy dialogues are well-informed	1.1	1.4	1.0	0.9	0.7	0.7	0.8	Ctgries: 0.140
B11 – change between 2015 and 2017/18	-0.6	-0.5	-0.9	-0.4	-0.7	-0.7	-0.7	Srvys: 0.001***
B12 – Performance of agricultural sector regularly assessed in an open and timely manner	1.0	1.1	0.6	1.0	1.4	1.2	1.0	Ctgries: 0.448
B12 – change between 2015 and 2017/18	-0.6	-0.9	-0.8	0.1	-0.8	-0.5	-0.5	Srvys: 0.003**
B13 – Assessments of the agricultural sector involve broad stakeholder participation	1.4	1.5	1.1	1.5	1.5	1.0	1.3	Ctgries: 0.378
B13 – change between 2015 and 2017/18	-0.5	-0.6	-0.7	-0.1	0.0	-1.5	-0.5	Srvys: 0.002**
B14 – A clear legal process for developing and approving policies is in place	1.3	1.6	1.0	1.5	1.4	0.8	1.2	Ctgries: 0.234
B14 – change between 2015 and 2017/18	-0.4	-0.5	-0.7	0.5	0.4	-1.7	-0.4	Srvys: 0.045*
B15 – A formal policy-making process is always followed	1.6	1.7	1.1	1.9	1.7	1.5	1.5	Ctgries: 0.125
B15 – change between 2015 and 2017/18	-0.2	-0.4	-0.7	0.7	0.2	-0.2	0.0	Srvys: 0.428

Question: “Agreement with view that in policy processes on agriculture and food security issues in Malawi ....”								Test of differences in responses between categories in 2017/18 and between the two surveys for all
	OVER-ALL	Government	Civil society	Private sector	Donor agency	Re-search	Non-government	
Assessment categories (numerical value assigned): Completely disagree (0); Somewhat disagree (1); Somewhat agree (2); Completely agree (3)								
B16 – A system to make information available provides evidence to inform decisions	0.9	1.0	0.9	1.3	1.0	0.2	0.9	Ctgries: 0.281
B16 – change between 2015 and 2017/18	-0.6	-1.2	-0.5	0.2	0.0	-1.2	-0.3	Srvys: 0.001***
B17 – Evidence is frequently used in making policy decisions in the sector	1.0	1.0	0.9	1.8	1.0	0.3	1.0	Ctgries: 0.011*
B17 – change between 2015 and 2017/18	-0.4	-0.8	-0.6	0.5	0.2	-0.8	-0.2	Srvys: 0.085
B18 – Stakeholder capacity for analysis and outreach exists to engage government	1.3	1.3	1.0	1.7	1.2	0.8	1.2	Ctgries: 0.151
B18 – change between 2015 and 2017/18	-0.7	-0.7	-0.9	-0.8	-0.5	-0.7	-0.8	Srvys: 0.000***
B19 – Capacity exists within Malawi to conduct independent policy analyses on these issues	1.3	1.5	1.1	1.6	1.2	0.8	1.2	Ctgries: 0.073
B19 – change between 2015 and 2017/18	-0.9	-0.8	-1.1	-0.9	-0.7	-1.3	-1.0	Srvys: 0.000***
Number of respondents (max.)	55	21	10	11	7	6	34	--

Source: Analysis of survey module B.

Note: The rightmost column presents the p-values for the Kruskal-Wallis rank test of statistically significant differences between responses. The first of each pair for each question in this column assesses the significance of differences in mean responses for 2017/18 between the five main institutional categories of respondents. The second of each pair assesses the significance of differences in mean responses for all respondents between the baseline in 2015 and the endline in 2017/18. The mean assessment score is the average of the four assessment levels, assigning a score of 0 to ‘Completely disagree’, 1 to ‘Somewhat disagree’, 2 to ‘Somewhat agree’, and 3 to ‘Completely agree’. \* p<0.05, \*\* p<0.01, \*\*\* p<0.001.

As was the case with the baseline survey, in the 2017/18 endline respondents from government generally provide the most positive assessments across the respondent categories, with an average score for all 19 questions in Module B of 1.42. However, this is significantly lower than the mean score in the baseline survey of 2.11. The average assessment score for all non-government respondents for the questions in Module B is 1.16, 0.26 points below the average score for government respondents. The mean score in the baseline survey for all non-government respondents was 1.81. Among non-government categories of respondent, encouragingly, the private sector respondents had the highest assessment of the quality of policy processes and showed the smallest decline in their mean assessment between the baseline and endline survey. Researchers, in contrast, showed both the lowest mean quality assessment score and the greatest drop in their mean score. Although, government respondents remained in 2017/18 generally more optimistic than the non-government respondents in their assessment of the quality of the content and inclusiveness of the discussions and debate in agriculture and food security policy processes in Malawi, the sharp decline in mean assessment scores is seen in both government and non-government respondents. This pattern is also seen in Module C.

The first five questions of Module B concern whether dialogue with government on agriculture and food security policy issues in Malawi is sustained and whether a range of perspectives are brought into this dialogue. Respondents were asked to consider these questions both in general and specific to their own institution. While in the baseline survey in 2015 most respondents felt that their institution is in reasonably good dialogue with government (Question B2), there was a sharp decline in this assessment in the endline survey—only civil society organization feel that they have reasonably continuous dialogue

with government. Researchers surveyed in 2017/18 feel generally excluded from dialogue with government.

However, somewhat more encouraging responses are seen on this question when the focus was on non-government stakeholders as a whole (B1), rather than to the respondent's institution alone. Most respondents either somewhat agreed or somewhat disagreed that the dialogue between stakeholders in general and government is continuous. The assessment in 2015 of the continuity of this dialogue between government and all stakeholders was considerably more positive in this regard than in 2017/18. While government respondents think such dialogue is continuous and broad, other categories of respondents were more critical, possibly reflecting a view that there are many stakeholders who could be, but are not participating in these policy processes. Moreover, some skepticism was expressed on the authenticity of the consultative processes. For example, it was noted that the level of consultation is issue-dependent, with some issues not open for multi-stakeholder consultation, as seen in this comment on BI—"The interaction is selective based on policy issues government is championing. But there are other issues government doesn't even consult."

With regards to the perspectives that are brought into these processes, fewer respondents in 2017/18 than in 2015 feel that their perspectives are considered in policy processes in general and particularly by government. Researchers are most skeptical of the consideration given to their ideas by other stakeholders, particularly by government, but they are not alone in this view. There has been a general drop in respondents' assessments of how well a broad set of perspectives are considered in these policy processes. Comparing the responses to B4 and B5, generally respondents feel that non-governmental stakeholders in policy processes consider more closely the perspectives of the respondent than do government participants in those processes. Moreover, it was noted that government dominates in how these processes roll out, which can diminish the contributions made by other stakeholders—one respondent noted that "[policy] finalization is dominated by government, [which] undermines the input and dialogue process."

Questions B6 to B9 ask about the degree to which the participation of particular stakeholder groups is effective in these policy processes—farmers, the private sector, civil society organizations, and donors. The pattern seen in the baseline survey on the relative effective participation of these groups was maintained, but with some decline in perceptions as to how effective the groups are in policy dialogues. Farmers and the private sector were judged to be less effective than the other two stakeholder groups. Several respondents were concerned that institutions representing farmers in policy processes dilute the perspectives of farmers. Moreover, consultations with farmers were characterized as often being "window dressing" or that the consultations take place "but their inputs are not taken seriously." With regards to the participation of the private sector, several respondents noted that their engagement was problematic—government does not communicate effectively with the private sector to maintain their engagement, nor are the processes conducted in a timely and efficient manner to maintain the commitment of business firms. One researcher observed that "Participation by private sector players in meetings is rare. The opportunity cost of their time is high and (like me) they get fatigued with long rambling consultations." Respondents from donor agencies and civil society organizations were the most critical among the respondent groups of their own institution's effectiveness in participating in these processes. For the donors, all other respondent groups but the donors viewed donor participation as generally effective in the endline survey, although less convincingly so than in the baseline survey. In the baseline survey, most respondents across the board completely agreed that donors were effective participants. In the endline survey, most respondents now 'somewhat agreed' with that donors were effective.



Questions B10 to B15 pertain to how well-structured the policy processes are. As was the case in 2015 in the baseline survey, the overall assessment of the timeliness and focus of these processes (B10) is the most negative of all assessments made in module B, and even lower opinions in this regard are seen in the endline. Researchers are most dismissive of the timeliness and focus of these processes.

Government respondents were second only to researchers in the decline since the baseline survey in their assessment of the timeliness and focus of these processes. This reflects the challenges that those responsible for managing these policy processes face in implementing them efficiently. Donors on average have the highest opinion, though still quite low. Respondents from all the other categories of stakeholders have generally critical views of the policy processes in this regard—drawn-out and unfocused policy formulation processes on agriculture and food security issues are more common in Malawi than anyone would wish. “We seem to be talking the same issues and problems, yet the solution has already been identified, but action is what is lacking.” As to whether the dialogues are generally well-informed, as in the baseline survey, in 2017/18 respondents from donor agencies and research organization remained the most critical (B11). All categories of respondents, especially those outside of government, recognize that there is considerable room for improving the degree to which conceptual understanding of the issues and evidence on them informs discussions in these policy processes.

Regarding whether the performance of the agricultural sector is assessed regularly in a transparent and timely manner (B12), most respondents disagree that the assessments meet expectations and this sense of dissatisfaction has increased between the baseline and endline surveys. However, there are differences of opinion between stakeholder groups—donors are most satisfied with the assessment processes, while respondents from civil society organizations are least satisfied. Government respondents fall between the two extremes. With regards to how broadly participatory such assessments of agricultural sector performance are (B13), whereas in 2015 there were relatively strong differences in opinion, responses in 2017/18 were more similar across groups with most respondents somewhat disagreeing with the statement that these assessments are reasonably participatory. However, the average opinion on the level of participation in agricultural sector performance assessment processes in the endline survey was more negative—“somewhat disagree”—than the positive average opinion—“somewhat agree”—seen in the baseline.

Respondents were asked whether a clear and broadly understood legal process was in place for developing and approving policies and related documents (B14). As was the case with the responses to the question in 2015, for the endline survey in 2017/18, mean assessment scores by category for this question show no significant differences between them. But we see within the categories of respondents there is considerable variation in responses to this question. This may reflect a lack of a good understanding across all respondents of exactly what that legal process is that should be followed. Overall, few respondents seem to have gained additional clarity in 2017/18 on the proper procedures that should be followed in formulating policies around agriculture and food security in Malawi to what they possessed in 2015. However, respondents from both the private sector and donor agencies showed an improvement in their assessment of the degree to which a clear and broadly understood legal framework operates to guide these processes. Nonetheless, a respondent from government, commenting on whether the legal process is clearly understood, stated “At government level, yes; outside government, ??????”.

On the question of whether a formal policy-making process is always followed in the sector, there appears to be consensus that this sometimes is done, but not always (B15). The responses to this question in the endline survey were statistically no different from those provided in the baseline survey two years before. Civil society respondents are most skeptical of whether a formal process is adhered to. A member of a civil society organization stated that there is “a lot of room for improvement (consistency and due diligence/compliance).”

The last four questions of the module, B16 to B19, examine the use of evidence generated through objective policy analysis in guiding decisions in agriculture and food security policy processes in Malawi. What is most noteworthy in the pattern of responses to these questions in the endline survey is the significant drop since the baseline survey in 2015 in the respondents' confidence that evidence can be effectively generated and then be effectively used in these policy processes. Respondents from the researcher group have the most pessimistic perspective among the groups, but all groups generally have a dim view of how well evidence informs the policy decisions made. The most negative responses are seen on the first two questions on whether systems are in place to provide this evidence (B16) and whether evidence is frequently used (B17). A civil servant was of the opinion that "information is hard to get, staff has low capacity in analytical skills, [and] it [is] always difficult to access evidence for decision making." However, somewhat more positive responses were obtained on the questions on whether capacity exists in the institutions involved to analyze the issues being considered and bring that analysis into the policy processes (B18) and whether such capacity is in place within Malawi (B19), while still recognizing problems. A respondent from a research institution noted that "National capacity to conduct independent policy analysis is still very weak. What capacity there is mainly funded by DPs [development partners]." Another researcher stated that "There are a number of institutions including CARD [Centre for Agricultural Research and Development, Bunda], CSR [Centre for Social Research, Zomba] and others that, if fully utilized, could form a think tank for government instead of relying on external institutions." It appears that the problem with the use of evidence in policy making is neglect of the evidence that is or can be made readily available to guide policy decisions. The perception is that the capacity available for policy analysis is reasonably good, but that capacity is not put to effective use.

## **5.2. Quality of the Institutional Architecture for Agriculture and Food Security Policy Processes in Malawi (Module C)**

Module C primarily focuses on the institutions and the policy implementation monitoring frameworks established to facilitate agriculture and food security policy reform processes in Malawi. The questions investigate the degree to which technical and coordination institutions are effective, policy frameworks are respected, and insights are gained through monitoring of the implementation of policy reforms.

As in Module B, the questions in Module C are made up of generally positive statements on these dimensions of the policy processes and the institutional architecture through which the processes are conducted. The overall question response patterns seen in Figure 2 for the first 20 questions (question C21 is considered separately below) shows that the average response to the statements posed in the endline survey in 2017/18 are somewhat more negative, often significantly so, than the responses made by the respondent for the baseline survey in 2015. Whereas for the baseline survey, responses for module C fell somewhat below the 'Somewhat agree' response with an average assessment score of 1.80 for the first 20 questions, the average assessment score for Module C for the endline is 1.09 with most respondents selecting a 'Somewhat disagree' response. Based on this overall trend in the assessment scores, it appears that most respondents have become somewhat disillusioned over the period between the two surveys with how well the institutions and the policy and implementation monitoring frameworks that have been put in place around agriculture and food security issues are performing. Across respondent categories, those from civil society organizations show the sharpest drop since 2015 and the lowest average scores in their assessment in 2017/18 of the quality of the institutional architecture. Private sector and government respondents provide the most positive assessments to the questions in Module C across the categories, although it is important to note that the average assessment score for government respondents dropped substantially between the two surveys. Table 6 shows that these differences between the two survey rounds are statistically significant for 14 of the 20 Module C questions.

The first five questions of Module C concern the operations of the Agriculture Sector Working Group (ASWG). The ASWG originally was established under the ASWAp as the highest-level multi-stakeholder group responsible for monitoring and directing the implementation of the sector-wide investment plan so that the objectives of the plan were achieved. Chaired by the Minister of Agriculture, its membership is made up of the leaders of a range of agricultural sector stakeholder institutions. The pattern of responses to the five questions indicate that the ASWG is no longer viewed as being effective in fulfilling its terms of reference vis-à-vis the sector itself—there was a sharp, significant drop in mean assessment scores for C1 and C2 between the baseline and endline surveys. Moreover, the ASWG continues to be broadly viewed as being unable to reliably make clear and firm decisions (C3) and still does not effectively communicate any decisions made by the group to the political leadership of the country in order to obtain their buy-in and support (C4). However, a respondent from government defended the role of the ASWG in policy making processes, observing that the ASWG “communicates its decisions to the political leadership, [but] whether the political leadership takes the decisions seriously or not is a different thing.” Similarly, a respondent from the private sector observed, “It depends on the political agenda—if the political interest is development, then it gets the ear of the political leadership. But if not, it gets blocked.”

Most stakeholders interviewed, particularly those in donor agencies or researchers, assert that action is not taken on ASWG decisions in a timely manner (C5). This likely reflects some ineffectiveness on the part of the ASWG in engaging outside of the sector, being unable to mobilize broader political support and, in consequence, public resources to implement its decisions. A respondent from research viewed the problem more systemically “Actions that are taken quickly are those dealing with disasters. However, it becomes difficult to mobilize resources (human, financial or otherwise) to implement [other] actions.” Given the ambivalent to negative assessment of the work of the ASWG by most respondents to the endline survey, the effort of building it into an effective agency for guiding public actions and investments for agricultural development in Malawi seems to have experienced some setbacks in recent years.

Questions C6 to C10 focus on the Technical Working Groups (TWG) in the agricultural sector in Malawi. TWGs work under the ASWG at a more technical level with policy issues and program design and implementation.<sup>10</sup> Led by MoAIWD, the membership of TWGs includes civil servants from other relevant ministries, relevant civil society organizations and NGOs, researchers and other technical experts, and representatives from donor agencies and private sector firms and organizations.

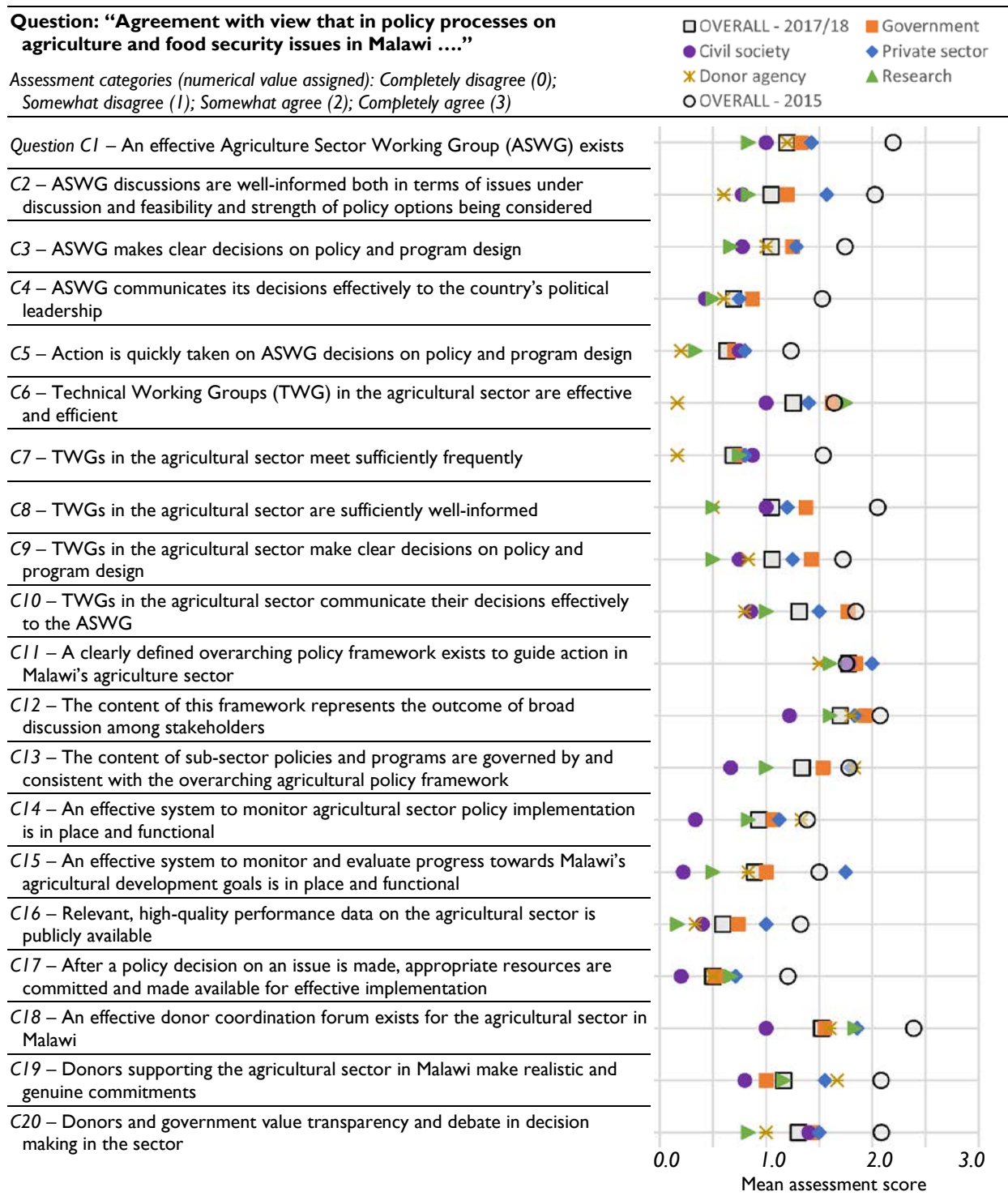
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<sup>10</sup> Under the ASWAp, there were seven Technical Working Groups in the agriculture sector in Malawi:

- Food Security and Risk Management;
- Sustainable Land and Water Management;
- Institutional Strengthening & Capacity Building;
- Monitoring and Evaluation;
- Commercial Agriculture, Agro-processing, & Value Addition;
- Technology Generation and Dissemination; and
- Gender Empowerment, HIV Prevention, & AIDS Impact Mitigation.

These were in place when the endline survey was conducted. However, the Malawi National Agricultural Investment Plan, 2017/18-2022/23, has reconfigured the Technical Working Groups in the agricultural sector. Eight TWGs are now being operationalized: TWG 1: Strengthening Farmer Organizations; TWG 2: Land Tenure; TWG 3: Agricultural Innovation Systems; TWG 4: Input Supply; TWG 5: Markets, Trade and Emergency Response; TWG 6: Natural Resources Management and Irrigation; TWG 7: Value Addition and Access to Finance; and TWG 8: Nutrition.

**Figure 2. Summary of Mean Assessment Scores Concerning Perceptions on the Quality of the Institutional Architecture of Agriculture and Food Security Policy Processes in Malawi in 2017/18 (Module C)**



Source: Analysis of survey module C.

Note: The mean assessment score is the average of the four assessment levels, assigning a score of 0 to ‘Completely disagree’, 1 to ‘Somewhat disagree’, 2 to ‘Somewhat agree’, and 3 to ‘Completely agree’.

**Table 6. Summary of Mean Assessment Scores Concerning Perceptions on the Quality of the Institutional Architecture of Agriculture and Food Security Policy Processes in Malawi in 2017/18 (Module C)**

Question: “Agreement with view that in policy processes on agriculture and food security issues in Malawi ....”								Test of differences in responses between categories in 2017/18 and between surveys for all
	OVER-ALL	Government	Civil society	Private sector	Donor agency	Re-search	Non-government	
Assessment categories (numerical value assigned): Completely disagree (0); Somewhat disagree (1); Somewhat agree (2); Completely agree (3)								
<i>Question C1 – An effective Agriculture Sector Working Group exists</i>	1.2	1.3	1.0	1.4	1.2	0.8	1.1	Ctgries: 0.073
C1 – change between 2015 and 2017/18	-1.0	-1.2	-1.2	-0.1	-0.6	-1.3	-0.9	Srvys: 0.000***
<i>C2 – ASWG discussions are well-informed on the issues and policy options being considered</i>	1.0	1.2	0.8	1.6	0.6	0.8	1.0	Ctgries: 0.069
C2 – change between 2015 and 2017/18	-1.0	-1.1	-1.2	-0.3	-1.4	-0.7	-0.9	Srvys: 0.000***
<i>C3 – ASWG makes clear decisions on policy</i>	1.0	1.3	0.8	1.3	1.0	0.7	0.9	Ctgries: 0.084
C3 – change between 2015 and 2017/18	-0.7	-0.7	-0.9	-0.6	-0.4	-0.8	-0.7	Srvys: 0.017*
<i>C4 – ASWG communicates its decisions effectively to the country’s political leadership</i>	0.7	0.9	0.4	0.8	0.6	0.5	0.6	Ctgries: 0.057
C4 – change between 2015 and 2017/18	-0.8	-0.9	-1.0	-1.0	-0.4	-0.5	-0.8	Srvys: 0.150
<i>C5 – Action is quickly taken on ASWG decisions</i>	0.6	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.2	0.3	0.6	Ctgries: 0.251
C5 – change between 2015 and 2017/18	-0.6	-0.6	-0.4	-0.6	-0.8	-0.7	-0.6	Srvys: 0.064
<i>C6 – Technical Working Groups (TWG) in the agricultural sector are effective and efficient</i>	1.3	1.6	1.0	1.4	0.2	1.8	1.0	Ctgries: 0.001***
C6 – change between 2015 and 2017/18	-0.4	-0.4	-0.8	0.0	-0.8	0.5	-0.4	Srvys: 0.799
<i>C7 – TWGs meet sufficiently frequently</i>	0.7	0.8	0.9	0.8	0.2	0.8	0.7	Ctgries: 0.020*
C7 – change between 2015 and 2017/18	-0.8	-0.8	-0.9	-0.6	-1.2	-1.0	-0.9	Srvys: 0.032*
<i>C8 – TWGs are sufficiently well-informed</i>	1.1	1.4	1.0	1.2	0.5	0.5	0.8	Ctgries: 0.003***
C8 – change between 2015 and 2017/18	-1.0	-0.9	-1.1	-1.2	-1.0	-1.0	-1.1	Srvys: 0.001***
<i>C9 – TWGs make clear decisions on policy and program design</i>	1.1	1.4	0.8	1.3	0.8	0.5	0.8	Ctgries: 0.028*
C9 – change between 2015 and 2017/18	-0.7	-0.6	-1.0	-1.3	-0.2	-0.5	-0.7	Srvys: 0.054
<i>C10 – TWGs communicate their decisions effectively to the ASWG</i>	1.3	1.8	0.9	1.5	0.8	1.0	1.0	Ctgries: 0.010***
C10 – change between 2015 and 2017/18	-0.5	-0.4	-0.9	-0.8	-0.4	-0.3	-0.6	Srvys: 0.543
<i>C11 – A clearly defined overarching policy framework guides action on agriculture</i>	1.8	1.8	1.8	2.0	1.5	1.6	1.7	Ctgries: 0.374
C11 – change between 2015 and 2017/18	0.0	-0.1	0.1	0.3	-0.3	0.2	0.1	Srvys: 0.883
<i>C12 – Content of framework represents outcome of discussion among stakeholders</i>	1.7	1.9	1.2	1.8	1.8	1.6	1.6	Ctgries: 0.011*
C12 – change between 2015 and 2017/18	-0.4	-0.4	-0.6	0.2	-0.6	-0.4	-0.4	Srvys: 0.019*
<i>C13 – Content of sub-sector policies and programs are consistent with framework</i>	1.3	1.5	0.7	1.8	1.8	1.0	1.2	Ctgries: 0.010***
C13 – change between 2015 and 2017/18	-0.4	-0.5	-1.0	0.4	0.5	-1.0	-0.4	Srvys: 0.107
<i>C14 – An effective system to monitor agricultural policy implementation is in place and functional</i>	0.9	1.1	0.3	1.1	1.3	0.8	0.9	Ctgries: 0.171
C14 – change between 2015 and 2017/18	-0.5	-1.1	-0.8	0.3	0.2	0.0	-0.1	Srvys: 0.029*
<i>C15 – A system to monitor progress towards Malawi’s agricultural goals is functional</i>	0.9	1.0	0.2	1.8	0.8	0.5	0.8	Ctgries: 0.053
C15 – change between 2015 and 2017/18	-0.6	-0.9	-0.9	0.5	-0.8	-0.5	-0.4	Srvys: 0.003***

Question: “Agreement with view that in policy processes on agriculture and food security issues in Malawi ....”								Test of differences in responses between categories in 2017/18 and between surveys for all
	OVER-ALL	Government	Civil society	Private sector	Donor agency	Re-search	Non-government	
Assessment categories (numerical value assigned): Completely disagree (0); Somewhat disagree (1); Somewhat agree (2); Completely agree (3)								
C16 – Relevant, high-quality performance data on the agricultural sector is publicly available	0.6	0.7	0.4	1.0	0.3	0.2	0.5	Ctgries: 0.256
C16 – change between 2015 and 2017/18	-0.7	-1.1	-0.8	0.0	-0.8	-0.5	-0.5	Srvys: 0.000***
C17 – After policy decision made, appropriate resources made available for implementation	0.5	0.5	0.2	0.7	0.5	0.7	0.5	Ctgries: 0.584
C17 – change between 2015 and 2017/18	-0.7	-0.9	-0.8	-0.6	-0.3	-0.3	-0.6	Srvys: 0.000***
C18 – An effective donor coordination forum exists for the agricultural sector in Malawi	1.5	1.6	1.0	1.9	1.6	1.8	1.5	Ctgries: 0.141
C18 – change between 2015 and 2017/18	-0.9	-0.9	-1.1	-0.6	-1.2	-0.5	-0.9	Srvys: 0.000***
C19 – Donors supporting agriculture in Malawi make realistic and genuine commitments	1.2	1.0	0.8	1.6	1.7	1.2	1.3	Ctgries: 0.042*
C19 – change between 2015 and 2017/18	-0.9	-1.1	-1.3	-0.2	-0.7	-1.0	-0.8	Srvys: 0.000***
C20 – Donors and government value transparency and debate in decision making in sector	1.3	1.4	1.4	1.5	1.0	0.8	1.2	Ctgries: 0.176
C20 – change between 2015 and 2017/18	-0.8	-0.9	-0.6	-0.3	-1.0	-1.3	-0.7	Srvys: 0.000***
Number of respondents (max.)	55	21	10	11	7	6	34	--

Source: Analysis of survey module C.

Note: The rightmost column presents the p-values for the Kruskal-Wallis rank test of statistically significant differences between responses. The first of each pair for each question in this column assesses the significance of differences in mean responses for 2017/18 between the five main institutional categories of respondents. The second of each pair assesses the significance of differences in mean responses for all respondents between the baseline in 2015 and the endline in 2017/18. The mean assessment score is the average of the four assessment levels, assigning a score of 0 to ‘Completely disagree’, 1 to ‘Somewhat disagree’, 2 to ‘Somewhat agree’, and 3 to ‘Completely agree’. \* p<0.05, \*\* p<0.01, \*\*\* p<0.001.

Although all respondents generally feel that significant improvements to TWG operations could be made, donor representatives particularly see the TWGs as not operating effectively or efficiently (C6). One donor respondent observed, “I don’t see the outcome of the TWGs—people just meet to fulfil the agenda.” Civil society organization, researchers, and donors believe the meetings of the TWGs could be better informed and clearer decisions could be made at them to guide policy reforms and program design. In contrast, government respondents consistently view the TWGs to be performing significantly better than do respondents from outside of government. Nonetheless, a civil servant observed that in the TWGs “there is good discussion, but most times action points from previous meetings are carried over. People meet just to fulfill the requirement for meeting.” Another donor respondent echoed this perspective, proposing that “We need to seriously think about why we should be meeting and see if at all we are contributing to the performance of the agriculture sector.” Opinions on the performance of the TWGs have not changed greatly between the baseline in 2015 and the endline in 2017/18. While opinions on the TWGs were somewhat more negative overall in the 2017/18 endline than in the 2015 baseline survey, the most significant decline is seen in the general opinion on how well-informed are TWG discussions (C8).<sup>11</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Many of the TWGs failed to meet in 2017. This was in part due to the transition from ASWAp to the NAIP that resulted in a drying up of ASWAp-linked resources used to convene TWG meetings. The 2016/17 Annual Performance Report for the Agriculture Sector reported that only ten out of 36 scheduled TWG or ASWG meetings took place over the reporting

Questions C11 to C13 concern whether a well-defined overarching policy framework on agriculture and food security is in place in Malawi, whether any such framework was developed in a consultative manner, and whether sub-sectoral policies are consistent with the broader framework. On all these issues, the respondents are somewhat in agreement that such a framework has been established in a reasonably consultative manner—highlighting the National Agriculture Policy that was developed over the past several years. Of all the questions in module C, these three garnered the most positive responses in the endline survey and showed the least difference from the responses to the same questions in the baseline survey in 2015. The only question in which there are strong differences of opinion is C13, which asks about how harmonized sub-sectoral strategies are with the overarching sectoral policies. On this point civil society organization respondents have a much more negative assessment than do other respondents. This reflects a recognition by civil society organization respondents that the recently adopted National Agriculture Policy will require a reworking of some sub-sectoral strategies so that they are more harmonized with the new sectoral policy. In contrast, donor and private sector respondents generally find that sub-sectoral policy documents now are more harmonized with the overarching sectoral policy than was the case in 2015 when the baseline survey was done.

The next three questions concern monitoring implementation of programs in the agricultural sector. Most respondents feel that there is room for improvement and no progress has been achieved in this regard since 2015. The assessments on these three questions were among the lowest in Module C. In particular, government respondents showed the largest drop in their opinion in the endline survey of the adequacy of monitoring systems in the agriculture sector relative to what they reported in the baseline survey. However, several respondents observed that monitoring systems in the sector should be re-energized in the medium-term as both the new NAP and the new NAIP have detailed monitoring components that will need to be operationalized.

Question C17 concerns whether appropriate resources are committed and made available to allow for implementation of a clear policy decision by sector leaders. The aggregate mean assessment score on this question of 0.5 is the most negative of all the questions asked in Module C. This was also the case for the baseline survey in 2015, but opinions fell even further in the endline survey of 2017/18. Moreover, there are not very wide differences of opinion—respondents from government are equally pessimistic to other categories of respondents on this point. This question highlights a general feeling that, despite the institutional architecture that has been put in place and however internally effective policy processes within the sector might be, the absence of attention to the broad needs of the sector from the political leadership of the country or from those agencies and ministries responsible for managing public resources results in poor implementation of any agriculture and food security policy decisions taken by MoAIWD and its multi-stakeholder partners. A respondent from civil society observed, “Priority setting is still cloudy at times with politically correct priorities crowding out real priority financing.” Despite reforms in recent years to the policy processes on agriculture and food security issues and the institutions involved in those processes in Malawi, those reforms may result in very little if they do not result in strong commitments of resources by the political leadership of the country to implement the broader strategies of agricultural development decided upon through these processes.

The last three questions considered here, C18 to C20, concern donor coordination, commitments, and dialogue in the agricultural sector in Malawi. These questions received among the most positive assessments of the questions in Module C, although significantly more negative responses were seen in

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period. This low frequency of meetings certainly contributed to the more negative assessment of the role of the TWGs in agriculture and food security policy processes in the period before the endline survey.

the endline survey than in the earlier baseline. Of note, in the baseline survey respondents from the donor agencies were somewhat more positive in their responses to these questions than were respondents from other categories. However, in the endline survey of 2017/18, the donors' assessments have fallen to a level similar to those of the other respondents. The exception to this is C19 on whether donor commitments are realistic and genuine—the donor respondents feel those commitments are relatively sound, while respondents from other stakeholder categories are more mixed in their assessments of how far they might take the commitments made by donors.

### 5.3 Overall Quality of Agriculture and Food Security Policy Processes in Malawi

It was noted in the introduction to this report that two of the NAPAS:Malawi project monitoring indicators are indices of, first, the quality of the agriculture and food security policy processes in Malawi and, secondly, of the quality of the institutional architecture within which those processes proceed. In this final section of the report, these two aggregate indices will be discussed.

The first index on the quality of these policy processes is derived directly from question C21:

*C21: How satisfied are you today with the overall quality of dialogue, coordination, cooperation, and partnership between stakeholders in the sector and government for advancing policy reforms on agriculture and food security issues in Malawi?*

The aggregate mean assessment score for this index in the endline survey of 2017/18 is 1.0, a decidedly negative response and significantly lower than the mean score of 1.8 in the baseline survey of 2015 (Table 7). The positive developments and strengths in the policy processes around agriculture and food security seen by respondents in 2015 seem to have been obscured by growing discouragement about how to bring positive change in the development challenges Malawi is facing on these issues.

**Table 7. Index Score on Level of Satisfaction with Overall Quality of Policy Reform Processes on Agriculture and Food Security Issues in 2017/18**

Institutional type	Mean score	Change in mean score				n	
		between 2015 and 2017/18	Completely dissatisfied, %	Somewhat dissatisfied, %	Somewhat satisfied, %		Completely satisfied, %
Government	1.3	-0.8	5.3	63.2	26.3	5.3	19
Senior	1.0	-0.9	14.3	71.4	14.3	0.0	7
Technical	1.4	-0.8	0.0	66.7	22.2	11.1	9
Statutory body	1.7	-1.0	0.0	33.3	66.7	0.0	3
Civil society	0.9	-1.0	30.0	50.0	20.0	0.0	10
Civil society organization	0.8	-1.2	33.3	50.0	16.7	0.0	6
Non-governmental org.	1.0	-0.8	25.0	50.0	25.0	0.0	4
Private sector	0.8	-0.5	27.3	63.6	9.1	0.0	11
Donor agency	0.8	-0.8	16.7	83.3	0.0	0.0	6
Research	1.0	-0.8	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	6
Non-government respondents	0.9	-0.8	21.2	69.7	9.1	0.0	33
Total	1.0	-0.8	15.4	67.3	15.4	1.9	52
change between 2015 and 2017/18	-	-	9.6	42.3	-34.6	-17.3	52

Statistical test of differences (Kruskal-Wallis rank test) between responses:

For five main institutional categories of respondents in endline survey:  $p=0.204$  (ns)

For all respondents across the two survey rounds:  $p=0.000$  (\*\*\*)

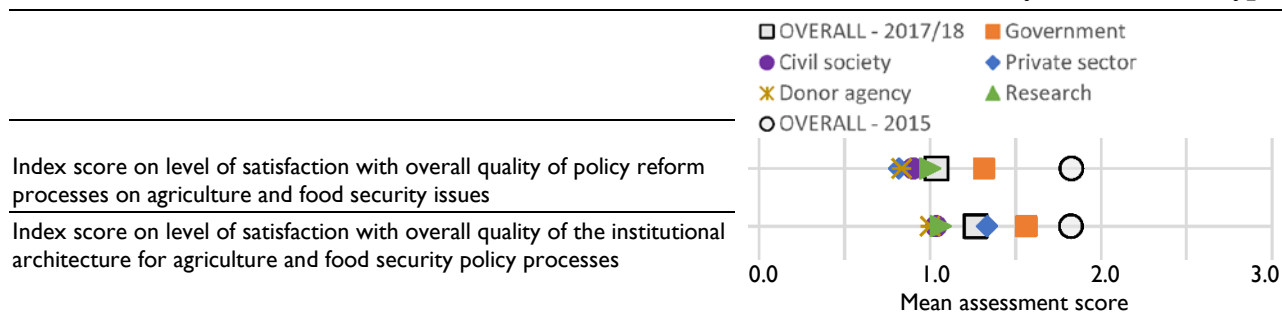
Note: Survey question C21. The mean score is the average of the four assessment levels, assigning a score of 0 to 'Completely dissatisfied', 1 to 'Somewhat dissatisfied', 2 to 'Somewhat satisfied', and 3 to 'Completely satisfied'. ns=not



significant, \* p<0.05, \*\* p<0.01, \*\*\* p<0.001, ns = not significant.

Table 7 provides a breakdown of the responses to C21 by categories and sub-categories of respondents. Figure 3 provides a graphical summary of both this and the second index across the different respondent categories and overall between the 2015 baseline and 2017/18 endline surveys. The spread in responses between categories for the first index is not so great—the most optimistic respondents are in government, with an aggregate score of 1.3, while the most pessimistic are donors and in the private sector, with aggregate scores of 0.8.

**Figure 3. Indices of Perceptions on the Quality of Policy Reform Processes and of the Institutional Architecture within which Those Processes Take Place in Malawi in 2017/18, by Institutional Type**



Source: Analysis of survey questions C21 (first index) and mean of C1, C6, C11, and C14 (second index) .

Note: The mean assessment score is the average of four assessment levels, assigning a score of 0 to ‘Completely disagree’, 1 to ‘Somewhat disagree’, 2 to ‘Somewhat agree’, and 3 to ‘Completely agree’.

Just over a quarter of respondents to C21 provided additional comments on the question. The following reflect their general tone.

*There are candid discussions. Based on them we make progress in the sector.* (civil servant)

*The structure is there; the willingness is there. But there are external factors, like politics, which hamper effective coordination and cooperation among stakeholders.* (civil servant)

*The Ministry has gone out to interact and consult stakeholders in the sector. The question is whether such dialogue will continue.* (private sector)

*Frank discussions and dialogue are being made, although it needs to be sincere with mutual accountability on both sides.* (civil society)

*Dialogue is there but sometimes implementation is difficult.* (private sector)

*The main problem is commitment and sometimes decisions by government have been forced by circumstance rather than implementing policies based on evidence.* (researcher)

*The question is not about policy design, but how implementation is done, which has remained questionable. We need to insist on the need to effectively implement our good written policies.* (donor)

*Policy dialogue takes place, but implementation is not there. Also, at resource allocation there is no dialogue. As long as MoAIWD does not have resources to implement policies then we have a problem. So, it's not effective dialogue if there is no action after the dialogue.* (donor)

Despite generally negative opinions being expressed in the endline survey of 2018/17, more broadly it appears that there is a general appreciation of progress having been made in developing consultative

multi-stakeholder policy processes for addressing agriculture and food security challenges in Malawi over the past ten years or so.<sup>12</sup> However, there seems to be a growing realization that these new ways of conducting these policy discussions are not enough. Considerable improvements are still needed, particularly with regards to how any policy initiatives lead to sustained and adequate action. But this would require substantially stronger connections between agriculture and food security stakeholders and the broader political leadership of Malawi who decide which priorities are addressed and how resources are allocated.

For the second index for the NAPAS:Malawi project monitoring indicators on the quality of the institutional architecture for agriculture and food security policy processes, no single all-embracing question on the quality of the institutions was asked of the respondents. To generate an aggregate index on institutional quality, we use a mean aggregate score derived from four questions in module C that ask respondents to directly assess the efficiency and effectiveness of several components of the institutional architecture for agriculture and food security policy processes in Malawi:

*C1: An effective and efficient Agricultural Sector Working Group exists.*

*C6: For the Technical Working Groups in the agriculture sector in which I have participated in the past 12 months, I have found them to be effective and efficient.*

*C11: A clearly defined overarching policy framework exists to guide action in the agriculture sector to improve agricultural productivity, increase production, boost food security, and enhance nutrition.*

*C14: An effective system to monitor policy implementation and results in the agriculture sector is in place and functional.*

While important aspects of the functions of these components of the institutional architecture are well outside the terms of reference and reach of the NAPAS:Malawi project, nonetheless, the project, if effective, should contribute to improvements in some of the functions of these four components. Note that we exclude considerations of donor coordination from our aggregate index (question C18), as NAPAS:Malawi is not expected to engage in strengthening agriculture and food security policy processes in Malawi in this area. Responses only for those who answered all four questions making up the index in both surveys were used in this computation, which reduces the sample size considerably.

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<sup>12</sup> Several respondents gave the NAPAS:Malawi project specific credit for motivating expanded policy consultations and higher quality policy discussions. In commenting on question C21, a private sector respondent stated, “I think it is because of the NAPAS project that ... the Ministry ... [has] gone out to interact and consult stakeholders in the sector. The question is whether such dialogue will continue after the NAPAS project phases out.”

**Table 8. Index Score on Level of Satisfaction with Overall Quality of Institutional Architecture for Agriculture and Food Security Policy Processes in 2017/18**

Institutional type	Mean score	Change in mean score between	
		2015 and 2017/18	n
Government	1.6	-0.7	12
Senior	1.7	-0.6	4
Technical	1.6	-0.5	6
Statutory body	1.3	-1.3	2
Civil society	1.0	-0.6	7
Civil society organization	1.0	-0.7	5
Non-governmental organization	1.1	-0.6	2
Private sector	1.3	-0.3	3
Donor agency	1.0	-0.6	5
Research	1.1	-0.2	4
<i>Non-government respondents</i>	<i>1.1</i>	<i>-0.5</i>	<i>19</i>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1.3</b>	<b>-0.6</b>	<b>31</b>

Statistical test of differences (Kruskal-Wallis rank test) between responses:  
 For five main institutional categories of respondents in endline survey:  $p=0.191$  (ns)  
 For all respondents across the two survey rounds:  $p=0.009$  (\*\*)

Note: Index based on mean assessment scores for a combination of survey questions C1, C6, C11, and C14. The mean score is the average of the four assessment levels used for these questions, assigning a score of 0 to ‘Completely dissatisfied’, 1 to ‘Somewhat dissatisfied’, 2 to ‘Somewhat satisfied’, and 3 to ‘Completely satisfied’. Only cases in which the respondent provided an assessment for all four questions making up the index in both survey rounds were used to compute the statistics in this table. ns=not significant, \*  $p<0.05$ , \*\*  $p<0.01$ , \*\*\*  $p<0.001$ , ns = not significant.

The aggregate mean assessment score for this composite index on the quality of the institutional architecture from the 2017/18 endline survey is 1.3, somewhat more positive than the first index from the endline survey focusing on the quality of the policy processes, but showing a significant decline since the baseline survey in 2015. Table 8 provides a breakdown of the results for the index by categories and sub-categories of respondents. (See Figure 3 for a graphical presentation.) While there was a significant difference between stakeholder categories for this index in the baseline survey, in the endline survey opinions have converged somewhat so that the differences between them are no longer statistically significant. As with the first index, the most optimistic respondents are in government, with an aggregate score of 1.6, while the most pessimistic are from civil society and donor agencies (1.0).

## 6. CONCLUSION

The immediate motivation for conducting the 2015 and 2017/18 Malawi agriculture and food security policy processes surveys was to provide a baseline and then a continuing understanding of the quality of those policy processes for the NAPAS:Malawi project. Moreover, two of the monitoring indicators for the project are indices developed from the survey responses—the first on the quality of dialogue, coordination, cooperation, and partnership between stakeholders in the sector and government within those processes, and the second on the quality of the institutional architecture within which those processes proceed. The baseline indices in 2015 were both 1.8, indicating that, while some positive developments had been achieved and elements of the policy processes were quite strong, improvements were still needed. However, the indices in 2017/18 showed an increase in pessimism among respondents as to the quality of the processes and the institutions involved in them. The index on the quality of the processes had fallen to 1.0, while that on the quality of the institutions had dropped to 1.3.

Explanations for this significant drop in the two indices are not obvious. Policy developments and the context around agriculture and food security in Malawi between 2015 and 2017/18 provides a mixed, but not a wholly negative, assessment. On the positive side, the National Agriculture Policy was adopted in late-2016 following extensive stakeholder consultations. More recently, a broad set of stakeholders were involved in developing the National Agricultural Investment Plan that will guide action to realize the objectives of the National Agriculture Policy. These policy processes certainly were successful. On the negative side, Malawi has experienced recurrent widespread food insecurity crises in recent years due to floods, drought, and pest infestations. These required significant humanitarian responses that involved considerable reliance on international assistance—the largest, the 2016/17 Food Insecurity Response Programme, targeted over six million vulnerable people in southern and central Malawi. As was repeatedly noted by respondents in their comments on specific questions in the endline survey, there is a significant disconnect between the reasonably high quality of the policy documents that are developed through the policy processes around agriculture and food security issues and the results obtained—the quality of policy implementation does not meet the aspirations of those policies and strategies. This is nowhere made more evident than when millions of Malawians persistently, almost routinely, are at risk of hunger. It is difficult to be self-congratulatory on the quality of the agriculture and food security policy processes with which one is involved in developing in such an enduring situation.

This disconnect between policy and strategy formulation and implementation also points to a deficiency in a premise of the survey. We assumed that the quality of policy processes and the effectiveness of the institutions involved in the formulation of policies and strategies on agriculture and food security could be assessed independently of the implementation of the policies and strategies. However, the analysis here shows that it is very difficult to separate the two in any assessment. Possibly with closer attention to distinguishing the elements of policy and strategy design from those of implementation in drafting the questions in the survey questionnaire or in the instructions to respondents, a more disaggregated assessment could be achieved that separates the design of policies and strategies from their implementation. However, we would question whether any assessment of the quality of policy processes is of much value if it does not also consider the quality of implementation. Any future research on this topic must ensure that both dimensions are examined.

While that is the larger context that might explain the generally negative assessments made in the 2017/18 survey, an additional factor is that the dominant framework under which much of the policy process related activities around agriculture and food security over the past ten years took place, the Agriculture Sector Wide Approach (ASWAp) framework that served as the agricultural sector plan for

the country for the period 2011 to 2015, is being replaced with the National Agricultural Investment Plan, which is aligned with the National Agriculture Policy. The resources and institutional support made available to motivate policy processes within the ASWAp framework are not as forthcoming as there were even as recently as 2015. Consequently, at an institutional level, between 2015 and 2017/18 the intensity of engagement under the Agricultural Sector Working Group (ASWG) and the Technical Working Groups (TWG) declined. As the questionnaire used for both survey rounds refers to the ASWG and TWGs in assessing institutional quality, the more negative assessment of the quality of the institutions involved in the policy process may simply reflect that these institutions were more central in the past in motivating these processes, but are no longer. It is as yet unclear if the ASWG and TWGs will be reanimated through the provision of sufficient resources to operate as the NAIP implementation proceeds in coming years.

The 2017/18 endline survey is likely the last such survey that will be done under the NAPAS:Malawi project, as the project will be closing by end-2018. However, the ASWG (or its replacement body) should consider replicating this survey regularly thereafter in order to better inform decisions on what sort of investments and institutional reconfigurations may be needed to ensure effective and efficient policy processes on agriculture and food security issues in the country. Better quality policy processes make an important, although not sufficient, contribution to achieving better outcomes in the agricultural sector and to ensuring that the sector's contribution to the development of the economy of Malawi and the food security of its citizens is optimal.

## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1. Questionnaire for the 2017/18 Malawi Agriculture and Food Security Policy Processes Endline Survey

#### Introduction

This survey is part of a joint effort by the global Feed the Future Innovation Laboratory for Food Security Policy (FSP) and the NAPAS: Malawi projects to study the institutional architecture and quality of policy processes on agriculture and food security issues in Malawi. Both projects are managed by Michigan State University (MSU) with funding from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Similar surveys are being conducted by the FSP project in other countries in Africa and Asia to derive "best practice" lessons on strengthening policy processes on agriculture and food security issues.

This survey is a follow-up to a baseline survey that was conducted in 2015 in Malawi. The report on the baseline survey can be obtained online at [http://foodsecuritypolicy.msu.edu/uploads/resources/FSPResearchPaper\\_13.pdf](http://foodsecuritypolicy.msu.edu/uploads/resources/FSPResearchPaper_13.pdf).

Survey respondents are being contacted now to obtain an updated assessment on the topics covered in the 2015 survey in order to better understand any changes in the institutional architecture or in the quality of policy processes on agriculture and food security in Malawi since then. If you were not involved in responding to the baseline survey, we are asking you to participate in this endline survey to replace a baseline survey respondent with similar characteristics to your own who no longer is involved in agriculture and food security policy processes in Malawi.

You are free to choose to participate in this survey, to refuse to answer certain questions, or to stop participating at any time without consequence. If you volunteer to participate, your help in answering these questions is greatly appreciated. Your responses will be kept completely confidential to the maximum extent allowable by law. Your responses will be summed together with those from other stakeholders in Malawi and possibly from other countries. Only general averages from the analysis will be reported.

For any questions about the study, contact Dr. Todd Benson or Mr. Zephania Nyirenda of the NAPAS:Malawi project.

#### ***A. Describe yourself and the organization you represent***

Are you willing to participate in the survey? [If "No", survey was not administered.]

A1. Name

A0. Sex of respondent

A2. Position

A3. Organization

A4.1. Office address; A4.2. e-mail address(es); A4.3. phone number(s)

A5. Number of years you have been with this organization:

A6: Total years of experience you have in policy development on agriculture or food security issues:

A7. Is the organization you are part of a member of any agriculture or food security related Technical Working Group, taskforce, steering committee, or other policy or sub-sector review committee?

A8. If a member of a Technical Working Group (TWG), which one(s)?

A9. How would you rate the influence your organization has on agriculture and food security policy change processes in Malawi?

#### ***B: Quality of agriculture and food security policy processes in Malawi***

Please rate each of the following statement against a four-level scale, where either you completely disagree/dissatisfied; you somewhat disagree/dissatisfied; you somewhat agree/satisfied; or you completely agree/satisfied. (If the question is not applicable or you do not know, mark 'NA/DK!')

All the statements refer to the policy environment in Malawi as of now, October 2017, for issues related to agriculture, agricultural development, and food security. You may, if you wish, add a comment in the space provided under each statement to elaborate on your response.

The term 'stakeholder' is used here to collectively include representatives from the private sector, CSOs, NGOs, research organizations, the donor community, producer organizations, citizen's groups, etc. that are active in Malawi on agriculture and food security policy issues.

The term 'policy' as used here includes the content of master development frameworks for Malawi, sector strategies, subsector strategies, public investment plans, proposed legislation and regulations, and the design of public programs.

- B1. There is continuous dialogue related to policy on agriculture and food security issues between government sector representatives and other stakeholders.
- B2. There is continuous dialogue on agriculture and food security issues between government sector representatives and your institution.
- B3. Stakeholder perspectives in these policy dialogues on agriculture and food security issues are listened to and considered closely by government.
- B4. The perspectives of your institution in these policy dialogues on agriculture and food security issues are listened to and considered closely by government.
- B5. The perspectives of your institution in these policy dialogues on agriculture and food security issues are listened to and considered closely by stakeholders other than government.
- B6. Farmers (agricultural producers) or their representatives effectively participate and are consulted in policy dialogues on agriculture and food security issues.
- B7. The private sector effectively participates and is consulted in policy dialogues on agriculture and food security issues.
- B8. Civil society organizations (CSOs) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) effectively participate and are consulted in policy dialogues on agriculture and food security issues.
- B9. Donors supporting the agriculture sector in the country effectively participate and are consulted in policy dialogues on agriculture and food security issues.
- B10. Policy processes on agriculture and food security issues can be characterized as timely and focused in addressing pressing and important issues related to the agriculture sector.
- B11. Policy dialogues on agriculture and food security issues can be characterized as well-informed with a clear understanding of the feasibility, strengths, and weaknesses of the policy options being considered.
- B12. The performance of the agriculture sector is regularly assessed in an open, transparent, and timely manner by government.
- B13. The assessment of the performance of the agriculture sector actively involves representatives from producers, donors, the private sector in agriculture, CSOs, and NGOs.
- B14. A clearly articulated and broadly understood legal process for developing and approving policy exists.
- B15. A formal policy-making process is always followed in the development of policies, strategies, legislation, and regulations on agriculture and food security issues.
- B16. A publicly transparent data and information sharing system makes evidence-based assessments available to inform discussions and decisions in policy processes.
- B17. Available evidence in the form of data and results of rigorous analysis is frequently used in policy processes on agriculture and food security issues.
- B18. Capacity exists within the stakeholder groups to effectively engage with government in agriculture and food security policy analysis and outreach.
- B19. Capacity exists in the country to effectively conduct independent policy analysis on agriculture and food security policy issues.

### ***C. Quality of institutional architecture for agriculture and food security policy processes in the country***

Please rate each of the following statement against a four-level scale, where either you completely disagree/dissatisfied; you somewhat disagree/dissatisfied; you somewhat agree/satisfied; or you completely agree/satisfied. (If the question is not applicable or you do not know, mark 'NA/DK'.)

- C1. An effective and efficient Agricultural Sector Working Group exists.
- C2. Discussions in the Agricultural Sector Working Group are well-informed, with sufficient information on current conditions in the agriculture sector of Malawi; on the various policy options that could be exercised to respond to a pressing issue in the sector; and on the feasibility, strengths, and weaknesses of the various policy options proposed.
- C3. The Agricultural Sector Working Group makes clear decisions on policy and program design.
- C4. The Agricultural Sector Working Group clearly communicates to the political leadership of Malawi the decisions on policy and program design it makes, and these are taken seriously by that leadership.
- C5. Action is quickly taken by members and other stakeholders on the decisions on policy and program design made by the Agricultural Sector Working Group.
- C6. For the Technical Working Groups in the agriculture sector in which I have participated in the past 12 months, I have found them to be effective and efficient.
- C7. Technical Working Groups in the agriculture sector meet sufficiently frequently to maintain momentum on the key policy reforms for which each is responsible.
- C8. Discussions in Technical Working Groups are well-informed, having sufficient information to make good decisions on issues in the sector for which each TWG is responsible.
- C9. Clear decisions on policy and program design are made by the Technical Working Groups.
- C10. Decisions on policy and program design made by the Technical Working Groups are communicated clearly to the Agricultural Sector Working Group and taken seriously by it.
- C11. A clearly defined overarching policy framework exists to guide action in the agriculture sector to improve agricultural productivity, increase production, boost food security, and enhance nutrition.
- C12. The content of the overarching policy framework for the agriculture sector represents the results of informed, transparent, and broad discussions among stakeholders in the sector.
- C13. The content of sub-sector policies and strategies and the design of programs in the agriculture sector are governed by and consistent with the overarching policy framework for the sector.
- C14. An effective system to monitor policy implementation and results in the agriculture sector is in place and functional.
- C15. An effective and comprehensive monitoring and evaluation system to monitor progress towards the agricultural development goals of the country is in place and functional.
- C16. Relevant and high-quality sector performance data (i.e., evidence) are made publicly available in a timely manner.
- C17. After a policy decision on an agriculture or food security issue is made, appropriate resources are committed and made available for effective policy implementation.
- C18. An effective donor coordination forum exists for the agriculture sector in Malawi so that donors together work in a consistent manner and in a way that minimizes any disruptions to the flow of resources that they commit to agricultural development.
- C19. In general, donors supporting the agriculture sector in Malawi make commitments that are clear, realistic, and genuine.
- C20. The government and donors supporting the agriculture sector have embraced transparency and debate in policy processes and decision making.
- C21. How satisfied are you today with the overall QUALITY of dialogue, coordination, cooperation, and partnership between stakeholders in the sector and government for advancing policy reforms on agriculture and food security issues in Malawi?



## **Appendix 2. Assessment of Any Bias Introduced into the Results of the Endline Survey Analysis Due to Sample Attrition between the 2015 Baseline and the 2017/18 Endline Surveys**

For the study of the quality of Malawi agriculture and food security policy processes, significant attrition in the sample occurred between the baseline survey in 2015 and the endline survey in 2017/18. The baseline survey analysis involved data from 86 respondents.<sup>13</sup> This report on the endline survey presents results from 55 respondents. The endline survey sample is made up of:

- 43 individuals who participated in both surveys; and
- 12 individuals who had replaced baseline survey respondents in the positions the baseline respondents held within their institutions at the time of the first survey. The respondents to the baseline survey who were replaced for the endline survey are no longer engaged in agriculture or food security policy processes in Malawi due to being transferred to new unrelated positions, having left the country (particularly staff of international agencies), retirement, or death. In constructing the sample for the endline survey, their replacements were contacted to solicit their participation as endline survey respondents.

To assess whether significant bias was introduced into the aggregate assessment of the quality of policy processes due to this attrition in the sample, Appendix Table 1 and Appendix Table 2 present comparisons of the mean assessment scores provided in response to each of the questions in Modules B and C, respectively. The responses are grouped by sub-sample and the entire sample, as follows:

- the 43 members of the baseline survey sample who did not participate in endline survey;
- the 43 other members of the baseline sample who did participate in endline survey;
- the full sample of 86 respondents for the baseline survey; and
- a sub-sample of 55 baseline survey respondents made up of the 43 members who also participated in endline survey, plus the 12 respondents who did not participate in the endline survey, but whose replacements in their institutional positions did so.

This analysis assesses whether the mean responses in the baseline survey of these sub-samples and the entire sample differed in a statistically significant manner. Two comparisons are presented in the two Appendix Tables: between the baseline survey respondents who either did or did not also participate in the endline survey, respectively; and between the full baseline sample and the sub-sample of 55 baseline survey respondents that is defined by the endline survey sample.

In comparing the mean assessment scores from Modules B and C of the 2015 baseline survey for the two 43-member baseline survey sub-samples, statistically significant differences are seen in none of the responses to Module B. The only statistically significant differences are seen in three questions in Module C, C8 and C9 on Technical Working Groups and C18 on donor coordination. The sub-sample of respondents that participated in the endline survey has a slightly more positive assessment on all three questions that does the sub-sample of respondents who did not participate in the endline survey.

The comparison of assessment scores between the full baseline sample and the sub-sample of 55 respondents defined by the endline survey analysis shows no statistically significant differences on any of the questions in either module.

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<sup>13</sup> See [http://foodsecuritypolicy.msu.edu/uploads/resources/FSP\\_Research\\_Paper\\_13.pdf](http://foodsecuritypolicy.msu.edu/uploads/resources/FSP_Research_Paper_13.pdf) or [http://foodsecuritypolicy.msu.edu/uploads/resources/Policy\\_Brief\\_10.pdf](http://foodsecuritypolicy.msu.edu/uploads/resources/Policy_Brief_10.pdf)

Overall, we conclude that there is very little difference in the general pattern of responses between the various sub-samples of the baseline survey sample. The mean responses across the samples differ at most for any question by three decimal points on a scale of 0 to 3. There is no evidence in these results to suggest that significant bias has been introduced into our analysis through the significant attrition in the sample between the baseline and endline surveys.

Moreover, the comparison of the mean assessment scores for the full sample to those of the 55 respondent sub-sample suggests that overall the findings from the analysis of the baseline survey data for the full sample of 86 respondents can be expected to be quite representative of what would have been obtained if the analysis had been restricted to the sub-sample of 55 respondents defined by the endline survey analysis. The findings presented in the earlier report on the baseline survey analysis should remain valid in informing the endline analysis presented here.

**Appendix Table 1. Differences between Sub-Samples and Full Sample for Mean Assessment Scores Concerning Perceptions on the Quality of Agriculture and Food Security Policy Processes in Malawi Reported in 2015 Baseline Survey (Module B)**

	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]
<b>Question: “Agreement with view that in policy processes on agriculture and food security issues in Malawi ....”</b>	<b>Baseline respondents who did not participate in endline survey</b>	<b>Baseline respondents who participated in endline survey</b>	<b>Test of differences in mean assessment scores between [1] &amp; [2]</b>	<b>Full baseline sample</b>	<b>Baseline respondents who participated in endline or were replaced</b>	<b>Test of differences in mean assessment scores between [4] &amp; [5]</b>
Assessment categories (numerical value assigned): Completely disagree (0); Somewhat disagree (1); Somewhat agree (2); Completely agree (3)						
<i>Question B1</i> – There is continuous dialogue between government and stakeholders	2.2	2.2	0.937	2.2	2.2	0.684
<i>B2</i> – There is continuous dialogue between government and own institution	2.1	2.1	0.692	2.1	2.2	0.561
<i>B3</i> – Stakeholder perspectives in general are considered closely by government	2.0	1.8	0.293	1.9	1.9	0.924
<i>B4</i> – Perspectives of own institution are considered closely by government	2.0	1.7	0.163	1.9	1.8	0.636
<i>B5</i> – Perspectives of own institution considered closely by non-government stakeholders	2.1	2.1	0.927	2.1	2.1	0.977
<i>B6</i> – Farmers participate effectively in policy dialogues	2.0	1.9	0.789	1.9	1.9	0.977
<i>B7</i> – Private sector participates effectively in policy dialogues	1.9	1.8	0.833	1.9	1.8	0.734
<i>B8</i> – Civil society organizations participate effectively in policy dialogues	2.4	2.3	0.884	2.3	2.3	0.920
<i>B9</i> – Donors participate effectively in policy dialogues	2.6	2.5	0.587	2.5	2.5	0.661
<i>B10</i> – Policy dialogues are timely and focused	1.6	1.3	0.340	1.4	1.4	0.715
<i>B11</i> – Policy dialogues are well-informed	1.8	1.7	0.463	1.7	1.7	0.746
<i>B12</i> – Performance of the agricultural sector is regularly assessed in an open, transparent, and timely manner	1.7	1.5	0.613	1.6	1.6	0.942
<i>B13</i> – Assessments of the agricultural sector involve broad stakeholder participation	2.1	1.8	0.229	2.0	1.9	0.667
<i>B14</i> – A clear and understood legal process for developing and approving policies, strategies, legislation, and regulations is in place	2.0	1.7	0.110	1.8	1.7	0.533
<i>B15</i> – A formal policy-making process is always followed	2.0	1.7	0.190	1.8	1.8	0.691
<i>B16</i> – A system to make information readily available provides evidence to inform discussions and decisions	1.7	1.6	0.640	1.6	1.5	0.639

	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]
<b>Question: “Agreement with view that in policy processes on agriculture and food security issues in Malawi ....”</b>	<b>Baseline respondents who did not participate in endline survey</b>	<b>Baseline respondents who participated in endline survey</b>	<b>Test of differences in mean assessment scores between [1] &amp; [2]</b>	<b>Full baseline sample</b>	<b>Baseline respondents who participated in endline or were replaced</b>	<b>Test of differences in mean assessment scores between [4] &amp; [5]</b>
Assessment categories (numerical value assigned): Completely disagree (0); Somewhat disagree (1); Somewhat agree (2); Completely agree (3)						
<i>B17</i> – Evidence is frequently used in making policy decisions in the sector	1.7	1.4	0.637	1.6	1.4	0.614
<i>B18</i> – Capacity for analysis and outreach exists within stakeholder groups to engage government on these issues	2.1	2.0	0.690	2.1	2.0	0.455
<i>B19</i> – Capacity exists within Malawi to conduct independent policy analyses on these issues	2.3	2.4	0.573	2.3	2.3	0.812
Number of respondents (max.)	43	43	--	86	55	--

Source: Analysis of 2015 baseline survey module B.

Note: The rightmost column presents the p-values for the Kruskal-Wallis rank test of statistically significant differences between responses for the two samples of respondents. The mean assessment score is the average of the four assessment levels, assigning a score of 0 to ‘Completely disagree’, 1 to ‘Somewhat disagree’, 2 to ‘Somewhat agree’, and 3 to ‘Completely agree’. \* p<0.05, \*\* p<0.01, \*\*\* p<0.001.

**Appendix Table 2. Differences between Sub-Samples and Full Sample for Mean Assessment Scores Concerning Perceptions on the Quality of the Institutional Architecture of Agriculture and Food Security Policy Processes in Malawi Reported in 2015 Baseline Survey (Module C)**

	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]
<b>Question: “Agreement with view that in policy processes on agriculture and food security issues in Malawi ....”</b>	<b>Baseline respondents who did not participate in endline survey</b>	<b>Baseline respondents who participated in endline survey</b>	<b>Test of differences in mean assessment scores between [1] &amp; [2]</b>	<b>Full baseline sample</b>	<b>Baseline respondents who participated in endline or were replaced</b>	<b>Test of differences in mean assessment scores between [4] &amp; [5]</b>
Assessment categories (numerical value assigned): Completely disagree (0); Somewhat disagree (1); Somewhat agree (2); Completely agree (3)						
<i>Question C1</i> – An effective Agriculture Sector Working Group exists ( <i>C1</i> )	2.1	2.2	0.192	2.1	2.2	0.784
<i>C2</i> – ASWG discussions are well-informed both in terms of the issues under discussions and the feasibility and relative strength of the policy options being considered	2.1	2.0	0.368	2.0	2.0	0.929
<i>C3</i> – ASWG makes clear decisions on policy and programs	1.9	1.7	0.840	1.8	1.7	0.780
<i>C4</i> – ASWG communicates its decisions effectively to the country’s political leadership	1.8	1.5	0.886	1.7	1.5	0.946
<i>C5</i> – Action is quickly taken on ASWG decisions on policy and program design	1.4	1.2	0.894	1.3	1.2	0.935
<i>C6</i> – Technical Working Groups (TWG) in the agricultural sector are effective and efficient	1.7	1.7	0.608	1.7	1.6	0.611
<i>C7</i> – TWGs in agricultural sector meet sufficiently frequently	1.7	1.5	0.565	1.6	1.5	0.928
<i>C8</i> – TWGs in sector are sufficiently well-informed	1.9	2.2	0.049 *	2.0	2.1	0.861
<i>C9</i> – TWGs in the agricultural sector make clear decisions on policy and program design	1.7	1.8	0.044 *	1.8	1.7	0.873
<i>C10</i> – TWGs in the agricultural sector communicate their decisions effectively to ASWG	1.8	1.9	0.173	1.9	1.8	0.910

	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]
<b>Question: “Agreement with view that in policy processes on agriculture and food security issues in Malawi ....”</b>	<b>Baseline respondents who did not participate in endline survey</b>	<b>Baseline respondents who participated in endline survey</b>	<b>Test of differences in mean assessment scores between [1] &amp; [2]</b>	<b>Full baseline sample</b>	<b>Baseline respondents who participated in endline or were replaced</b>	<b>Test of differences in mean assessment scores between [4] &amp; [5]</b>
Assessment categories (numerical value assigned): Completely disagree (0); Somewhat disagree (1); Somewhat agree (2); Completely agree (3)						
<i>C11</i> – A clearly defined overarching policy framework exists to guide action in Malawi’s agriculture sector	1.9	1.8	0.457	1.9	1.8	0.803
<i>C12</i> – The content of this framework represents the outcome of broad discussion among stakeholders	2.3	2.0	0.665	2.2	2.1	0.930
<i>C13</i> – The content of sub-sector policies and programs are governed by and consistent with the overarching agricultural policy framework	2.2	1.6	0.182	1.9	1.8	0.747
<i>C14</i> – An effective system to monitor agricultural sector policy implementation is in place and functional	1.5	1.3	0.954	1.4	1.4	0.808
<i>C15</i> – A system to monitor and evaluate progress towards Malawi’s agricultural goals is functional	1.6	1.5	0.773	1.5	1.5	0.648
<i>C16</i> – Relevant, high-quality performance data on the agricultural sector is publicly available	1.3	1.4	0.804	1.4	1.3	0.652
<i>C17</i> – After a policy decision on an agriculture or food security issue is made, appropriate resources are made available for effective implementation	1.3	1.2	0.716	1.2	1.2	0.774
<i>C18</i> – An effective donor coordination forum exists for the agricultural sector in Malawi	2.2	2.4	0.025 *	2.3	2.4	0.448
<i>C19</i> – Donors supporting the agricultural sector in Malawi make realistic and genuine commitments	1.9	2.2	0.060	2.0	2.1	0.763
<i>C20</i> – Donors and government value transparency and debate in decision making in sector	2.2	2.1	0.582	2.2	2.1	0.739
<i>C21</i> – Index score on satisfaction with overall QUALITY of dialogue, coordination, cooperation, and partnership between stakeholders for advancing policy reforms	1.7	1.9	0.758	1.8	1.8	0.908
Number of respondents (max.)	43	43	--	86	55	--

Source: Analysis of 2015 baseline survey module C.

Note: The fourth and sixth columns presents the p-values for the Kruskal-Wallis rank test of statistically significant differences between responses for the two sub-samples of baseline survey respondents and the entire sample. The mean assessment score is the average of the four assessment levels, assigning a score of 0 to ‘Completely disagree’, 1 to ‘Somewhat disagree’, 2 to ‘Somewhat agree’, and 3 to ‘Completely agree’. \* p<0.05, \*\* p<0.01, \*\*\* p<0.001.

