MAFAP is one of the most important programs monitoring agriculture policy in Africa today. By comprehensively tracking various aspects of the policy process – from expenditures to development outcomes – it informs agriculture policy in a unique way.

- Prabhu Pingali, Deputy Director of the Agriculture Development Division, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation

MAFAP is expected to become an element of the CAADP monitoring and evaluation framework.

- Martin Bwalya, Head of the NEPAD Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP)

As FAO sets new priorities and promotes new models for its policy assistance work, MAFAP’s experience and achievements will help us build sustainable policy monitoring systems at country, regional and global levels.

- Jomo Sundaram, Assistant Director General, FAO

The WAEMU commission considers MAFAP to be an essential part of its efforts to monitor and evaluate food and agriculture policies in the African Union. Indeed, MAFAP’s tools and methodology, and the institutional framework it promotes, allow us to better understand and compare member states’ policies. We especially appreciate the project’s results in Burkina Faso and Mali, and strongly urge FAO to support MAFAP and expand it to all countries in West Africa.

- Soumana Diallo, Permanent Secretary of the CRMV, Rural Development Department, West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU)

MAFAP IN A NUTSHELL

Monitoring African Food and Agricultural Policies (MAFAP)

FAO is working with national partners to set up a sustainable system for monitoring the impact of food and agricultural policies for the first time in Africa. Through MAFAP, FAO has developed common indicators for monitoring key commodities and public expenditure in agriculture. This helps policy makers and donors understand if policies are having a positive impact and compare results across countries and over time.

The challenge

After several decades of declining investment in agriculture and the recent crisis caused by high food prices, policymakers and investors are paying renewed attention to agriculture and food security. Interest is strong in developing countries, especially in Africa, where production has not kept pace with the rapidly growing demand for agricultural products.

Although decision makers recognize that appropriate policies and adequate public spending are critical for closing this gap, evidence to support decision making is often limited in Africa.

MAFAP’s contribution

Building a unique system for monitoring national food and agriculture policies

MAFAP produces a common set of indicators that can be used to measure the impact of policies on different commodities, countries and over time.

Meeting the needs of policy makers and donors who seek solid evidence about the impact of policies

Using comparable quantitative indicators makes it easier to understand the impact of policies.

Focusing on country ownership to make it sustainable

MAFAP is unique in its focus on country ownership and partnerships to establish a sustainable policy monitoring system. It collaborates closely with national institutions to develop capacity and make policy monitoring an integral part of their regular work.

Assessing the impact of national policies and how they compare with similar policies in other countries

Having common quantitative indicators increases transparency and makes it possible to compare policies across countries. Having objective results empowers people affected by policies, and farmers in particular, in their interaction with governments and donors.

Strengthening ongoing policy processes and initiatives

MAFAP builds on existing efforts at the regional level such as the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP). For example, it provides feedback on how well countries are fulfilling their “CAADP compacts” and if they are meeting CAADP targets for public expenditure in agriculture. This information feeds into policy dialogue at the regional level.

How MAFAP information is used

The system provides regularly updated analyses to African governments seeking to:

- improve policy frameworks for producers and consumers;
- prioritize investments to increase agricultural production and improve farmers’ incomes and food security;
- better target the share of the national budget devoted to agriculture and rural development; and
- more effectively allocate the agricultural budget’s resources.

Development partners can use this information to:

- improve policy advice; and
- identify investment opportunities that will have a positive impact on agricultural sector performance.

Where we work

MAFAP partner countries are Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Nigeria, Tanzania and Uganda.

MAFAP is supported by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and USAID.
MEASURING POLICY IMPACT

The challenge

Every country has policies which directly or indirectly affect agricultural development. The way these policies interact can support or hinder agricultural growth. However, until MAFAP was implemented, policy impact was not measured in a systematic way in most developing countries. Furthermore, different indicators were used. This made it difficult to compare results for diverse commodities, countries and time periods.

Measuring how much of the national budget is spent on agriculture and how it is composed

MAFAP measures how much governments spend to support agriculture. This helps countries keep track of progress towards meeting the Maputo declaration objective of investing ten percent of the national budget on agriculture. MAFAP also provides a detailed analysis of how much is spent on agricultural research, infrastructure, subsidies and other components of the agricultural budget.

Based on this information, and on policy impact analysis, policy makers will have a better understanding of where additional investment can generate the biggest impact.

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ASSESSING POLICY COHERENCE

The challenge

Agricultural development does not happen in a vacuum, but is affected by the overall policy environment. Even well designed policies may fail to work as expected if other policies contradict them. Furthermore, inadequate funding, weak infrastructure, lack of access to markets, and even corruption may reduce their effectiveness.

What MAFAP is doing

Through MAFAP, FAO tracks public expenditure related to agriculture and measures the impact of policies on the prices of key agricultural commodities.

MAFAP country reports provide policy makers with detailed assessments of:
• the impact of food and agricultural policies on producers;
• public expenditure to support food and agriculture; and
• whether these are consistent with other government policies and objectives.

Indeed, systematically comparing policy objectives, public expenditure and policy impact helps identify:
• opportunities for making policies more coherent; and
• priorities for investment.

Analyzing Policy Coherence in Tanzania

In Tanzania, many farmers have difficulty accessing markets because of a lack of rural roads and storage facilities. MAFAP price analysis shows that:
• difficulty in accessing markets and a lack of infrastructure are the main reasons farmers do not produce more; and
• if these constraints were adequately addressed, farmers would be able to obtain higher prices for their products.

However, MAFAP’s analysis of public expenditure in the agricultural sector shows that while only one percent of the agricultural budget is spent on non-farm agricultural infrastructure and two percent on storage, the biggest share of direct support to producers goes to input subsidies. These inconsistencies draw attention to key investment opportunities, and provide an important input into the dialogue between donors and the government.
Developing a system for monitoring food and agricultural policies in Africa

The challenge: building a sustainable system

In Africa, there is limited systematically produced information to help governments understand the impact of policies and public spending. MAFAP bridges this information gap by working closely with national partners to set up a sustainable system for monitoring the impact of food and agricultural policies.

How?
- a practical methodology and common indicators, adapted to the African context, for measuring the impact of policies on agriculture;
- in-depth analyses of the impact of policies on the prices of key commodities and on farmers, traders, consumers and other people involved in value chains; and
- detailed analyses of public expenditure in agriculture.

MAFAP also develops the capacity of national partners in policy monitoring and publishes in-depth country and commodity reports (see table below).

MAFAP Country and Commodity Reports

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In Burkina Faso, MAFAP works with the Rural Economics Division (DGPER) of the Ministry of Agriculture. DGPER, which is the division responsible for policy analysis, has been actively disseminating and raising awareness about MAFAP findings. Thanks to this, MAFAP results were presented at an international conference on agriculture, livestock and water. MAFAP results will provide key evidence to the discussion among policy makers from Burkina Faso and the region on:
- national, regional and international market access;
- agricultural value chain organization;
- policy coherence in Burkina Faso; and
- regional integration.
Comparing agricultural policies in Mali and Burkina Faso

In November 2012, researchers from Mali and Burkina Faso met with a team from FAO and a representative from the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU) to compare results from MAFAP analyses of commodities such as rice, cotton and sorghum. This led to a deeper understanding of the effects of agricultural policies within each country and in the region.

Papers comparing indicators for maize, rice and cotton in MAFAP countries have been prepared and will be available on the MAFAP website: www.fao.org/mafap.

“Only by having a common set of indicators, can we compare agricultural policies in different African countries.” MAFAP’s unique database makes it possible to compare the effects of agricultural policies in ten African countries over time and for more than twenty commodities.

• A consistent set of indicators makes it easier to understand how different policies work in various contexts. Policy makers from different countries will thus be able to learn from one another. In particular, MAFAP indicators make it possible to compare:
  • the effects of incentives and disincentives for a specific commodity over time and in different countries;
  • how incentives affect different commodities in the same country; and
  • public spending in the agricultural sector, and how it is broken down into various components such as agricultural research, subsidies, infrastructure, etc.

Figure 6. Share of food and agriculture budget expenditure on input subsidies (2006/07, 2008/10)

Kenya
Uganda
Tanzania
Burkina Faso
Mali

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50%
2006 - 2007 2008 - 2010

Between 2005 and 2010, four of the five countries analyzed reached the Maputo target. Indeed, the share of government public expenditure going to the agricultural sector in terms of actual spending substantially exceeded the ten percent target in Burkina Faso and Uganda.

*Data on actual spending in Kenya are not yet available and the figure is based on the allocated budget.

While farmers in Kenya and Burkina Faso have seen their prices move towards those that would prevail in the absence of price-distorting policies and with well-functioning markets, discrepancies have increased in Tanzania, Mali and Uganda.

In most countries, the policy environment and market structure have led to lower prices for producers. This is especially true where policies aim at lowering prices for consumers. However, some governments have tried to encourage maize producers by providing input subsidies.

With the exception of ad-hoc export bans, which lower prices that farmers receive, markets for specific commodities appear to function better in countries that are net exporters of those commodities. In some cases, excessive domestic transport costs and lack of storage facilities have led to domestic prices which are higher than export prices.

Figure 7. Policy support to maize producers through price incentives (2005/07, 2008/10)

Kenya
Uganda
Tanzania
Burkina Faso
Mali

-30% -20% -10% 0% 10% 20% 30% 40%
Nominal Rate of Protection
2005 - 2007 2008 - 2010

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COMPARING POLICY PERFORMANCE

WORKING WITH PARTNERS

The Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP)

MAFAP analyses have participating countries implementing specific elements of their CAADP compact. The CAADP compact is a contract between donors, national governments, and CAADP’s PSE advisory group. MAFAP identifies strategic opportunities for agricultural investment.

In particular, MAFAP looks at the impact of current policies and if they are coherent with the compact’s objectives. By keeping track of public expenditure on agriculture, MAFAP helps national governments understand if they are making progress in reaching the CAADP target of allocating ten percent of the national budget for agricultural development.

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)

The OECD is a leader in the policy monitoring field for developed countries. MAFAP has worked with the OECD to adapt its policy monitoring methodology for use in developing countries.

In particular, MAFAP uses an indicator called the Nominal Rate of Assistance (NRA) which tracks the amount and type of support African governments give to agriculture. The NRA is similar to OECD’s Producer Support Estimate (PSE).

Both indicators can be used to monitor levels of government support to agriculture and how it is composed. The NRA, as calculated by MAFAP, makes it possible to estimate: 
  • achieve its objectives for public expenditure; and
  • implementing policies that are congruent with national policy objectives and strategies such as the CAADP compacts.

Regional partners include:
  • The Planning and Coordinating Agency of the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD/NPCA)
  • The West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU)
  • The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)
  • The East African Community (ECA)

GLOBAL PARTNERS

The Northwest African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU)

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The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)
MAFAP provides decision makers with the evidence they need to implement more effective policies. In several countries, MAFAP has helped set up policy analysis units in the Ministry of Agriculture or related ministries. These units help facilitate a more direct dialogue between researchers, policy makers, farmer organizations, development partners and the private sector.

**Contributing to high level policy dialogue in Burkina Faso**

MAFAP has established a partnership with the Rural Economics Division of Burkina Faso’s Ministry of Agriculture (DGPER). By August 2012, initial results on the impact of policies for nine commodities were available. These caught the attention of decision makers, including the Minister of Agriculture. They expressed great interest in using MAFAP recommendations for policy making — especially for the rice sector. The results will be presented to other ministers and the parliament.

**African farmer networks use MAFAP results to advocate for food security and sustainable food systems**

Farmers are directly affected by food and agricultural policies. Therefore, their input is essential in making sure policies enhance agriculture production and farm incomes. One way in which farmers are using MAFAP analysis is to advocate for more effective policies. For instance, the Pan African Farmers Organization has used MAFAP results to build the case for more sustainable food systems. Examples of actions called for include:

- enabling small scale family farmers to seize opportunities arising from better connections to booming cities; and
- developing a market information system geared to rural producers’ needs.

A report was presented to the African Union and CAADP, and is expected to have an impact on policies regarding sustainable food systems.

**MAFAP and its partners supply vital evidence to regional and national policy dialogue by regularly publishing:**

- commodity reports for key agricultural products;
- in-depth country reports which analyze prices, public expenditure and policy coherence; and
- policy briefs.

“MAFAP provides valuable information on the impact of our agricultural policies and the effectiveness of our agricultural development strategy. MAFAP's information will certainly strengthen our ongoing policy dialogue with farmers and other stakeholders”

- Dr. Emmanuel M. Achayo, Director of Policy and Planning, Ministry of Agriculture, Food Security and Cooperatives, United Republic of Tanzania

**Our Vision for the Future**

**Increase the number of MAFAP countries in Africa**

FAO seeks to increase the number of African countries covered by MAFAP from 10 to 23. It seeks to progressively include all countries belonging to three regional economic organizations (ECOWAS, EAC and SADC). This will further support regional policy dialogue.

**Expand MAFAP beyond Africa**

Expanding MAFAP beyond Africa will create opportunities for sharing and comparing policy experiences from different regions. This will make it possible to learn about effective solutions to similar problems. It will be easier to foresee, based on experiences in other countries, the likely impact of food and agriculture policies.

**Develop the skills of national professionals in partnership with universities**

FAO will work with partner universities to develop curricula that build policy analysis and monitoring skills and increase the number of qualified graduates able to apply the MAFAP methodology.

**Invest in making MAFAP part of the global policy dialogue**

MAFAP’s methodology and common indicators make it possible to compare policy impact across countries. In the future, FAO will seek opportunities for incorporating MAFAP findings into global fora in a systematic way.

**Deepen analysis and include additional topics**

Since co-existing policies directly affect each other, FAO will release additional MAFAP indicators which show the combined effects of policies on key inputs and agricultural products. MAFAP will also look at how incentives affect producers and consumers to make sure food security is not compromised. Moreover, going beyond price analysis, MAFAP will look at how incentives affect farmers’ decisions about what to produce.

**FARMLANDS AGRICULTURAL POLICIES**

**FOOD AND AGRICULTURAL POLICIES**

**We envision a self-sustaining policy monitoring system based on:**

- Country Ownership
- Highly Skilled National Professionals
- Targeted Partnerships
- Systematic and Comparable Monitoring
- International Peer Reviews of Technical Work
CONTACTS

Website: www.fao.org/mafap
Email: mafap@fao.org
Mailing Address:
FAO Headquarters
Viale delle Terme di Caracalla
00153 Rome, Italy

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