



Independent Technical Review of the Liberian
Agricultural Investment Plan (LASIP II) 2018-2022

LIBERIA

Final Review Report

Johannesburg, South Africa

September 2019

Table of Contents

1	CAADP Independent Technical Review Report
---	-------------------------------------------------

Acknowledgments

The African Union would like to express deepest appreciation to the IFPRI / ReSAKSS, for dedicating time to review key components of the draft LASIP II document despites receiving the request for support at rather short notice.

Disclaimer

This report does not reflect the official opinion of any of the institutions whose representatives were involved in the review exercise. It is rather their expert opinion resulting from collective reflection on the subject that has been captured here to support finalization of the LASIP II of the Republic of Liberia.

Review Team

Dr Augustin Wambo Yamdjeu (Team Leader), Dr Bernice Mclean and Mr Erick Sile (African Union Development Agency-AUDA-NEPAD), Dr Laila Lokosang (African Union Commission), Dr Manson Nwafor (ReSAKSS)

1 CAADP Independent Technical Review Report

1.1 Purpose of the Review

The Independent Technical Review follows upon completion of the formulation of the National Agriculture Investment Plan (NAIP) or Regional Agriculture Investment Plan (RAIP) and preferably occurs before the Business Meeting as a critical milestone in the operational implementation of the country or regional compact and investment plan. The Independent Technical Review is undertaken as a part of a due diligence process to ascertain that the plan comprehensively addresses agricultural transformation and sustained inclusive agricultural growth for the country or region. Recommendations of the Technical Review are subsequently presented to

Coming to LASIP II, I find the identified components rationally identified. However, I feel that the Plan has left out some pertinent intervention areas without which it would not have “worn the right boots for climbing the rough cliff” on the journey towards achieving the Malabo 2025 and SDG 2030 targets! I outline this missing links as follows:

Component 1: Food and Nutrition Security

There is need to include a strategy for improving access to energy, linking with the energy sector. Oftentimes access energy is often neglected in food insecurity discussions, but it is one of the major factors affecting food consumption, and even processing (drying, smoking and cooking). Food may be available, but making to the table might be curtailed by lack of cooking energy. Food losses is also significantly caused by lack of access, availability and affordability.

AU has decided that home-

implemented, there will be substantial improvement in them and in the general policy environment.

In terms of specific policy changes, the LASIP II has equally planned on addressing a number of policy and legislative issues in the planned activities. It is impressive that a number of policy stocktaking or reviews are planned. This shows that the government is keenly aware of the role the policy environment plays in moulding outcomes. While it would have been better to condu

3.2.1 Viability of implementat

the materials have been harnessed and fed into the current version of the LASIP II. Here is an important question for which a clear-cut answer is hard to find throughout the LASIP II document: what is the nature and role of the *Liberia Agriculture Transformation Agenda (LATA)* in between LASIP 1 and LASIP 2?

3.3.3 Links with existing sector programmes/projects

See section right above for reference.

3.3.4 Monitoring and evaluation framework

The results framework and M&E indicators show that adequate plans have been made for Monitoring and evaluation. The document indicates that a detailed Liberia Agriculture Monitoring and Evaluation System (LAGMIS) has been developed with the support of USAID. However, it is not clear how functional the system presently is. It is hoped that with funding the already created system will address the needs of the LASIP's implementation.

The strategic/results framework for the LASIP II shows that careful thought has been given to achieving the food and nutrition security goals of Liberia in line with the areas of focus encouraged by the ECOWAP/CAADP. If the results in the framework is achieved, reasonable changes will be observed in a wide area of issues in food and nutrition security in Liberia. However, the absence of growth and poverty reduction targets makes it challenging to monitor high level goals achievement. Only commodity targets are indicated in the plan. This should be addressed.

3.3.5 Risk assessment

This could be further detailed to explore the main risk that could prevent implementation of the LASIP II from achieving its main targets in a manner that is consistent with the Malabo Declaration and the National development Plan (NDP) which seems to be missing here.

4 Conclusion

From the review of the present LASIP II document, besides detailed recommendations made in sections of the report, the following concluding remarks could be arrived at:

5.1. Reading through the assessment, the outbreak of Ebola set aside, one gets a sense that implementation of the LASIP I was rather challenged by some many factors; hence achievements are rather limited. It our hope such a quick summary is accurate.

5.2. The document is well written and easy to read and understand. However, some sentences and segments are incomplete or repeating. A thorough editing of the whole document is therefore recommended.

5.3. An Executive Summary is missing. Having one could make reading and understanding of the document even much easier.

5.4. The document needs to have better-structured presentation of the methodology mobilized in its formulation. As of now, such aspect appears to be too lightly presented in the document.

5.5. The review observed that building capacity within Ministry of Agriculture to drive implementation of the LASIP should be seen as urgent.

5.6. It is critical that the country fully embraces multisector approach that the Malabo declaration is calling for.

5.7. Throughout the document, as missing element of the analysis is the “HOW”. In as much as there is some good level of clarity on what has to be done and why, one is not always sure HOW exactly the LASIP II document “intends to things and using which instruments.” It is therefore highly recommended that the CAA

5 Annexes

Independent Technical Review of National Agricultural Investment Plans Concept Note and Terms of Reference

November 10, 2017

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance for the review of National Agricultural Investment Plans (NAIPs) and for the Business Meeting to be held after the NAIP review. The document discusses the objectives and outcomes of each of these steps to enable the country to move rapidly towards implementation of quality agriculture programmes. This document elaborates a common framework to rally local and international expertise and development partner and private sector support to country CAADP processes in liaison with the African Union Commission (AUC), the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency (NPCA) and Regional Economic Communities (RECs).

The technical independent review note consists of three sections: the first outlines the scope, content, objectives and outcomes of the technical review of the NAIP; the second provides guidelines for the Business Meeting to be held following the NAIP review to finalize the expenditure / spending plan for the NAIP; and the third discusses ongoing efforts to strengthen CAADP implementation at the country level and ensure a rigorous, evidence-based policymaking process.

1. Technical Review of the National Agricultural Investment Plan: what it stands for

1.1 Goals and Outcomes of the Technical Review

Once the National Agriculture Investment Plan is ready, the Government will make available copy

Table 1: Undertaking the Technical Review of the National Agriculture Investment Plan and Programmes

Activity/Outcomes	Govt Responsibilities (Country CAADP Team)	Other Lead Players	Timeline Date limit	Remarks
Technical Review of the National Agriculture Investment Plan				
The review of the investment plan (or due diligence process) would be conducted by a review team led and managed by AUC and NPCA in liaison with the REC concerned	Govt lead [verify]			

The basic approach of the review consists of assessing proposed actions and outcomes in the programmes against CAADP / Malabo principles and country specific targets, objectives, practices, and approaches stated in the NAIP or defined during the analytical support for NAIP design. The criteria are measures of the consistency or lack thereof of the programs with the above indicators. The main components and tools for the review include the following:

1. Alignment with the CAADP and Malabo principles, values and targets: The Country CAADP Implementation Guidelines under the Malabo Declaration setting out the vision, principles, core strategy elements, and impact expectations;
2. Coherence and consistency with transformation, growth and poverty reduction objectives and targets: The country Goals and Milestones Report defining the long term agricultural productivity, growth, and trade performance goals, and the related poverty outcomes;
3. Embodiment of technical best practices and CAADP / Malabo priority areas/issues: The country Policy and Program Opportunities document laying out the key strategic issues, core program elements, and best practices;
4. Operational quality and implementation readiness: The country JSR assessment and reports, Biennial Review (BR) report, and country Status Assessment and Profile and associated lessons on the country's current agricultural performance, agricultural funding landscape, policy review and dialogue systems, etc.;
- 5.

This component of the review seeks to find out where clearer definition and understanding of the strategic issues and better integration of best practices can help improve the design of the plans and maximize the chances of success. The review will be guided by the analysis of best practices, policy opportunities and recommended actions in the country Policy and Program Opportunities and Best Practices Report.

Component 4: Coordination capacities and implementation readiness

	made to enhance the alignment with CAADP and coherence of the plan.	
2	<p>Existence of sound expenditure plan</p> <p>Purpose: To assess the aggregate feasibility of the incremental financing proposed, identify sources of existing or pipeline financing available, and establish the scale of the financing gap.</p> <p>Approach: The scale of incremental financing should be assessed against:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current development and recurrent budget commitment and budget outcomes Overall budget scale and financing against Maputo commitment (10%) <p>The financing plan should be comprehensive so that it covers both on- and off-budget financing sources, both core sector and related sector budgets, and traditional and non-traditional donors.</p> <p>Costing of programmes should be assessed by reviewing a detailed breakdown of incremental costs based on unit costs where available and estimates. Results-based budgeting should link expenditures to outcome and outputs contained within a results or logical framework.</p> <p>Importance: High</p> <p>Recommendation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) If the projected size of incremental funding is greater than indicated by the IFPRI analysis, and/or represents an increase of more than 30% over existing budgets, even if less than the 10% target, the scale of the investment plan should merit detailed review. ii) The expenditure plan should clearly show all known financing sources with a full breakdown by donors or government source. It is not necessary to demonstrate how the gap will be financed at the review stage but clear linkages should be made with prioritization of expenditures. iii) A full PER will be a pre-requisite to implementing a SWAp or PBA arrangement and should be a core part of the review process. If no in-depth PER is available, a rapid budget assessment focusing on core PER elements can be useful in the review, in particular an analysis of budget outcomes in the sector in recent years. PERs should be fully integrated into budget planning and monitoring process and undertaken on a regular basis (yearly if possible). 	<p>National budget documents</p> <p>Budget outcome reports</p> <p>Estimate of Maputo commitment scale</p> <p>IFPRI analysis</p> <p>Donor assistance strategies</p>
3	<p>Prioritisation within the investment plan</p> <p>Purpose: To demonstrate that the sequencing of investment in the sector and within individual programmes has been properly considered.</p> <p>Approach: Presentation of different levels of priority (e.g. high, medium, low) in the investment plan with a clear explanation of why the particular level of priority has been assigned, together with</p>	<p>Implementation plan</p>

	assessment has been carried out, its conclusions and recommendations should be cross-checked against proposed implementation arrangements and measures to strengthen identified weaknesses. If no adequate institutional assessment has been carried out, the plan should include proposals and a timeline for undertaking such an assessment.	
7	<p>Stakeholder consultation</p> <p>Purpose: To assess the extent to which the investment plan is likely to have the full support and ownership of the main stakeholders.</p> <p>Approach: The investment planning process should document the scope and form of stakeholder consultations that took place.</p> <p>Importance: Medium</p> <p>Recommendation: Although stakeholder consultation is built into the roundtable process, it is crucial that this continues throughout the investment plan formulation process as well. Any indication that the private sector has not played an active role should raise questions about the capacity of the plan to mobilise private investment in the sector. CSOs – especially farmer organisations - should have been engaged in investment planning both nationally and at local level.</p>	<p>Investment plan process documents</p> <p>CSO consultation proceedings</p> <p>Chamber of Commerce reports</p> <p>CNC Report</p>
8	<p>Inter-ministerial collaboration and coordination</p> <p>Purpose: To identify constraints to implementing a sector investment plan that incorporates infrastructure and services that support agriculture.</p> <p>Approach: Review existing inter-ministerial collaboration mechanisms and proposals to strengthen them.</p> <p>Importance: Medium</p> <p>Recommendation: Inter-ministerial collaboration is difficult to achieve in any administration. The group of ministries and agencies critical to agriculture should be identified and collaboration mechanisms assessed.</p>	<p>Institutional assessment report</p>
9	<p>Status of donor harmonization</p> <p>Purpose: To determine the likelihood that donor assistance will be effectively coordinated and that planning, financing and reporting processes are simplified.</p> <p>Approach: The commitments made by donors in the Compact should be unpacked through extensive discussions with the DPWG.</p> <p>Importance: Medium</p> <p>Recommendation: Two main scenarios need to be assessed: If government decides to formulate a SWAp for the sector, a clear indication is needed of the state of readiness of donors to pool resources and harmonize processes in support of the SWAp. Mechanisms for accommodating donor funding outside the SWAp must also be explicit.</p>	<p>Consultation with government and DPWG</p>

	<p>If a SWAp is not proposed, individual donors are likely to retain their separate identities and processes, but it is important to determine the extent to which they are prepared to adhere to the agreed programmes and activities, to facilitate joint programme assessments or appraisals, and to fund "on budget".</p> <p>If the DPWG does not operate on a regular basis or has important partners absent, the capacity of the government to prepare an investment plan with genuine ownership by stakeholders and to support harmonized external assistance will be in doubt.</p>	
--	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--

10

	many cases but an indication might be obtained by extrapolating from recent patterns of investment.	
--	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--

Technical criteria		Information source
12	<p>Consistency with Transformation, growth and poverty reduction goals</p> <p>Purpose: To ensure that the investment plan is consistent with the sector growth targets established and will achieve the expected impact on poverty reduction.</p> <p>Approach: Estimates of rates of productivity and income growth included in each major programme, together with clear indication of target groups and the impact of the investment on income.</p> <p>Importance: High</p> <p>Recommendation: If any of the major programmes is unable to demonstrate a credible projection of productivity growth and rates of incremental income growth for small farmers and rural enterprises, the programme should be seriously questioned.</p>	Goals and Milestones Report
13	<p>Adoption of policy and programme best practices</p> <p>Purpose: To determine whether the investment plan and its component investment programmes and policies adhere to recognized best practices.</p> <p>Approach: Assess</p>	

	programmes, building upon those programmes and projects that have demonstrated positive impact on growth and poverty reduction.	
15	<p>Monitoring and evaluation framework</p> <p>Purpose: To assess the scope, methodology and implementation modalities of the M&E framework</p> <p>Approach: Detailed brainstorming around the investment plan results framework and the feasibility of the indicators proposed. Review of alignment with RF. Assess proposals to conduct baseline surveys and the adequacy of the data gathering system.</p> <p>Importance: High</p> <p>Recommendation: An incomplete M&E framework suggests that the results framework itself has not been thoroughly thought through.</p>	<p>Investment plan results framework</p> <p>CAADP Results Framework</p>
16	<p>Risk assessment</p> <p>Purpose: To be able to assess the likely impact on programme outcomes if certain critical assumptions are not met and to identify potential mitigation measures.</p> <p>Approach: Risk assessment is a tool for identifying the consequences associated with failures in achieving specific programme objectives, outputs, reforms, cost escalation or other changes. It facilitates critical thinking about k</p>	