

# Agri-Food Policy Advice in GIZ projects



Cases from Africa, Asia and Europe

As a federal owned enterprise, GIZ supports the German Government in achieving its objectives in the field of international cooperation for sustainable development.

**Published by:**

Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

**Registered offices**

Bonn and Eschborn, Germany

Dag-Hammarskjöld-Weg 1 - 5

65760 Eschborn, Germany

T +49 6196 79-0

F +49 6196 79-11 15

E [info@giz.de](mailto:info@giz.de)

I [www.giz.de](http://www.giz.de)

**Author:**

Julia Reimers, Bonn/Hohenheim

**Co-Author:**

Nuray Duman, Hohenheim

**Editor:**

Dominik Fortenbacher, Eschborn

**Design and layout:**

The-1st Design Company Limited, Bangkok, Thailand

**Photocredits:**

@GIZ / Joerg Boethling

@GIZ / Martin Godau

@GIZ / Ursula Meissner

@GIZ / Dirk Ostermeier

@GIZ / Britta Radike

@GIZ / Manfred Wehrmann

**Maps:**

The maps printed here are intended only for information purposes and in no way constitute recognition under international law of boundaries and territories. GIZ accepts no responsibility for these maps being entirely up to date, correct or complete. All liability for any damage, direct or indirect, resulting from their use is excluded.

Bonn und Eschborn, May 2021

# FOREWORD

Rural development and agriculture – as the economic engine in rural areas – play important roles in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set by the Agenda 2030 in many partner countries. Thus, German development cooperation has prioritized agriculture and rural development as key intervention areas in the Federal German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Developments' (BMZ) 2030 reform process. In the field of rural development and agriculture, many international organisations and the projects they implement, are often focusing on microlevel interventions and directly target small-scale farmers without adequately taking into consideration institutional structures and policymaking processes. However, when implementation on microlevel is not linked to policy advice on meso and macro level, the impact of projects in the long run is often not guaranteed and potentials for structural changes, from which the entire sector can benefit are often not utilized.

This shows the importance of a coherent agri-food policy: It combines sector-specific measures to create an enabling environment and provides incentives to accomplish many goals simultaneously, among them for instance productivity, employment, food security, climate change mitigation and adaptation. The intersection of agri-food policy with other policy areas makes it even more relevant.

Policy makers cannot achieve policy objectives alone – cooperation with the private sector, civil society and research institutions for an efficient design and coherent implementation is essential. However, in reality there is often a tendency for agri-cultural and rural development policies to be driven by clientelism or populist purposes. Therefore, GIZ aims at advising policymakers on the design and implementation of targeted and efficient agricultural and rural development policies, as well as relevant stakeholder processes. Analysing policy options (ex-ante) und evaluating (ex-post), political measures provide governments with the necessary evidence to ensure that their policies are well targeted and effective.

To learn more about how agri-food policy advice is delivered by GIZ and to identify key criteria of success, three GIZ Sector Networks (SNRD Africa, SENECA SEDE and SNRD Asia and the Pacific) joined forces in conducting a standardised query complemented by case studies covering countries in Africa, Asia and Europe.

The review of principles and good practices of agri-food policy advice aims at further improving GIZ approaches and increasing awareness of projects, partners and clients regarding the importance and effectiveness of agri-food policy advice in facilitating structural changes in the development agendas of our partner countries.

There is no one-size-fits-all-solution, as sustainable progress in each partner country requires finetuned interventions that target underlining and deep-rooted causes, which are inhibiting development. Nevertheless, there are lessons to be learned and experiences to be shared from past and ongoing projects. We hope this paper offers useful guidance and meaningful insights for our colleagues, and to support projects in achieving their full potential in fostering sustainable agricultural and rural development.

We would like to thank the experts from the University of Hohenheim and all colleagues involved for their valuable contributions.

## **For the sector networks working groups:**

**Lisa Faust**, SNRD Asia and the Pacific – Working Group Agriculture

**Theresa Kinkese**, SNRD Africa – Working Group Policy Processes in Agriculture and Rural Development (PPARD)

**Benjamin Mohr**, SENECA SEDE – Working Group Rural Economic Development (RED)

May 2021





# CONTENT

LIST OF ACRONYMS	6
1. Background to this Paper	7
2. Methodology	8
3. Agri-food Policy Advice	9
3.1 Why agri-food policy is important and what it entails	10
3.2 Dimensions of the term “policy”	11
3.2.1 Policy: creating content in a step-by-step process	11
3.2.2 Politics: actors involved in policy processes	12
3.2.3 Polity: institutional set-up for implementing a policy	13
3.3 Policy advice	13
3.4 How the projects define agri-food policy advice	14
4. Survey Results	16
5. Case Studies	24
5.1 Step 1 and 2 – Problem identification and agenda setting: remodelling the African cashew sector	26
5.2 Step 2 – Agenda setting on national level: enabling evidence-based decision-making in Namibia	30
5.3 Step 2 – Agenda setting on regional level: how the Western Balkans prepare for EU accession	33
5.4 Step 3 – Policy formulation: rewriting national Kenyan policies for youth employment at district level	38
5.5 Step 3 and 4 – Policy formulation and implementation: inclusively preparing the Albanian agri-food sector for EU accession	41
5.6 Step 4 – Policy implementation: making Myanmar’s agri-food sector fit for competing in global markets	44
5.7 Step 4 – Policy implementation: innovating the cotton and wheat value chain in Uzbekistan using the “cluster approach”	47
5.8 Step 5 – Policy evaluation: evaluating Africa’s progress in developing the agri-food sector	50
6. Lessons Learnt	54
6.1 Lessons learnt for policy advice along the policy cycle	55
6.2 Lessons learnt for the project set-up	58
6.3 Lessons learnt for the team and qualities of “the” policy advisor	59
7. Recommendations	60
8. Annex	62

## LIST OF ACRONYMS



ACA	African Cashew Association
AKIS	Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation System
ATPI	Agricultural Trade Policy Institute (Namibia)
AUDA-NEPAD	African Union Development Agency
AU-DREA	African Union Commission Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture
BMZ	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development
CAADP	Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy (EU)
CAP-F	Country Agribusiness Partnership Framework
CICC	Consultative International Cashew Council
ComCashew	Competitive Cashew Initiative
ECAP	Support to Evidence-Based and Coordinated Agri-Trade Policy Development in Namibia (project Namibia)
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EU	European Union
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IFP	Investment Facilitation Platform
IPARD	Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance in Rural Development
ITR	Independent Technical Review
NAIP	National Agricultural Investment Plan
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NUST	Namibian University of Science and Technology
PPARD	Policy Processes for Agriculture and Rural Development (working group in the SNRD Africa)
REAWG	Regional Expert Advisory Working Groups
SAFI	Sustainable Agricultural Development and Food Quality Initiative (project Myanmar)
SRD	Sustainable Rural Development (project Albania)
SEDRA	Support to Economic Diversification of Rural Areas (project Western Balkans)
SENECA SEDE	Sector Network Europe, Caucasus, Central Asia and Afghanistan for Sustainable Economic Development and Employment
SNRD	Sector Network Rural Development
SWG RRD	Standing Working Group on Regional Rural Development (Western Balkans)

# 1. BACKGROUND TO THIS PAPER



Although agri-food policy advice is regarded as an important task and plays a major role in many GIZ projects, there is currently no overview of projects which deal with the topic, nor exists a systematic review of concrete activities, lessons learnt, indicators used, or outputs achieved. This paper aims at shedding light at these issues in order to facilitate learning among GIZ implemented projects but also in order to raise awareness for the importance of agri-food policy advisory services amongst GIZ clients.

Summarised in more detail, the main goals were:

- **Understanding the context within which agri-food policy advice takes place:** Political set-ups are sensitive and differ across countries. Within each of these individual set-ups, policy advisory services are only requested and accepted by the political partner if there exists a relationship of trust, based on a common history between the advising agency and the partner country. In our understanding, it is important to understand these conditions for (re-)designing projects and manage expectations accordingly.
- **Assessing at which steps of the policy cycle advisory services are usually provided:** The policy cycle is a recognized theoretical and analytical tool with which policy processes can be clustered in five different steps, from "problem definition" up to "policy evaluation". It can be applied regardless of the type of political system, background or time and is able to uncover gaps within the process. In our understanding, each step requires a slightly different competence profile. Hence the analysis may allow for uncovering needs for capacity building in process management and provides potential starting points for mutual learning among projects.
- **Assessing activities commonly implemented and instruments regularly recommended:** The policy cycle also allows for a comparison of activities, instruments, and resources used within policy processes. It allows for identifying needs for technical capacity building.
- **Measuring and evaluating outputs and outcomes:** Here two different effects have to be distinguished. Firstly, how and by whom is the effect of the policy itself on the (agricultural) sector measured? An analysis which lies beyond the scope of this paper. And secondly, how and by whom are outputs and outcomes of policy advice on a policy measured? This latter analysis allows for identifying systemic gaps in monitoring policy advisory processes.
- **Formulating lessons learnt, both positive and negative:** What were challenges faced and what were reasons for failure? Were these used to initiate change processes? Can parameters for successful policy advice be identified? What is needed for further improving the quality of advisory services, both in and outside GIZ?

## 2. METHODOLOGY



The analysis in this paper followed the subsequent four steps.

### Step 1

An online questionnaire was sent out to members of the working group “Policy Processes for Agriculture and Rural Development” (PPARD) in the Sector Network Rural Development (SNRD) Africa, the working group “Agriculture” in the SNRD Asia as well as to projects with a rural development marker of one or higher in the Sector Network Europe, Caucasus, Central Asia and Afghanistan for Sustainable Economic Development and Employment” (SENECA SEDE). The questionnaire took around 20 minutes time. Around 20 projects took part (see chapter 4 for results).

### Step 2

Based on the results from step 1, eight projects were chosen for a more in-depth analysis. The main criteria for their selection were:

- **Criteria 1: high relevance of policy advice** (self-assessed by the projects with at least “medium importance” or higher).
- **Criteria 2: variety in geographic distribution and project set-up** (bilateral projects in Africa, South East Asia and Central Europe as well as bilaterally, regionally and continentally implementing projects).
- **Criteria 3: variety in the technical foci of policy advice** and the overall emphasis of the projects.
- **Criteria 4: variety in the scope of advice** (i.e. supra-macro level, regional level and bilateral level).
- **Criteria 5: variety in the managerial level of advice** (e.g. advising ministerial level or micro level).
- **Criteria 6: projects whose policy advice was** already evaluated to some degree.
- **Criteria 7: variety in political instruments used** in policy advice.

### Step 3

After the casestudies were identified, project staff were interviewed **during two personal online interviews**. The first interview (around 30 to 60 minutes) was intended to get an initial overview of the project and to share relevant documents. The second interview (around 90 to 120 minutes) was based on a standardised questionnaire, analysing different project parameters in line with the aims of the study (see chapter 1).

### Step 4

After the 16 interviews were carried out, about 35 hours of audio files were transcribed, coded and systematised, analysed and summarised in this paper.



### 3. AGRI-FOOD POLICY ADVICE



## 3.1 Why agri-food policy is important and what it entails

**Firstly**, favourable political frame conditions are a precondition for investments and growth in the agri-food sector and rural development and are hence a precondition for necessary production increases and the creation of employment.

A favourable investment climate is fostered by peace and security, secure property rights, macroeconomic stability, a low inflation, a competitive exchange rate, low corruption and a fair tax system that reinvests revenues in public goods (infrastructure, education/ extension, energy, etc.). To achieve an ideal situation such as this, the legislature (the parliament) defines the legal frameworks and, together with the judiciary, determines the level of legal certainty (e.g. land rights or contractual transactions), while the government (the executive branch) formulates the overall economic, educational, environmental and socio-political strategy, identifies respective instruments, allocates budget for implementation and finally identifies suited indicators and manages the monitoring of their achievement.

Formulating a sustainable and successful long-term national agricultural strategy as a subset of global, regional, national and economic objectives is a particular challenge. Agriculture is often described as 'the awkward sector': it interfaces with almost all other sectors (e.g. trade, industry, and financial services, health and social security, environment and natural resources) and has to fulfil a multitude of expectations under relatively difficult conditions (e.g. climate change, inflexibility under rapid change). At the same time, agricultural institutions often have little political clout and budget.

**Secondly**, external negative effects (e. g. of agricultural production) must usually be addressed by public authorities as markets mostly don't remunerate private efforts of environmental and natural resource protection and/ or animal welfare.

External effects occur when the production or consumption decisions of an actor effect the utility of another actor in an unintended way and no compensation (payment) is made. In agriculture, these effects are for example linked to highly intensive conventional agriculture, and/ or the improper use of farm inputs. Over the years, this has led to an over-exploitation of natural resources causing irreparable damage in many parts of the world, including the increase of the occurrence of extreme weather events and rising temperatures that affect vegetation zones or the incidence of pests, diseases, and zoonosis.

Possible policy interventions to internalise these externalities related to natural resources are:

- specification of property rights,
- environmental taxes and subsidies as economic incentives,
- environmental regulations, or
- cap-and-trade schemes, e.g. issuing transferable emission permits.

**Thirdly**, an efficiently functioning agricultural sector is a prerequisite for social stability and human health, for enough diverse and nutritious food and hence requires special political attention.

A functioning agricultural sector fulfils important services to society: It is responsible for the provision of enough, diverse and nutritious food, it is often the main source of income for the rural population, and it considerably relieves national social systems due to the importance of family structures. Nonetheless, the agricultural sector often suffers from a lack of prestige and innovation, leading to rural exodus and an ageing rural population in parts the world. It is often the weakest link in food systems, prone to high risk and with low access to market information and the least favourable bargaining position. This often results in a very low income, further increasing social inequalities between rural and urban areas. These issues have to be politically addressed to maintain social stability.

## 3.2 Dimensions of the term “policy”

Tackling the challenges named above is a complex task and poses enormous challenges to policy makers and their advisors. In order to understand the political system within which they operate, it is important to distinguish the following “dimensions” of the term “policy”:

- **Policy** means the normative, and topical content of a specific policy (see chapter 3.3).
- **Politics** describes the process of political decision making, including the political personnel, their interactions, the negotiation of compromises as well as personal interests (see chapter 3.4).

- **Polity** is the structural dimension of the term policy and refers to institutions, norms and the constitution that underlies political decision making (see chapter 3.5).

The dimensions of the term “policy” will be explained in some more detail in the subsequent chapters.

### 3.2.1 Policy: creating content in a step-by-step process

The term “policy” refers to the content-related dimension of policy. It includes political aims and objectives, e.g. in the form of party and governmental programmes.

The different steps necessary to create a policy can be described by “the policy cycle”, a recognized tool of analysis in political science. It starts with the definition of a problem and ends with the termination of a policy (see figure 1).

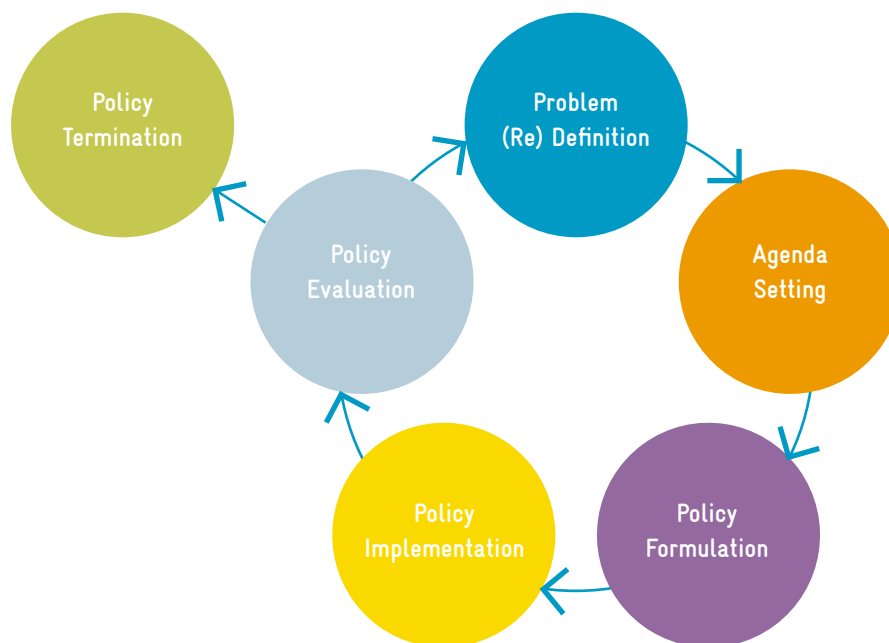


Figure 1: The policy cycle

Source: Author's creation based on policy literature.

### Phase 1: Problem Definition

Stakeholders involved must understand the economic context in which they operate. Based on this understanding, challenges in the scope of influence can then be identified.

### Phase 2: Agenda Setting

From the number of challenges defined, issues that should be addressed by a certain policy are identified. Topics can either be initiated by the government itself, by non-governmental actors or by external events that require political action. Political willingness is a prerequisite.

### Phase 3: Policy Formulation

Political objectives are defined, alternative options are developed, and binding decisions are made. This step usually results in the formulation of strategic plans and papers.

If new ideas and actors are available, this may result in substantial change, if neither are present, it usually only results in “cosmetic” changes to a running system.

### Phase 4: Policy Implementation

Instruments are implemented and laws and regulations, that define the implementation pathway are written, usually with support of the administration. At this stage, tools for impact analysis should already be kept in mind.

### Phase 5: Policy Evaluation

Direct and indirect impact analysis of the activities that were induced by the policy and government action are ensured. Governments must ask themselves whether or not their policy was successful and what has changed after its implementation. It is important to think of the data necessary and available as well as of suitable indicators.

### Phase 6: Policy Termination or Problem Redefinition

Are feedback loops foreseen? Is modification possible, if yes, at what political costs? What is the exit strategy?

---

## 3.2.2 Politics: actors involved in policy processes

The term “politics” describes all individual and collective actors that are involved in policy processes: the government, political parties, voters and advocacy groups.

**Government, politicians and their respective advisors** have to be well equipped with technical knowledge in numerous scientific disciplines in order to tackle the challenges and tasks previously described. However, they are not necessarily led by evidence and rational choice alone. Apart from research-based evidence and information, additional factors play an important role: According to the latest policy research, decisions that policy makers take also depend on their self-interest (e.g. to be re-elected), their beliefs and ideals (e.g. religious or political ideals) as well as on the influence of organised interest/ advocacy or lobby groups. Depending on the politician, each factor may be weighted to a different extent.

Apart from technical knowledge, it is important for policy makers to have managerial skills to negotiate compromises between different stakeholders and actors.

**Voters** tend to reward the achievement of short-term rather than long-term goals. Politicians on the other hand usually behave as ‘utility maximisers’ and hence tend to reject measures that would appear to be detrimental to voters in the short term, even if they are necessary for overall societal development in the long run.

**Interest/ advocacy or lobby groups** are usually politically, religiously, socially, morally and/ or economically motivated and try to achieve their aims through directly or indirectly influencing politicians or voters.

### 3.2.3 Polity: institutional set-up for implementing a policy

The term “polity” describes the institutional (e.g. constitutionally created) set of norms and its resulting orders, political procedures, etc. (e.g. voting rules).

The **legislative power** is usually held by the elected parliament which is accountable towards their voters/constituents and proposes and agrees on legislation. The **executive power**, the government, is elected out of the respective political party or parties, that have been voted for by the people, based on their political program. It proposes legislation, in certain cases even agrees on it without the parliament's inclusion. Decisions are implemented by the public administration (ministries, competent authorities etc.). The **judiciary power** is the system of courts that interprets and applies laws in the name of the state.

---

## 3.3 Policy Advice

Policy advice can be differentiated by the actor it is given from: academia, interest groups other government agencies or, like in this case, development agencies, such as GIZ. These groups themselves have different interests: While academia is believed to intend “good policies”, other government agencies usually aim at increasing or at least remaining their current share of competencies. Interest groups usually advocate for their own advantages. Development agencies, including GIZ, also advocate according to their specific interests, for their belief of what is best for another country or region, based on “European values” and experiences they have made in the past.

Policy advice can be differentiated by different types of advice:

- **Institutional and/or organizational advice and capacity development:** improving institutional set-ups, knowledge and competencies, processes, management of finances, etc.
- **Technical advice and capacity development:** regarding technical questions (e.g. carrying capacity of infrastructure).
- **Design advice and capacity development:** design of policies, new ideas and approaches, inclusiveness, alternative designs, use of instruments, etc.
- **Competitive advice and capacity development:** advise on political competition, etc.

Along the policy cycle it can include the following direct or indirect activities:

- **Step 1 Problem Definition:** organising learning events, study tours, exchange between stakeholders, providing technical expertise, etc.
- **Step 2 Agenda Setting:** organising and/ or financing exchange formats between stakeholders, lobbying activities, empowering civil society, providing technical expertise, etc.
- **Step 3 Policy Formulation:** directly assisting in the drafting process of policies, rules and regulations or commenting on respective documents, financing experts, conducting trainings for the drafting of policy documents, conducting or financing in-depth political economic analysis as a basis for policy documents, etc.
- **Step 4 Policy Implementation:** advising the use of certain instruments for implementation (e.g. an export tax), directly implementing certain instruments for achieving the objectives of a policy (e.g. updating extension curricula), piloting implementation of policies on small scale to provide evidence or building institutional capacity, etc.
- **Step 5 Policy Evaluation:** assisting with the formulation of certain indicators, financing external experts, monitoring activities, etc.



“

“

”

“

“

“

”

in , ,

in “

the “

“

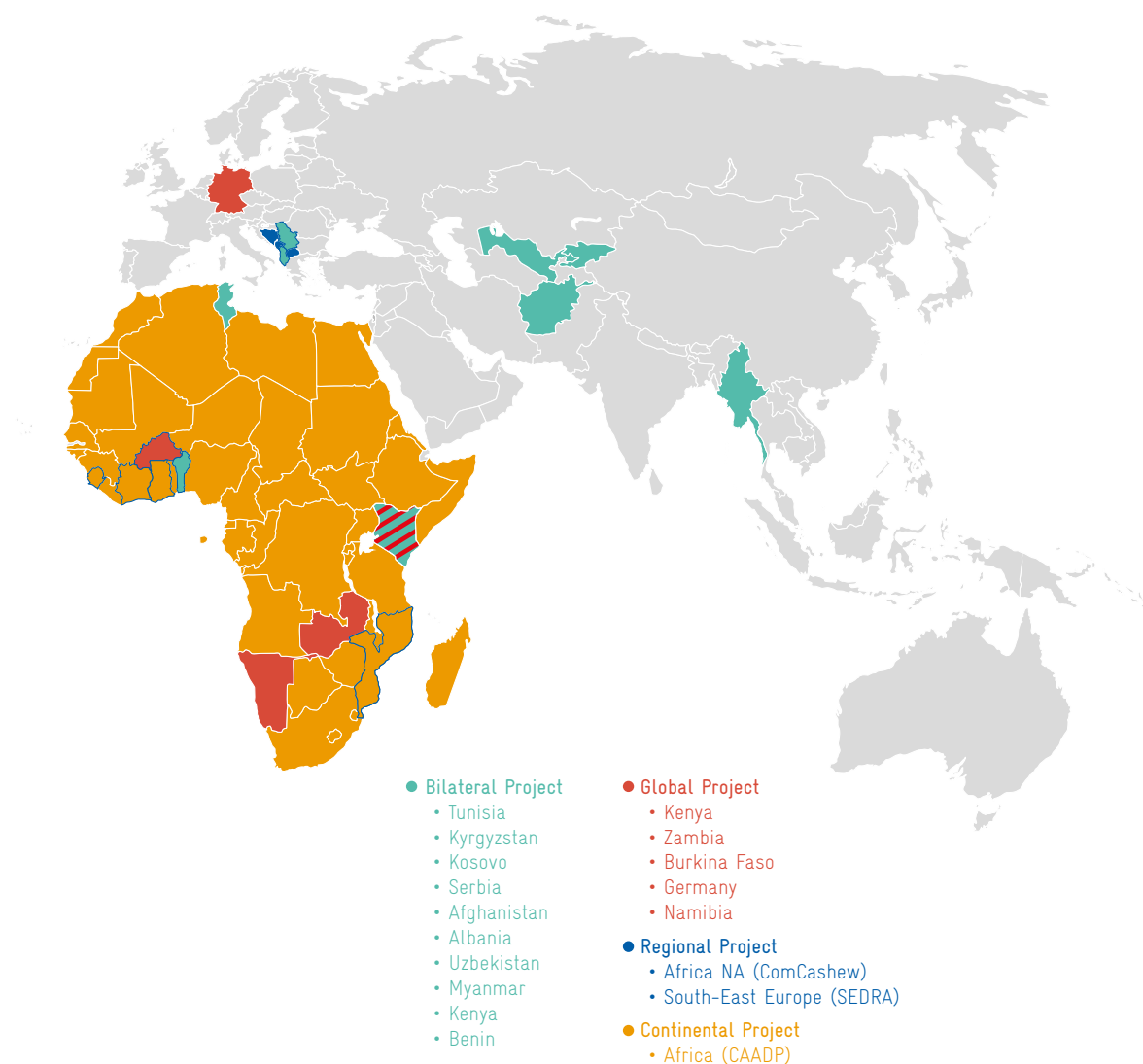




## 4. SURVEY RESULTS



The online questionnaire was fully answered by 20 projects: 11 in Africa, five in South-East Europe and four in Asia (see annex 1 for more details). Results are summarized below, enriched with information from in-depth interviews.

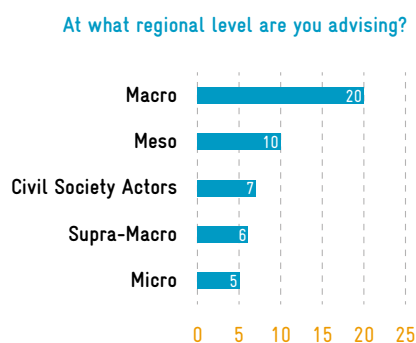


## a) Policy Advice is important

For almost two thirds of the projects, policy advice is either “very important” or “important”. As the survey was only sent to projects that were believed to consider policy advice as important, this does not come as a surprise. However, it may still underline the relevance of the subsequent results for making general conclusions on the state of agri-food policy advisory services within GIZ.

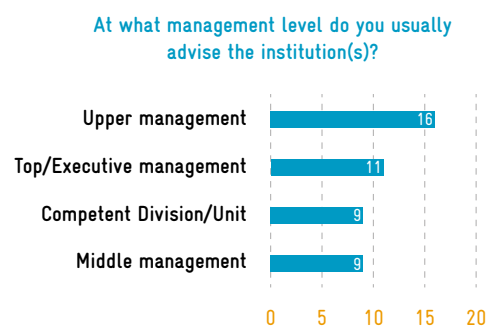
## b) The national level is the most relevant target for advisory services

All of the projects advise at national administrative level (e.g. ministries), the most important target for advisory services. Around half of the projects also advise at meso level (e.g. competent authorities) or civil society organisations. Six projects work with partners at supra-macro level (e.g. multilateral organisations or regional organisations), while on the other hand, only five projects work at micro level, advising local administrations or cities.



Graph 1: Scope of Advice

Regarding the management level within these institutions, almost all projects (16/20) advise on the upper management level (e.g. head of agricultural unit), around half of the projects (also) advise at the top management (e.g. Secretary General), a competent division (e.g. regulatory authorities) and/ or the middle management (e.g. line management).

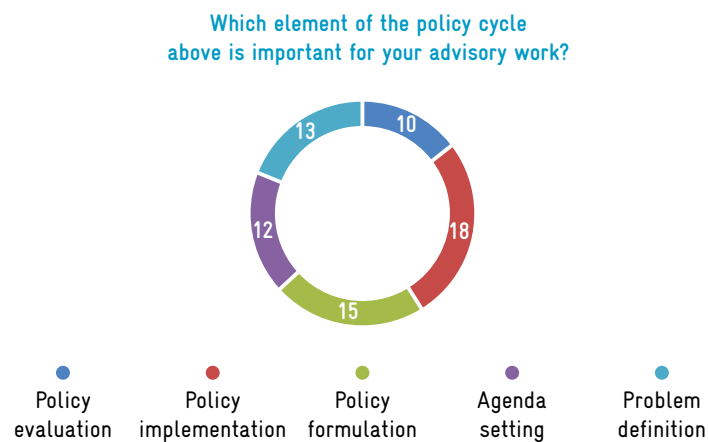


Graph 2: Management Level Advised

The results show that upper management at national level is the main recipient of agri-food policy advisory services. This is especially interesting when having a look at which steps of the policy cycle projects focus on.

### c) Policy advice focuses on policy formulation and implementation

Seven projects indicated to work in all five steps of the policy cycle while another seven indicated working only on one or two elements, mainly on step 4, policy implementation, and some also on step 3, policy formulation. All but two projects support partners with policy implementation, three projects work even exclusively at this level. More than half of the projects are involved in step 1, problem definition (13 projects) and step 2, agenda setting (12 projects). Policy evaluation is the step in the policy cycle that projects worked the least on, only half of the projects assist with that step.



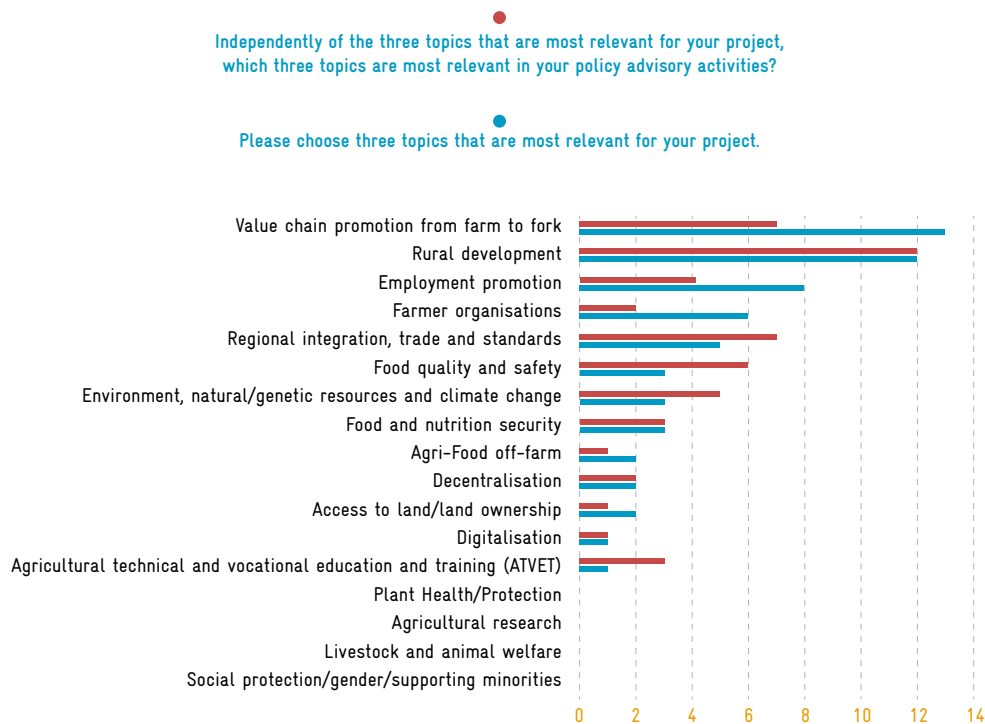
Graph 3: Policy support throughout the cycle

Having kept in mind that projects mostly advise at macro level, the results of them mostly working in policy implementation rather comes as a surprise as policies are usually implemented at meso and micro level.

d) Policy advice is technically diverse but mostly focuses on economic and trade related issues

This answer might give an explanation for this bias: As the national level is the most relevant advisory target, the focus lies on economic issues. These are most commonly addressed at macro level: regional integration, trade and standards as well as food quality and safety.

In general, the diversity of topics that the projects advise upon is broad. The pallet differs slightly from the overall project foci (value chain promotion, rural development, employment promotion, and farmers organisations), as for almost all projects, agri-food policy advice is only one of several components in their overall project setup.



Graph 4: Variety in the technical foci of the projects and for policy advice



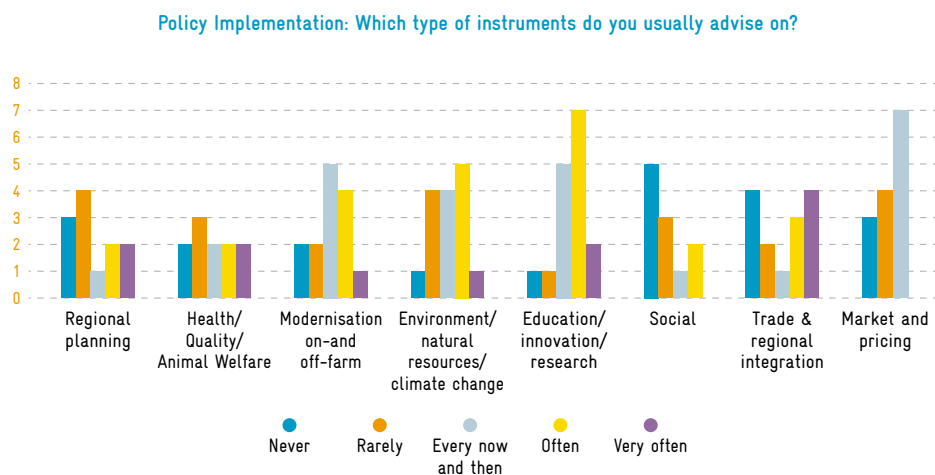
## e) Even though policy advice focuses on economic issues, projects do not advise on instruments related to markets and pricing

Having a closer look at the step of policy implementation, the data shows that even though policy advice focuses on economic issues (see results d), market and pricing instruments (e.g. export tax, levies) are only recommended "every now and then", "rarely" or "never", and never "very often". The same holds true for social instruments.

Instead, instruments advised upon (very) often are mainly related to "education, innovation and

research" and "environment and natural resources", even though they were not named as a priority topic previously. Their importance might however be an explanation for the high relevance of "policy implementation" (see result c).

Generally, advising on concrete policy instrument does not seem to happen on a regular basis.



Graph 5: Type of instruments advised on



## f) Policy advice is rarely based on evidence

In regard to the quality of data, only eight projects stated that their advice was evidence-based, while for five projects a maximum of 50 % of their advice is made on the basis of reliable data. The rest of the projects (5/20) did not answer the question.

In the in-depth interviews it became clear, that the term "evidence" is interpreted rather differently among projects: some already equate "evidence" with personal "experience" while others only count on scientific data.

## g) Most projects do not monitor policy advisory activities, but – based on personal perception – regard their advice as well reflected in the policy process

Most projects do currently not monitor policy advice in their projects because it is either not a focus, advisory activities only developed over time, the project is still too young or a "more systematic approach (...) needs to be developed". When asked for their personal perception of how the advice is currently reflected in policy processes, most of the projects had the impression that their advice was at least "well reflected" (8/20) or "fully reflected" (3/20) in the policy process. None had the impression that the advice was "not reflected" at all. Reasons for it not being fully reflected were political (4/15), financial (2/14) or

technical (2/14). In addition, the following reasons were named:

- "competition with other agencies",
- "the overall volatile situation in the country",
- "insufficient communication between the responsible government agencies".

The most important policy processes that projects advised upon were monitored by the political partner in almost half of the cases (8/20), only in six cases by GIZ or in three cases by other institutions.

## h) National staff is highly qualified and the most important asset for policy advice

All projects employ at least one national expert responsible for policy advice, eight projects employed three or more national experts. In six projects international long-term experts work in the field of policy advice, in half of the projects at least one international short-term consultant is assisting. The instruments of CIM-experts and development advisors do not seem to play an important role.

The majority of the staff responsible for agri-food policy advisory services has at least 5 to 10 years, mostly even more than 10 years of experience in policy advice.

The advising personnel usually has experience in development cooperation and/or holds a university degree in either agriculture or economics. However, only in seven cases, staff has also working experience in the private sector, less than five already received training in agriculture or are farming themselves.

Knowledge for policy advice is acquired via different channels, both personal, digital and physical (see graph 7).



Graph 6: Staff working on policy advice



Graph 7: Acquiring knowledge for advice



## 5. CASE STUDIES



The subsequent chapters look into specific policy advisory processes along the policy cycle in eight different projects. Even though a project may work in several steps along the cycle, we picked only one political process in each project to be looked at in more in-depth and we tried to find a decent example for every one of the five steps of the policy cycle. Lessons learnt and suggestions from all projects will be presented in chapter 6, regardless of the policy process chosen here. Hence, no information shall be lost.

The following eight country cases were chosen according to the criteria mentioned in chapter 2, even though it was not possible to value all criteria equally. The country cases are subsequently presented in order of the policy process addressed along the policy cycle.

5.1

**Step 1 & 2 Problem identification and agenda setting:**  
remodelling the African cashew sector

5.2

**Step 2 Agenda setting:**  
enabling evidence-based decision-making in Namibia

5.3

**Step 2 Agenda setting on regional level:**  
how the Western Balkans prepare for EU accession

5.4

**Step 3 Policy formulation:**  
rewriting Kenyan policies for youth employment

5.5

**Step 3 and 4 Policy formulation and implementation:**  
preparing the Albanian agri-food sector for EU accession

5.6

**Step 4 Policy implementation:**  
making Myanmar's agri-food sector fit for competing in global markets

5.7

**Step 4 Policy implementation:**  
innovating the cotton and wheat value chain in Uzbekistan using the "cluster approach"

5.8

**Step 5 Policy evaluation:**  
evaluating a continents progress in developing the agri-food sector



## 5.1

### Step 1 and 2 – Problem identification and agenda setting: remodelling the African cashew sector





---

#### Facts & Figures

---

<b>Project name:</b>	Competitive Cashew Initiative (ComCashew)
<b>Countries:</b>	Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Mozambique, Sierra Leone
<b>Project Type:</b>	Regional
<b>Duration:</b>	05/2016 – 12/2021
<b>Budget:</b>	30.000.000 € (BMZ)
<b>Key Topics:</b>	Rural Development, Value Chain and Employment and Employment Promotion

<b>Importance of Policy Advice:</b>					
	Not important at all	Not very important	Medium	Important	Very important

<b>Key Advisory Topics:</b>	Rural Development, Value Chain Promotion, Regional integration, trade and standards
<b>Level of Advice:</b>	Executive and upper management at meso, macro (respective national ministries) and supra-macro level (Economic Community of West African States, ECOWAS), and civil society actors
<b>Dimensions:</b>	Politics, Policies, Polity
<b>Major process:</b>	Strategy for regional integration, jointly with the ECOWAS and now the Consultative International Cashew Council (CICC)
<b>Policy Indicators:</b>	The framework conditions for cashew value chains have improved. six countries have developed strategies for the cashew sector, including those involved in the value chain.



### 5.1.1 Background

The cashew value chain offers multiple opportunities for development in Africa: Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Mozambique, and Sierra Leone alone produce more than a third of the world's cashews. The potential for income and employment creation for the continent is great: demand on world markets is growing by approximately 10 % per annum, geographic characteristics are favourable for cashew production, and yield levels in competing countries in Asia and Latin America are stagnating. However, only around 10 % of the cashews produced in Africa are currently processed on the continent. Currently, they are mostly shipped to Asia for processing and afterwards transported to be sold on high-value markets, e.g. in Europe. Hence value addition and returns are generated and distributed elsewhere.

Governments in various African countries have long overlooked the cashew trees potential. Due to an absence of political attention, the sector lacks far behind competitors from Asia and America. Most (small-scale) farmers involved in the cashew value chain are fragmented and disconnected from markets and have poor production practices, along with a lack of access to training, finance, and inputs. Further along the value chain a lack of processing facilities and marketing capacities further weakens the sectors ability to become a competitive player on the global cashew market. In order to tackle these challenges and to take advantage of the opportunities, it requires sustainable supply chain linkages, access to the right technologies and finance as well as improved and inter-regional knowledge exchange and political cooperation.

### 5.1.2 Assessing the project's influence on a policy process

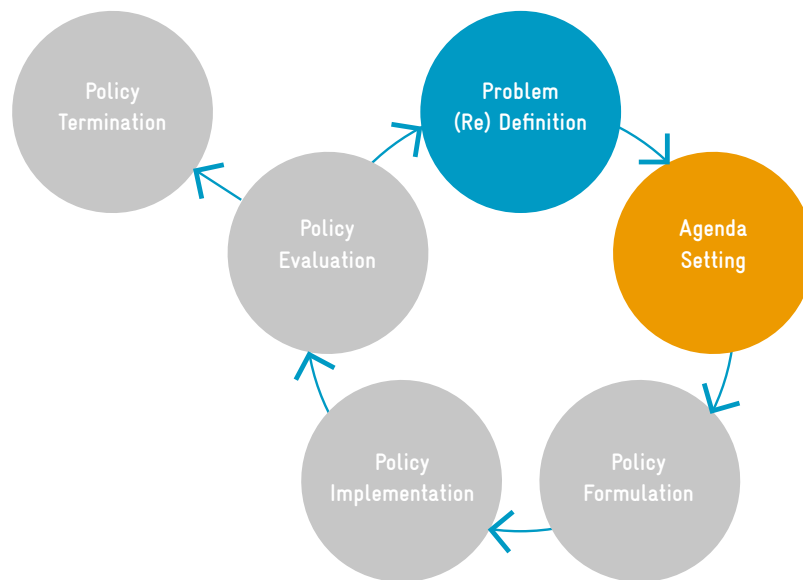
The project started in 2009 jointly financed by BMZ, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and several private sector actors. In 2021, the project is preparing for its fourth phase.

Having started from the ground with rather direct interventions along the cashew value chain, today, ComCashew works in almost all steps of the policy cycle. However, due to the initial focus on the cashew value chain rather than on political issues, policy advice is not yet fully reflected in the projects' indicators.



In this analysis, we are going to focus on ComCashew activities the first two steps of the policy cycle.

Generally, the team self-assessed the level of reflection of their advice in the different policy processes as “well”:



The policy cycle

### Step 1 & 2: Problem definition and Agenda Setting (national and regional level)

When the project started its activities in the cashew sector in 2009, governments did not yet have the cashew sector on their agenda and had no strategies regarding its development. Consequently, evidence was hard to get and since its beginning, the project had to start developing technical knowledge almost from scratch. Activities were mostly direct interventions along the value chain, gathering data and experience and facilitating exchange among stakeholders along the value chain. The obtained data and experience from this initial project phase formed the basis for many strategic decisions within the sector later on.

In the second phase (2013 – 2016) the project focused rather on consolidation of training activities undertaken during the first phase. In the third phase (2016 – 2021), technical expertise was sufficiently built among the most important stakeholders within the countries and the project started to be mainly active advising them as well as institutions.

regard to the nut's potential to create income and employment. According to the perception of the project the political will for change across countries and institutions in regard to the cashew sector rose from an initial 2 stars in 2009 to a full five stars in 2021 due to the projects activities:



Based on its vast and unique expertise in the sector politicians started to directly request the projects advise and listened to its opinions, especially in

*“As in a football game, we started off as a player and over time, withdrew from the playing field. Being a player, we become a coach, an advisor, and now we are only asked to comment on the game from time to time. Perfect.”*

The upcoming fourth phase, starting in 2022, is expected to primarily focus on agricultural (trade) policy issues.

As a result of the projects efforts, several governments in cashew producing countries have entered the third step of the policy cycle with assistance from the project: Formulating value chain specific development strategies.

The project also fosters intra-regional exchange between countries (e.g. through the Consultative International Cashew Council, CICC) or other political dialogue formats, jointly organised with the African Cashew Association, ACA) in order to align national strategies and assists some of the countries in finding the right policy tools for implementing their sector strategies (step 4, policy implementation). Instruments of markets, pricing and trade become increasingly important, especially when working together with the industry association ACA, while formally the project mainly focused on on-farm instruments.

In regard to the polity dimension, the project also assisted the formalisation of several sector institutions, e.g. the intergovernmental commodity organisation CICC (polity), which becomes increasingly relevant for public actors shaping relevant policies for the development of the cashew sector.

## Contact Details

---

**Rita Weidinger**  
Head of Project  
GIZ Ghana  
[rita.weidinger@giz.de](mailto:rita.weidinger@giz.de)

**Maria Schmidt**  
Technical Advisor  
GIZ Ghana  
[maria.schmidt@giz.de](mailto:maria.schmidt@giz.de)

## 5.2

### Step 2 – Agenda setting on national level: enabling evidence-based decision-making in Namibia



#### Facts & Figures

<b>Project:</b>	Support to Evidence-Based and Coordinated Agri-Trade Policy Development in Namibia (ECAP)
<b>Project Type:</b>	Country package of the Global Project "Agricultural Policy and Innovation Fund"
<b>Duration:</b>	09/2019 – 08/2022 (3 years)
<b>Budget:</b>	1.850.000 € (BMZ)
<b>Key Topics:</b>	Value chain promotion, regional integration, trade and standards, agricultural finance

**Importance of  
Policy Advice:**



<b>Key Advisory Topics:</b>	Environment, natural/ genetic resources and climate change, regional integration, trade and standards
<b>Level of Advice:</b>	Competent division on macro level (Ministry of Industrialization, Trade and SME Development; Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry)
<b>Dimensions:</b>	Politics, Policy, Polity
<b>Policy Indicators:</b>	<p>25 research analyses on agricultural and trade policy issues are fed into change processes of the Namibian agri-food sector.</p> <p>5 long-term institutionalized partnerships between central partners for the planning and implementation of agricultural trade and food policy in Namibia and other countries are established.</p> <p>70 % of key stakeholders, that took part in capacity development measures and other learning events confirm their ability to properly plan and implement agricultural trade and food policies.</p> <p>5 contributions to concepts and formats to support the agri-sector working group (towards the NAIP formulation and other relevant processes).</p>



## 5.2.1 Background

Despite its marginal contribution of approximately 3.8 % to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), the agriculture sector still remains central to the majority of the Namibian population. Directly or indirectly, it supports over 70 % of the country's population and employs about a third of the work force. The sector can be divided into two distinct sub-sectors: the capital intensive, relatively well developed and export oriented commercial sub-sector; and the subsistence-based, high-labour, low-technology communal sub-sector.

Namibia is the driest sub-Saharan nation and is among the countries most severely affected by climate change. This is threatening food security, particularly in the densely populated northern region, home to half of the country's inhabitants. Continuous drought with significant water shortages due to a changing climate and frequent outbreaks of animal diseases continue to negatively impact the sectors growth. In 2018, more than 70,000 jobs were lost in agriculture, leading to unemployment of almost 40 % of the population. The vulnerability of the Namibian agri-food sector to external shocks is partly due to limited variety in agricultural production as well as a large dependency on primary products with no value-added. The Namibian agri-food sector is currently not sufficiently prepared for these current and future challenges resulting from climate change, competition on global markets, or social inequalities. A strategic development of the agri-food sector, taking into account regional value chains and long-term climatic effects, is still not comprehensively addressed by policy makers in a coherent and cross-sectoral manner. Most of the policies and strategies in place are still from shortly after independence and need an urgent update. They are neither implemented wholeheartedly nor are they coherent. Collaboration on working and technical level is not a given and staff lacks both the necessary evidence and the competences to improve this situation and establish change processes. Opportunities for export potentials currently remain untapped due to unfavourable framework conditions.

## 5.2.2 Assessing the project's influence on a policy process

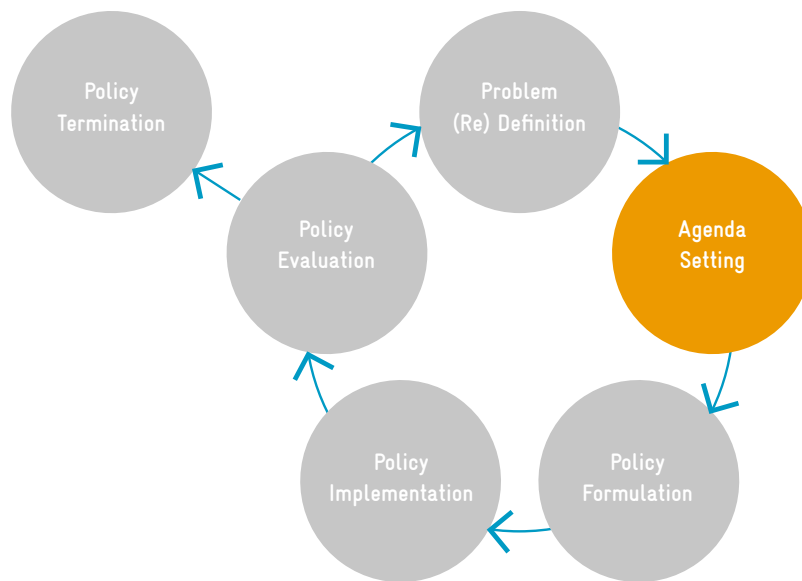
GIZ has been working in Namibia since the country's independence in 1990. An office in the capital Windhoek was opened in 1994. Since then, trust was built between German development cooperation and the Namibian institutions during the implementation of several agricultural projects until today.

The ECAP project started implementation end of 2019. It is one of three country packages in the global project "Agricultural Policy and Innovation Fund" with the objective of "selected African countries or groups of countries to use improved agricultural and trade policy instruments". It is the only project in this analysis which is fully focusing on policy advice.

Political structures in Namibia are old and the governments political will for change is currently rated as "very low" for the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Land Reform and as "medium" for the Ministry of Industrialization and Trade.



The projects' success will hence be measured by whether or not this political will has changed to the positive in future.



The policy cycle

## Step 2 Agenda Setting (national level):

In order to systematically tackle the challenges described above and to identify those issues that shall be primarily addressed (agenda setting) on a scientifically sound basis, the project entered a partnership with the Namibian University of Science and Technology (NUST). NUST is currently building up a centre for agricultural trade policy advice, called “Agricultural Trade Policy Institute” (ATPI). Based on scientific data, public and private stakeholders in the agri-food sector alike shall be enabled to make strategic and evidence-based decisions, e.g. on which crops to focus on during the upcoming years based on climate data. The evidence is prepared in a target-group friendly manner and presented during the annual agricultural outlook conference, the most important venue for agri-food stakeholders in Namibia. During this intensive vertical and horizontal intersectoral exchange, compromises between key stakeholders are discussed and decided. Both, evidence and stakeholder discussion, form the basis for policy formulation.

Based on the evidence, AgriBank, the country's biggest agricultural finance institution, is developing policy briefs as well as tailor-made financial products for strategic and evidence-based investments on farms, aiming at sustainable conversion for the future.

In addition, by offering (individual) coaching, training and the facilitation of dialogue between experts, including study trips and learning tours to other African and European countries, the project aims at strengthening the partners' strategic skills for subsequent steps of the policy cycle, namely the initiation and implementation of reform processes. The project for example also intends to assist political partners with the formulation of a common road map for shaping reform processes (step 3, policy formulation) as well as with assessing policy impacts in cooperation with the ATPI at NUST (step 5).

## Contact Details

**Vehaka Tjimune**  
Project Manager  
GIZ Windhoek  
[vehaka.tjimune@giz.de](mailto:vehaka.tjimune@giz.de)






**Hannah Scheuermann**  
Technical Advisor  
GIZ Bonn  
[hannah.scheuermann@giz.de](mailto:hannah.scheuermann@giz.de)

## 5.3

### Step 2 – Agenda setting on regional level: how the Western Balkans prepare for EU accession



#### Facts & Figures

<b>Project:</b>	Support to Economic Diversification of Rural Areas (SEDRA)
<b>Countries:</b>	Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia
<b>Project Type:</b>	Regional
<b>Duration:</b>	09/2018 – 08/2021 (3 years)
<b>Budget:</b>	4.950.000 € (BMZ)
<b>Key Topics:</b>	Rural development, value chain and employment promotion, regional integration, environment, genetic resources and climate change
<b>Importance of Policy Advice:</b>	<div> Not important at all</div> <div> Not very important</div> <div> Medium</div> <div> Important</div> <div> Very important</div>
<b>Key Advisory Topics:</b>	Rural development, economic diversification, food quality and safety, agri-food and rural tourism
<b>Level of Advice:</b>	Executive, upper and middle management as well as competent divisions at supra-macro, macro and meso level
<b>Dimensions:</b>	Politics, Policy, Polity
<b>Policy Indicators:</b>	<p>In 4 out of 6 Southeast European countries, one strategic measure under the flag ship initiatives "Connectivity" or "Competitiveness" of the program document 2017-2019 of the "Strategy SEE 2020" was accomplished by a legislative or administrative measure.</p> <p>70 % of the 120 people from stakeholder groups, local action groups and rural development networks supported by educational measures have made "some" or "great progress" in applying the newly acquired skills in supporting EU-compatible economic diversification.</p> <p>75 % of the approx. 450 participants in regional dialogue forums and technical policy meetings use a concrete example from their everyday work to confirm the benefits of the regionally coordinated approaches and recommendations for the topics they deal with.</p> <p>The political representatives of the six Southeast European states in the Standing Working Group on Regional Rural Development (SWG RRD) have endorsed 3 resolutions / policy recommendations regarding EU-compliant rural diversification.</p>





### 5.3.1 Background

The Southeast European countries are characterised by great disparities between the urban and rural areas. Almost half of the population lives in rural areas, the majority being economically and socially dependent on agriculture and forestry. The rich and highly diverse natural and cultural heritage of the Western Balkans rural areas bears great potential for economic diversification, especially in regard to nature conservation, tourism and sustainability.

However, many rural areas currently do not yet tap these opportunities and suffer from high rates of unemployment. The unsustainable use of natural resources has led to substantial loss of economic viability, a major loss of biodiversity and to a poorer quality of life. Factors which all increase rural exodus.

The renewed EU accession process is the most important policy driver for tackling these issues at national level as well as aligning policy measures of the six Southeast European countries with the European Union's Common Agricultural Policy (EU CAP).

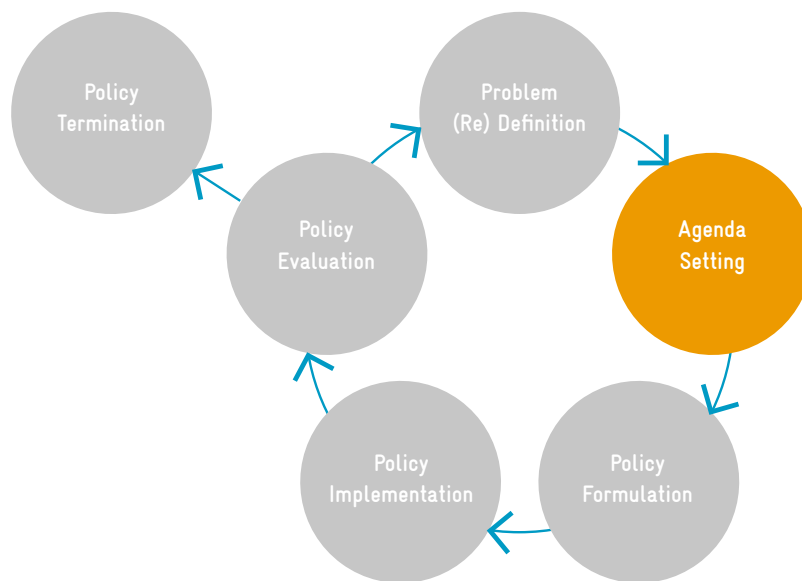
In addition to challenges at the policy dimension, the accession process also entails challenges at the dimension of polity. Institutional capacities for the embedding of EU policies and for implementing pre-accession instruments and measures are still weak and the strongly needed financial and technical support for rural stakeholders at micro level can hardly be offered. The vast majority of agriculture holdings is currently not yet able to comply with existing EU instruments.

### 5.3.2 Assessing the project's influence on a policy process

The predecessor project started in 2014, after the great floods in Bosnia and Herzegovina and focused on policy advice related to the integration of environmental objectives into agricultural policies and sustainable natural resource management. Today, SEDRA focuses on diversification of economic activities in rural areas, still considering the sustainable use of natural resources. This is mainly due to the ambition of the Western Balkans to align their regional agri-food and rural development policies to the EU CAP within the framework of EU rapprochement. To support this process, the EU uses the "Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance in Rural Development" (IPARD). It is intended to support the countries in adopting the aspects of

the *acquis communautaire* relevant to the EU CAP and to ensure sustainable adaptation of agriculture and rural regions in the accession process. Like for the CAP, a catalogue of possible measures is available to the countries.

Consequently, step 1 (problem identification or definition) for almost all policy processes related to rural development in the Western Balkans is mostly pre-defined by the EU accession agenda.



The policy cycle

## Step 2: Agenda Setting (regional level)

In order to jointly assess which political priorities are to be set and which instruments best to use in order to comply with the EU standards on a regional basis, the project is closely cooperating with the so-called SWG RRD, an intergovernmental platform of the ministries of agriculture.

Generally, change processes are officially initiated by the ministries of agriculture. They are taken up by a SWG RRD which establish subject related Regional Expert Advisory Working Groups (REAWG). A REAWG is led by regional coordinator who her or himself is coordinating national experts. International expertise, mainly related to the relevant EU policies is provided by an international organisation, contracted by GIZ. Overall, the governments will for change is rated as "medium" which can be taken as an indicator for the level of difficulty in initiating change processes:



*"We may organise the dance floor but it's the different stakeholders that fill it with life."*

Depending on the technical topic to be addressed, GIZ supports different REAWG by providing specific sector assessments and in elaborating evidence-based policy recommendations. One of the most successful assessments was the evidence-based policy assessment and gap analysis on “Agro-Biodiversity in Southeast Europe – Assessment and Policy Recommendations”. It was performed in a regional process involving leading experts and institutions of all countries of Southeast Europe as well as other entities, all aiming to identify priorities and to formulate recommendations for mainstreaming agrobiodiversity in agriculture and rural development policies, strategic plans, programmes and relevant legislations. The process was perceived as very innovative as the project succeeded in bringing together experts from various disciplines – plant and animal genetic resources conservation and sustainable use.

The working groups usually meet up to five times during a period of 18 months. Their major findings and recommendations are discussed during an Agricultural Policy Forum, a two-day event on regional agri-food policy, organised by the SWG. Once policy recommendations are validated by the forum, they are discussed by the annual Meeting of Ministers of Agriculture and, after approval, taken up in policy design and implementation on national level. The agrobiodiversity assessment for example played a major role for the Republic of North Macedonia to take up several biodiversity measures and related aspects in their new Strategy for Agriculture and Rural Development (2021 – 2027).

Generally, the process is regularly followed up through multi-stakeholder dissemination events.

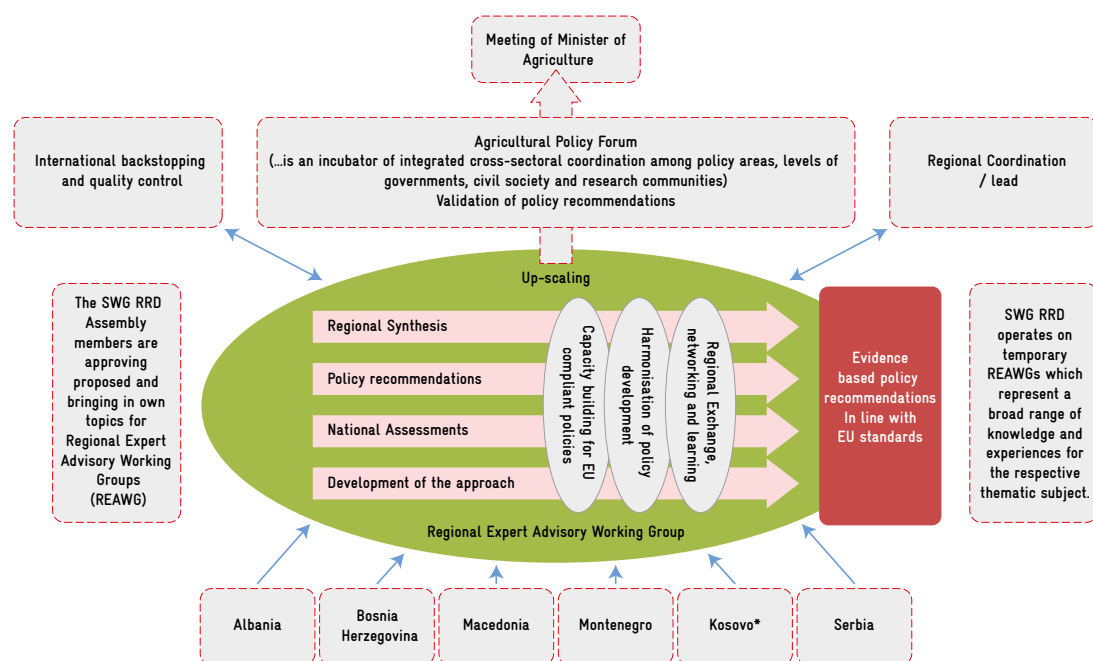


Figure 2: Sketch of the Regional Expert Advisory Working Group

Source: SEDRA.

At national level, SEDRA provided evidence and accompanied the evolvement of national IPARD programs with particular focus on agro-environment, economic diversification and the LEADER measures.

Apart from providing these policy recommendations (policy dimension) for evidence-based agenda setting and later on policy formulation (step 3) on national level, strengthening institutional capacities of selected stakeholders (polity dimension) for supporting EU-compliant economic diversification in rural areas is another of the projects main advisory priorities. This also includes assistance in the adequate methodical approach of collecting, processing, analysing and exchanging on scientifically sound data.

Concluding, the team assessed the reflection of their advice in the different policy processes as “fully reflected” as policy recommendations were taken up by the Leaders of the Western Balkans in its full extent under the framework of the Berlin Process in the Sofia Declaration on the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans in November 2020. They are also included in the EU Economic and Investment Plan and Green Agenda for the Western Balkans.



Progress in all these endeavours is regularly monitored jointly by SWG RRD and GIZ. In addition, SWG monitors policy processes in collaboration with experts from academia the EU Joint Research Centres contributes with international expertise.

## Contact Details

---

### **Benjamin Mohr**

Team Leader

GIZ Skopje

[benjamin.mohr@giz.de](mailto:benjamin.mohr@giz.de)

### **Dr Irena Djimrevska**

Technical Advisor

GIZ Skopje

[irena.djimrevska@giz.de](mailto:irena.djimrevska@giz.de)

## 5.4

### Step 3 – Policy formulation: rewriting national Kenyan policies for youth employment at district level



---

#### Facts & Figures

---

**Project:** Youth employment in the agri-food sector in Western Kenya  
**Project Type:** Bilateral  
**Duration:** 01/2020 – 03/2022 (2 years, 2 month)  
**Budget:** 5.000.000 € (BMZ)  
**Key Topics:** Rural development, employment promotion, decentralization

**Importance of  
Policy Advice:**

★ Not important at all    ★ Not very important    ★ Medium    ★ Important    ★ Very important

**Key Advisory Topics:** Rural development, employment promotion, decentralization  
**Level of Advice:** Executive middle and upper management at micro, meso and macro level  
**Dimension:** Politics, Policy, Polity  
**Policy Indicators:** The Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries has confirmed for 2 of the 3 counties that their plans in 2 selected sub-sectors are in line with national agricultural policies and strategies.  
80 % of the 80 interest groups involved in the formulation of policies and strategies at county level confirm their satisfaction with the national agricultural strategies on a scale from 1 to 4 with 3 (corresponds to "somewhat satisfied") or better.



### 5.4.1 Background

Around 70 % of Kenya's population lives in rural areas, of which roughly 80 % find employment directly in agriculture. Despite its importance, especially in remote areas, the sector is still characterised by traditional agricultural methods, hard work and little earning. In consequence, the sector's image in regard to innovative strength and job attractiveness is not very high, especially not among young and well-educated Kenyans.

About 35 % of Kenya's population are between 18 to 35 years old. Every year, around 1.2 million Kenyans enter the labour market while estimates only count for an additional 500,000 new jobs, most of them informal. Consequently, unemployment is as high as 9.3 %, for young people even 26.2 %.

In order to sustainably cope with the related social and economic challenges, employment prospects, especially for youth and women, need to be created. The Kenyan government has already declared it a major goal at national level, reflected in the national "Youth and Agribusiness Strategy". However, Kenya only decided to decentralize government in 2010. Since then, power and responsibility partly shifted from the national government to 47 newly elected county governments. And even though major progress was made in regard to the decentralisation of power, political, fiscal and administrative challenges are still encountered when adopting national strategies and policies at local level.

### 5.4.2 Assessing the project's influence on a policy process

GIZ is working in Western Kenya for decades, enabling the current project to build on established structures, partners and lessons learnt. Policy advice has always been an important activity in many former projects, assisting the Ministry of Agriculture in the development of several national policies and strategies, e. g. in the areas of aridity, value chain development, irrigation, land tillage, or nutrition.

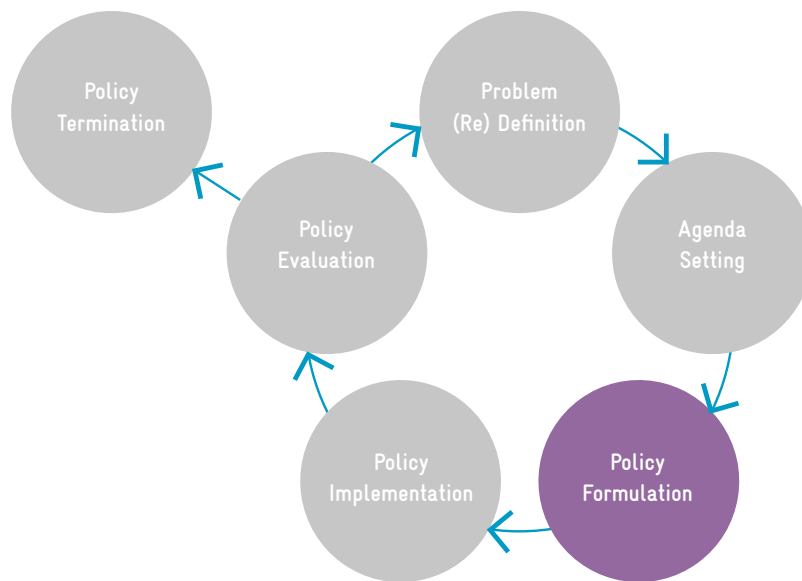
explicit policy indicator, it is assisting and advising county government on how to narrow policies down and to adapt them to local conditions. According to its evaluation, this advice is "well reflected" in the political process:



The current project on youth employment focuses at creating more decent jobs for youth and women along the entire agri-food value chain. Structurally weak rural areas shall be strengthened, malnutrition and climate change counteracted and an ecologically sustainable agricultural production promoted. The most relevant policy documents in this regard are the "Youth and Agribusiness Strategy" as well as the "National Climate Change Adaptation Plan", both developed and adopted at national level. These policies partly set the agenda for youth employment on county level, however, they need to be reformulated and adopted before being implemented. Even though the project has no

*"A continuity of projects  
is important to lead  
to implementation of policies.  
The closets are full with  
uncompleted policies"*





The policy cycle

### Step 3: Policy Formulation (county level)

In order to assist county governments with this process, the project facilitates one week training courses on policy development (so called “champions of change workshops”). The concept was originally developed by USAID and taken up and further developed by GIZ. During the workshops participants learn how to adapt national policies to county level. This is an important preparation for the policy hearings, which are critical for developing policies in Kenya and required by the Kenyan constitution. During these hearings stakeholders from the public and private sector, non-governmental and church organisations as well as academia are invited to discuss planned policies. A process that takes up to one year.

According to the project’s perception, the quality in planning political strategies by the county administration has significantly improved since participation in the workshops. The awareness of responsible staff on how best to achieve policy targets has increased and led to a more careful stakeholder selection for public hearings. This results in an improved quality of policy development and planning.

## Contact Details






**Dr Mathias Braun**  
 Head of Project  
 GIZ Nairobi  
[mathias.braun@giz.de](mailto:mathias.braun@giz.de)

## 5.5

### Step 3 and 4 – Policy formulation and implementation: inclusively preparing the Albanian agri-food sector for EU accession



#### Facts & Figures

<b>Project name:</b>	Sustainable Rural Development (SRD)
<b>Project Type:</b>	Bilateral, TC module in overall program on sustainable economic development in Albania
<b>Duration:</b>	01/2019 – 12/2022 (4 years)
<b>Budget:</b>	10.000.000 € (BMZ)
<b>Partner:</b>	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Ministry of Tourism and Environment
<b>Key Topics:</b>	Rural Development, Value Chain and Employment Promotion
<b>Importance of Policy Advice:</b>	<div> Not important at all</div> <div> Not very important</div> <div> Medium</div> <div> Important</div> <div> Very important</div>
<b>Key Advisory Topics:</b>	Environment, natural/ genetic resources and climate change, ATVET, food quality and safety, financing
<b>Level of Advice:</b>	Macro and meso level, upper management and civil society
<b>Dimension:</b>	Policy, Politics, Polity
<b>Policy Indicator:</b>	4 coherent policy contributions that have led to the creation of income in rural areas were included as adjustments of the national strategic framework of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development and the Ministry of Tourism and Environment.



## 5.5.1 Background

Since 2014, Albania is official candidate for accession to the European Union. The gradual alignment with the EU common acquis, rural development is currently receiving a high level of political and financial attention. Nevertheless, the preparational consolidations in the sector are expected to urge many small family farms to find alternative sources of income.

With a contribution of 22.9 % to GDP, agriculture is still the most important sector in rural regions of Albania. The majority of farms are family-owned, practicing subsistence agriculture on an average land size of 1.2 hectares with only limited integration into value chains. Only 15 % of farms operate market-oriented, out of which only two thirds are registered for tax purposes. Producer groups or cooperatives rarely exist. Limited socio-political participation, especially for women and the younger share of the rural population, including the lack of access to and poor quality of (advisory) services, are important reasons for Albanian migration to the European Union.

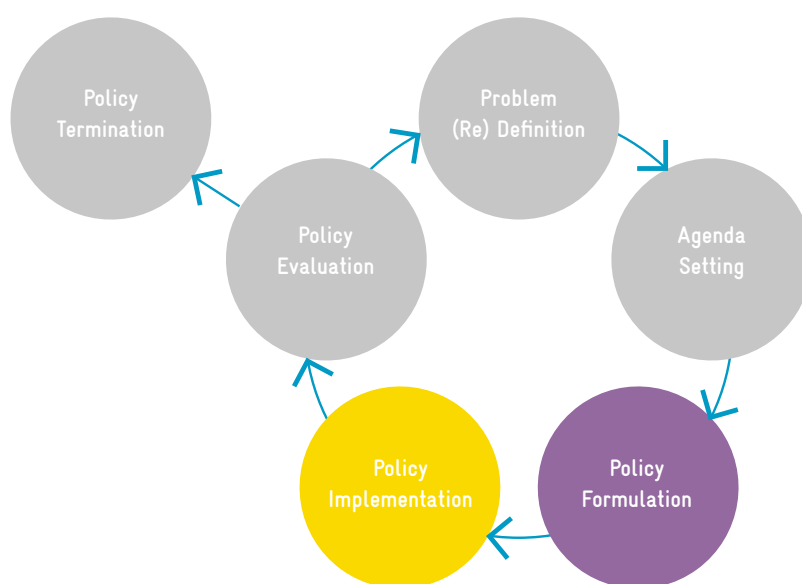
## 5.5.2 Assessing the project's influence on a policy process

GIZ has been active in the agricultural sector in Albania for over 20 years. Within SRD, the relevance of agri-food policy advice only emerged over time and went hand in hand with Albania's process of rapprochement with the EU and successful cooperation with respective EU institutions. Today, it is one of the project's four outputs. Due to an evolving relationship of trust, based on continuity in qualified senior national personnel, GIZ/ SDR

holds an office in the Ministry for Agriculture and Rural Development since 2002.

The EU accession process mainly determines both problem definition (step 1) and agenda setting (step 2). The "will for change" of the political partner is assessed with "medium":

★ ★ ★ ★ ★



The policy cycle

### Step 3 & 4: Policy formulation and implementation

SRD is mainly assisting its partners with aligning national policies with the EU accession process. This includes direct advice on policies and legal frameworks including the financing of different sector analysis as well as the choice of the right instruments. One major process is the development of a new Albanian Strategy for Agriculture, Rural Development and Fisheries 2021 – 2027, describing priorities based on EU CAP post 2020.

Apart from its technical advice supporting the content of the policy, the project also has a strong focus on the polity dimension, i.e. establishing the right institutional and managerial capacities for the implementation of the policy. One tool for building capacity and promoting an inclusive policy

process, aligning national policies more to the needs and challenges of the sector and, is the “Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation System” (AKIS). It is an innovative digital tool used across the EU with the aim of bringing both political and value chain actors closer together, including farmers, businesses, authorities, research, etc.

Based on a self-assessment, the team rated the reflection of its advice in the different policy processes as “very well reflected”.



### Contact Details

---

**Roland Cela**  
Technical Advisor  
GIZ Tirana  
[roland.cela@giz.de](mailto:roland.cela@giz.de)

**Thorben Kruse**  
Head of Component  
GIZ Tirana  
[thorben.kruse@giz.de](mailto:thorben.kruse@giz.de)

## 5.6

### Step 4 – Policy implementation: making Myanmar's agri-food sector fit for competing in global markets



#### Facts & Figures

<b>Project name:</b>	Sustainable Agricultural Development and Food Quality Initiative (SAFI)
<b>Project Type:</b>	Bilateral, TC module in the program "Rural Development in Myanmar"
<b>Duration:</b>	06/2017 – 05/2021
<b>Budget:</b>	5.000.000 € (BMZ)
<b>Key Topics:</b>	Value chain promotion, food quality and safety, agricultural formal education
<b>Importance of Policy Advice:</b>	<div> <span>★</span> Not important at all           <span>★</span> Not very important           <span>★</span> Medium           <span>★</span> Important           <span>★</span> Very important         </div>
<b>Key Topics:</b>	Value chain promotion, food quality and safety
<b>Level of Advice:</b>	Upper management at macro level (Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation)
<b>Major process:</b>	Establishment of recognized certification systems; development of a food safety roadmap to ensure the fulfilment of the targets of the National Food Safety Policy
<b>Dimension:</b>	Policy, Politics, Polity
<b>Policy Indicators:</b>	<p>The Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation has presented a roadmap that shows the way to improve the quality standards and quality management of agriculture-based value chains (cross-departmental policy, strategy).</p> <p>At political level, a roll-out concept (including the naming of funding instruments) for the broad-based dissemination of quality-oriented implementation approaches is available.</p>



## 5.6.1 Background

After almost 50 years of military rule and planned economy, Myanmar began its process of democratization in April 2011. Since then, the government has initiated a series of political and economic reforms and is striving for integration into the regional Asian as well as the world market. However, even though necessary resources such as land or water availability and climactic conditions are favourable, framework conditions remain difficult and partly hinder Myanmar's food industry to achieve competitive levels of productivity and to meet quality and safety requirements of modern regional and international food markets. This includes inadequate infrastructure, a lack of knowledge of market based policy instruments, the need for modernization of laws and regulations, including quality and food safety standards, their enforcement and the necessary adjustments to and capacities of public administration. Insufficient cooperation and coordination within and between ministries adversely affect the use of an integrated food safety approach along agri-food value chains.

In general, Myanmar's economy is still dominated by the agricultural sector with mainly small to medium-sized family-owned businesses that contribute 32 % to the GDP and 20 % to export earnings. Agricultural cultivation is predominantly characterized by traditional methods, fertilizers and pesticides are applied without knowledge of risks. Cooperation and division of labour within the value chain are still based on traditional relationships rather than comparative advantages as for the last 70 to 80 years, governments in Myanmar tried to organize markets, e.g. by handing out inputs, providing state-owned land and determining the crops to grow. Most of small and medium-sized companies use outdated plants and process raw materials with little knowledge and demands on quality and food safety standards.

## 5.6.2 Assessing the project's influence on a policy process

After an interruption of almost 20 years, GIZ resumed its work in Myanmar in 2012. Starting in 2017 as one of the first projects to be implemented, the project was not able to build upon the trust of previous projects of technical cooperation but on Germany's strong connection to the Myanmar research community: Since 2011, eight cooperations between Myanmar and German universities could be established and the "German Alumni Association Myanmar" counts for around 700 Alumni today. Due to this close collaboration and Germany's proposedly well-known expertise in matters of food safety and quality, German know-how is repeatedly requested by the Myanmar Government.

By the time SAFI started, policies and regulations related to food safety were generally in place, but not effectively implemented. Although "food safety and quality" was identified as essential area of intervention to achieve the outcomes of the Agriculture Development Strategy (2018), the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation, being responsible for its mainstreaming and harmonization, still lacked efficient policy

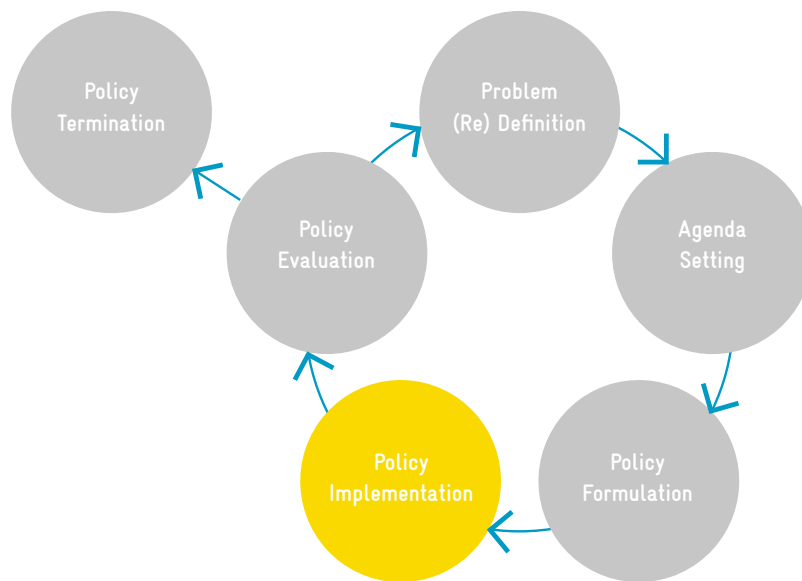
frameworks and plans for the implementation of a recognizable food safety and quality assurance system.

The "MyanGAP" standard for example, applied on fresh fruits and vegetables, was already in place but neither complying with its international (Global G.A.P.) nor its regional (ASEAN GAP) equivalent, both a prerequisite for exports to regional and international (e.g. EU) markets.

Due to this background, SAFI aimed at improving food quality and safety standards and at establishing a respective certification scheme that complies with the modern food markets. Agri-food policy advice was one of the projects three components. In this context, the governments will for change is rated as "high" (step 2 & 3 agenda setting and policy formulation), even though actors sometimes lack awareness for the steps necessary for change to actually also happen (step 4 policy implementation):







The policy cycle

#### Step 4 Policy implementation

In order to support the government with implementing its political intentions, SAFI facilitated several workshops with various stakeholders where gaps were identified, and recommendations were developed. The final process resulted in a “Policy Roadmap for the Safety and Hygiene of Agri-food Products 2020 – 2027” with several action plans covering legal and institutional frameworks, standards and certification. Due to the overall success of the process, the partner even started coming up with own innovative ideas which indicated a strong ownership in the process. For example, the development of a MyanGAP web portal and a mobile application for an online registration, auditing and certification process.

Due to its strong relationship to the scientific community, SAFI was also involved in the development of university courses and curricula

on food safety and quality management at the Yezin Agricultural University and State Agricultural Institutes. Due to these courses, the availability of qualified personnel for food safety controls, including laboratory analysis etc. is improved.

Also, thanks to the projects support in streamlining the Myanmar GAP standard with international and regional benchmarks, the “Myanmar GAP standard for diverse crops in Myanmar” was officially adopted by the National Standards Council in June 2020 in its new form. The project also developed a “MyanGAP Normative Document” with general policy recommendations for the certification system.

As a consequence, the team assessed the reflection of their advice in the different policy processes as “fully reflected”.



#### Contact Details

**Peter Hinn**  
Head of Project  
GIZ Myanmar  
[peter.hinn@giz.de](mailto:peter.hinn@giz.de)

**Dr Ye Tun Tun**  
Technical Advisor  
GIZ Myanmar  
[ye.tun@giz.de](mailto:ye.tun@giz.de)

## 5.7

### Step 4 – Policy implementation: innovating the cotton and wheat value chain in Uzbekistan using the “cluster approach”



#### Facts & Figures

<b>Project:</b>	Sustainable economic development in selected rural regions in Uzbekistan
<b>Project Type:</b>	Bilateral, Stand-alone
<b>Duration:</b>	11/2014 – 12/2020 (6 years, 2 month)
<b>Budget:</b>	17.328.532 € (BMZ, EU)
<b>Key Topics:</b>	Rural development, regional integration, trade and standards, farmer organisations
<b>Importance of Policy Advice:</b>	<div> <span>★</span> Not important at all           <span>★</span> Not very important           <span>★</span> Medium           <span>★</span> Important           <span>★</span> Very important         </div>
<b>Key Advisory Topics:</b>	Rural Development, ATVET, farmer organisations
<b>Level of Advice:</b>	Upper management and competent division at meso and macro level, civil society actors
<b>Policy Dimensions:</b>	Policy, Politics, Polity
<b>Policy Indicators:</b>	None
<b>Other Actors involved:</b>	EU, UNDP, FAO, USAID, World Bank



### 5.7.1 Background

Uzbekistan's administration still remains highly centralized with area governors (hokime) of the 12 regions (viloyate) still being appointed directly by the president. Since its independence in 1991, after which traditional trading links partly collapsed, the country began its gradual economic reform path, still pursuing a strong protective trade policy, including minimum prices, purchase guarantees and cultivation quotas. Nevertheless, according to official information, the Uzbek economy grew continuously at rates of more than 7 % since 2005. When president Shavkat Mirzaev came into office in 2016, the new reform path began, summarized in the Uzbek Development Strategy 2017-2021.

In Uzbekistan, agriculture is alongside industrial production still the most important sector, with a share of approximately 20 % of GDP. Approximately 30 % of export earnings are generated by cotton alone, a strategic commodity. The cotton supply chain was long criticized for being state controlled and regulated as well as for using unsustainable production and processing techniques. Generally, outdated agricultural technology and cultivation methods hinder significant development of the sector. Over 60 % of the rural population and 75 % of households live below the poverty line; women are disproportionately affected. There are clear regional disparities with regard to the living and working conditions of the population as well as to climatic and geographic conditions.

In its reform policy, the government is focusing on structural and institutional reforms, the privatization of the agricultural sector, modernization, diversification and intensification of agricultural production, and food self-sufficiency. However, the necessary dialogue between public and private stakeholders, including chambers, associations, as well as between private sector actors is only poorly developing and opportunities for the rural population remain partly untapped.

### 5.7.2 Assessing the project's influence on a policy process

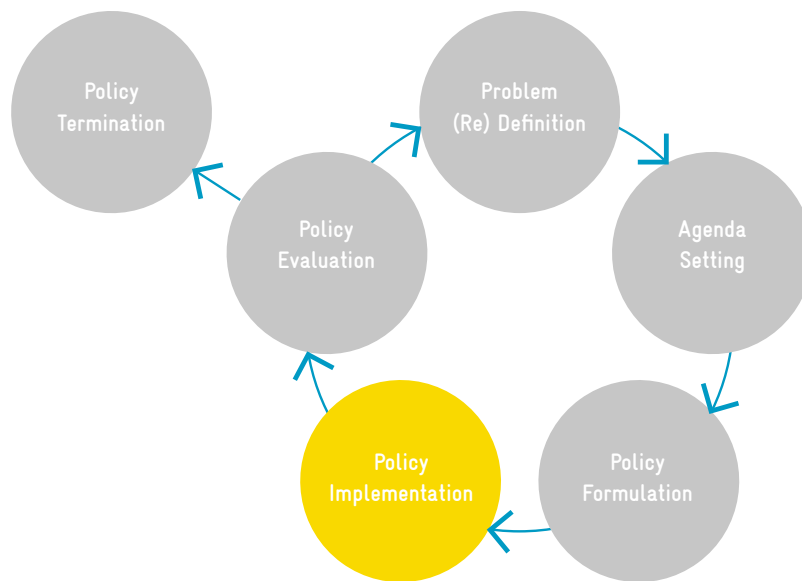
GIZ opened an office in the capital of Tashkent in 1992, shortly after independence and owns a good reputation ever since. In Uzbekistan, each donor is known for a specific field of expertise, Germany for example is Uzbekistan's main partner for technology. Agricultural machinery and companies such as CLAAS or LEMKEN successfully produce and sell in the country.

The stand-alone measure "Sustainable economic development in selected rural regions in Uzbekistan" is a follow-up measure of projects dating back to 2009. It aims to strengthen the sustainable development of small and medium sized enterprises as well as to improve employment opportunities for rural population groups.

When the project was initiated in 2014, agri-food policy advice was not on its agenda, and GIZ was rather expected not to interfere with political

issues. This set-up changed with the beginning of the new reform agenda in 2016, when the new Uzbek government opened itself to the international community. Since then, policy advice is increasingly requested by relevant ministries (e.g. agriculture, economy) and competent authorities; even a stand alone project on the topic is currently under discussion.

The project is working in all steps of the policy process. The project was for example most actively involved in the formulation of the Strategy of Development of Agricultural Industry of the Republic of Uzbekistan for 2020 to 2030 and the development of Rural Development Plans. However, due to the overall setup of this analysis, we focused on policy implementation.



The policy cycle

#### Step 4 Policy Implementation

One important and successfully implemented activity of the project is the support of the Presidential Academy and its five regional branches within the country. It is a training facility for civil servants on highest administrative levels. The project assists in developing new curricula and with facilitating trainings on innovations and clusters, e.g. cluster approaches for the textile and wheat sector.

Clusters are an important approach in the country's ongoing development from a Soviet state to a market economy. In the long run, subsidies and state monopoly shall be replaced by private sector investments. In order to achieve this scenario, the approach envisages the wheat and cotton sectors to modernise and to vertically integrate and incentivise foreign direct investments. The cluster approach aims at fostering cooperation and exchange among stakeholders involved in a sector. They are for example expected to improve linkages between the public and private sector, researchers and politicians as well as to improve working conditions.

As formerly, the government has set fixed minimum prices for cotton and now follow a more market oriented approach, the project mainly advises on market and pricing instruments.

The Uzbek government strongly believes in the cluster approach as a quick way to innovate the agri-food sector. This view is also echoed in a presidential speech in September 2018: "The future of agriculture and its economic efficiency depends on [clusters]. Clusters should become the "locomotive" for the accelerated development of the agricultural sector".

According to the project's own perception, its advice is "well reflected" in the political process:



As up to 2017 the project's main focus wasn't on policy advice, official GIZ monitoring data on the outcome of policy advisory services are not yet in place.

#### Contact Details






**Beate Schoreit**  
Programme Manager  
GIZ Taschkent  
[beate.schoreit@giz.de](mailto:beate.schoreit@giz.de)

**Oydin Sattarov**  
Technical Advisor  
GIZ Taschkent  
[oydin.sattarov@giz.de](mailto:oydin.sattarov@giz.de)

## 5.8 Step 5 – Policy evaluation: evaluating Africa's progress in developing the agri-food sector



### Facts & Figures

<b>Project name:</b>	Policy Advice for Strengthening CAADP Implementation
<b>Country:</b>	Africa continental, 55 member states of the AU
<b>Project Type:</b>	Continental, stand-alone
<b>Duration:</b>	01/2008 – 06/2020 (finalised, full life span reflected here)
<b>Budget:</b>	10,200,000 € (BMZ; since 2008)
<b>Key Topics:</b>	Rural development, regional integration, trade and standards, good agricultural governance
<b>Importance of Policy Advice:</b>	<div>      </div> <div> Not important at all Not very important Medium Important Very important </div>
<b>Key Advisory Topics:</b>	Rural development, regional integration, trade and standards, good agricultural governance
<b>Level of Advice:</b>	Upper management and competent division on macro (national agricultural ministries, particularly CAADP focal points and Permanent Secretaries in member countries) and supra-macro level (African Union Commission Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture, AUC-DREA), African Union Development Agency (AUDA NEPAD);
<b>Major process:</b>	Implementation of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program (CAADP)
<b>Policy Indicators:</b>	<p>The institutional capacities of AUDA-NEPAD have improved by one notch on a five-point scale in the categories of (a) leadership, (b) adaptation, (c) management and (d) implementation capacities.</p> <p>Twelve other countries are effectively advised by AUC-DREA / AUDA-NEPAD based on the new continental guidelines and handouts (e.g. CAADP Country Implementation Guidelines, M&amp;E Guidelines, CAADP Results Framework, etc.) in the implementation of the CAADP process.</p> <p>Four second generation National Agricultural Investment Plans (NAIPs) contain implementation-relevant measures to improve the position of women in agriculture.</p> <p>40 % of the recommendations (a) of 3 regional value chains committees or (b) 5 Investment Facilitation Platforms (IFPs) to strengthen private sector participation in the CAADP process have been implemented.</p>



## 5.8.1 Background

Given the potential of agriculture for job creation and the fight against poverty and food insecurity, in 2003, African heads of state and government launched the “Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program” (CAADP) in the context of the “New Partnership for Africa’s Development” (NEPAD), a continental strategic framework for the agricultural transformation of the continent. Responsible for its coordination and implementation is the African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD), the technical arm of the African Union Commission (AUC), together with the AU Commission’s Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture (AUC-DREA). At the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of CAADP in 2014, the heads of state of the AU recommitted to CAADP by adopting the Malabo Declaration. At the centre of both is the development and implementation of National Agricultural Investment Plans (NAIP) with appropriate participation from the private sector operating in the agricultural sector. The AU member states depend on effective support from the two continental CAADP institutions, whose capacity for service provision towards member states is still building up.

Unlike other projects in this chapter, the analysis reflects the whole project life span of 12 years.

## 5.8.2 Assessing the project’s influence on a policy process

GIZ provided policy advice to the African Unions institutions for more than 12 years, beginning in 2007. In June 2020, the policy advice module came to an official end. Throughout the overall programme (including three other modules apart from policy advice), funds of a total of nearly 60 million Euro were invested into CAADP.

The policy advice module aimed to enable AUDA-NEPAD and AUC through capacity development to fulfil their respective mandates in support of the CAADP country processes. It followed a multi-level approach and provided for interventions at the continental, regional and national level. The policy advice module also strived for vertical cooperation with selected bilateral TC projects in the agricultural sector.

With its advice, the project covered all parts of the policy cycle, especially through capacity development measures and knowledge products (e.g. AU Malabo Knowledge Compendium) for different national and regional stakeholders to increase their knowledge and understanding of national, regional, continental and global processes and to help member countries prioritise and identify key topics for the formulation of their national agricultural sector strategies (NAIPs, Step 2 & 3 Agenda Setting and Policy Formulation).

The political will for change across countries and institutions in regard to the CAADP process is rated with an average of four stars across countries:

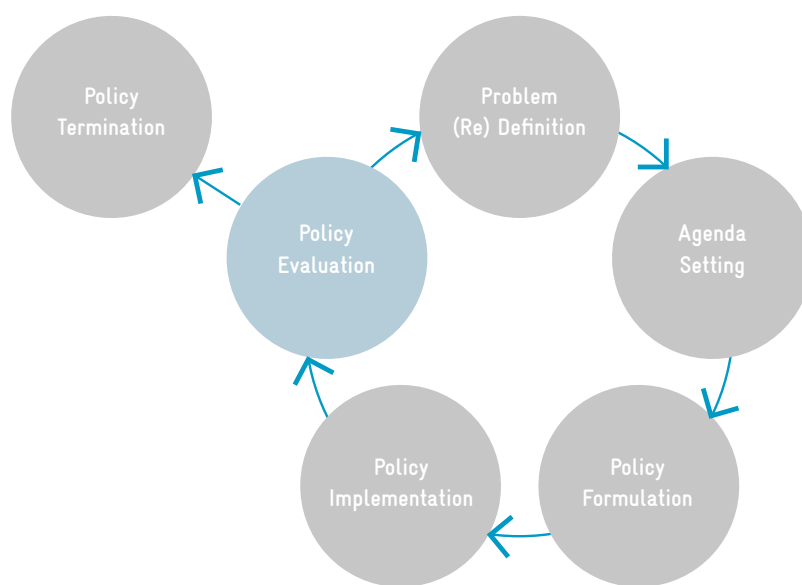




Over time, the module continuously advised the AUDA-NEPAD and the AUC-DREA on the implementation of the Malabo agenda at country level by developing Malabo-compliant, evidence-based and implementable NAIPs and by providing technical support. At national level, at least eight countries received assistance with the formulation and implementation of their NAIPs (Step 4 Policy Implementation on continental, Step 3 Policy Formulation at national level).

With the support of the TC measure, AUDA-NEPAD also improved the systematic involvement of the private sector in the CAADP process by establishing Country Agribusiness Partnership Frameworks (CAP-F) in selected countries through the Grow Africa Initiative.

Regardless of the many processes covered by the project, this analysis focusses on the last step of the policy cycle, step 5 policy evaluation, as it is the only case study that has dealt with advising on policy evaluation processes.



The policy cycle

## Step 5 Policy Evaluation

Within its second term, the project assisted in building a M&E and reporting system, including technical guidelines for the continental “Biennial Review Process”. The Biennial Agricultural Review serves as the monitoring and evaluation mechanism of the CAADP process. Every two years, all 55 AU member states are invited to report on their progress in achieving the Malabo goals, based on a total of 47 indicators. The Biennial Agricultural Review process allows for country-to-country comparisons as well as regional comparisons. The technical guidelines provided included methodological requirements for data collection, data analysis and reporting.

The TC measure promoted in particular the joint development of the 47 Malabo indicators. Unfortunately, BMZ did not want to further promote the review process in the last phase of the project after 2016, and the process was further accompanied by USAID and AGRA.

According to the key lessons learnt formulated in the aftermaths of 12 years of project implementation, the significance of the Biennial Review cannot be overestimated. “On the one hand, it constitutes a powerful tool that allows to track and monitor progress towards achieving the Malabo targets. On the other hand, the individual country score-cards that the process generates contain concrete recommendations for policy action to be taken at country-level, which are ideally taken up as countries formulate or revise their national agricultural strategies and investment plans. Furthermore, the process has created a healthy level of competition among countries and hence increased the pressure on non-performing countries as well as countries’ general political commitment to the process. It has certainly increased the result and impact orientation of the CAADP process: It can be expected that successful NAIP implementation

will reward countries with higher Biennial Review scores. Overall, the Biennial Review process has become a genuine success story that is widely recognised as a unique continental innovation in the agricultural sector, applauded by CAADP constituencies and the development partner community alike. Its successful establishment is historical, as it produces, for the first time, a comprehensive continental status report for the agricultural sector” (Source: “23 Key Lessons Learnt – Reflections at the End of 12 Years of German Support to CAADP”, 2020).

As a continental status report, the Biennial Review provides valuable data on the wider agri-food sector for almost every country in Africa, covering a broad range of subtopics. These include nutrition, agricultural trade, agricultural finance, climate resilience, youth and gender, and more.

At country level, the project also participated in the Independent Technical Review (ITR) missions, quality checking the NAIP on their compliance with Malabo indicators.

Even though the project did not support the process during its last mile due to BMZ specifications, the project was picked as a good practice example for step 5, policy evaluation, as it played a major role in the initial steps of the process. Additionally, there was also a lack of suitable alternatives, as assistance in policy evaluation does not seem to be widely practiced among GIZ projects (compare chapter 4).

Concluding, the team assessed the reflection of their advice in the different policy processes (independently of this process) as “high”.



## Contact Details

**Tarquin Mészáros**

Technical Advisor

[tarquin.meszaros@giz.de](mailto:tarquin.meszaros@giz.de)

**Hannah Scheuermann**

Technical Advisor

[hannah.scheuermann@giz.de](mailto:hannah.scheuermann@giz.de)

## 6. LESSONS LEARNT



This chapter summarizes the lessons learnt that were mentioned in and extracted from all interviews with the eight case studies regardless of the policy process depicted in more detail in chapter five. It ends with recommendations.

*“Acting quick  
is a privilege of  
politics.”*

Generally, the most important lesson learnt that was pointed out several times and across all projects was a very simple one: **Policy advice takes time! It takes time until you learn to see from a partner’s perspective and to build trust and it takes time until it generates impact!** Sometimes results may be seen only decades from implementation. Support should hence be granted realistic timeframes and be based on strategic and visionary thinking on the part of the development agencies as well as their commissioning parties.

It also requires flexibility in project design as **projects need be able to quickly react to a challenging and highly dynamic partner system.** Division of labour envisaged in the team and between different actors does not always materialise in practice in such situations. It is rather important to understand the partner system and its underlying power dynamics and to navigate the cooperation system in a pragmatic manner.

## 6.1 Lessons Learnt for policy advice along the policy cycle

- **Policy advice must be (as) neutral** (as possible). Acknowledging one’s own bias is crucial and should be taken into account when designing the project. **Even if it is easier said than done: Avoid mixing your own agenda into the process;** “You have to take the time to talk to your partner and think from a partner’s perspective”.
- **Policy advice should be based on scientific evidence**, where appropriate and necessary. Staff should have a basic understanding of economics in order to interpret data and translate it into “digestible policy language”.
- **“We are limited by our ability to simplify”**: Voters are no scientists, neither are the politicians they vote for. Implementation as well as communication has to be as simple as possible, especially in environments where the importance of the agri-food sector is high, but the level of education is low. “We must simplify our messages in order for our work to be understood and to be successful.”
- **Cross-country exchange** among policy stakeholders is a powerful and highly accepted tool to facilitate peer-learning.
- **Leadership is prerequisite** for politicians to successfully manage political processes and cross-sectoral exchange among different interest groups, including ministries. Advisory services should hence be complemented by targeted capacity building and coaching to enhance overall functionality of the agri-food governance system.



## 5. Policy Evaluation

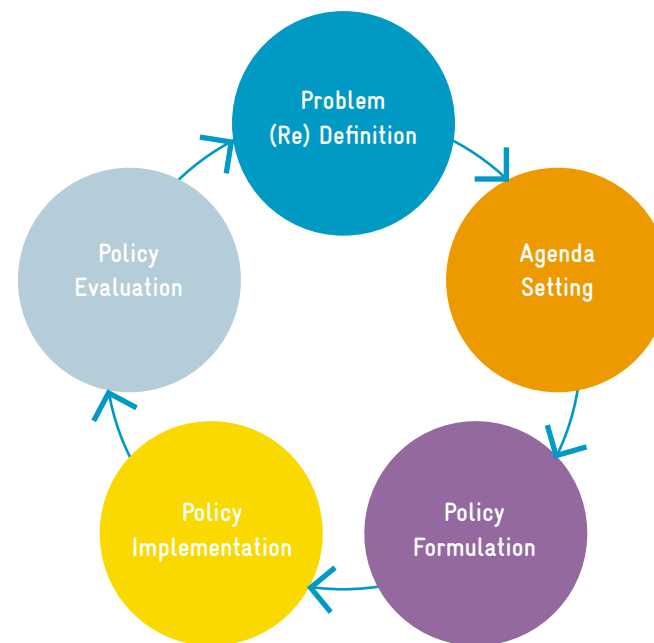
- **Policies derive their legitimacy from the impact they create.** Tools such as impact evaluation should be fostered, also to make political communication easier.
- **Clear target system and functional accountability mechanism**, e.g. in the form of regular monitoring of policy implementation progress, may trigger action and reform processes.
- **Partner institutions should organise evaluations of their policy processes themselves**, supported by external experts, in order to increase ownership.
- **Evaluating policy advisory takes time.** Whether policy recommendations were taken up and had an impact can only be evaluated after a time period longer than a typical project life span. This is one major challenge when it comes to annual reporting in GIZ.

## 4. Policy Implementation

- **The “right” institutional framework and capacities have to be created** before policies can successfully be implemented; this takes time and flexibility.
- **Technical advisory support should always be accompanied by institutional capacity-building measures**, strengthening the systemic and transformational capabilities at all levels of the governance system.
- **Policies must be enforced on the ground. The best policy is worthless if it's not properly implemented.**

## 1. Problem (Re) Definition

- Staff should have basic knowledge of economics to be able to understand the economic context in which they operate and to identify challenges in their scope of influence.



The policy cycle

### Step 3 and 4

- **Alignment of policy development with overarching frameworks or regional policies** and embedded in national planning and budgeting cycles is important.
- **Robust inter ministerial coordination and governance**, acknowledging the cross-sectoral nature of agriculture, is a major factor for success.
- **Provision of policies and papers in local languages** is crucial to increase ownership, equal share of information and for implementation.
- **Regional/ Continental policies may promote policy reform at country level** if they offer a clear set of principles and values, of best practices, thematic policy guidance and concrete targets to which countries can align their individual agricultural sector strategies.

## 2. Agenda Setting

- **Political change must always be initiated by the partner, ownership of the countries and the region over the development of policies** is a main success factor.
- **A platform** should be available **for all stakeholders to be able to communicate** with each other openly; both for promoting ownership and mutual understanding.
- Sometimes it is not a challenge to bring people together but to also **maintain a group during its ups and downs**, e. g. when personnel is changing.
- **Donor action must be streamlined, coordinated and harmonised**, especially as each international organization has its own cultural perspective on how to do things the “right way”. This is also important in regard to the production of consistent and comparable data.

## 3. Policy Formulation

- **Evidence-based policy making is key!** Analytical studies prior to policy making should be conducted, even though policy processes and decisions depend on more than just evidence (see chapter 3.2.2. on the policy dimension “Politics”). **Data availability, transparency and quality** can be a huge problem, especially on the lower policy levels. There is often no unified data collection system and the data obtained from different countries or institutions is often not comparable and can't be processed without considerable additional effort. **Competence to correctly collect data and manage respective data basis as well as to use and interpret data (policy analysis and ex-ante assessments)** is also a necessary precondition for evidence based policy making and should be built, if not yet present. Digital tools can improve data management significantly.
- Specific **realities of stakeholders at micro level** have to be taken into account. They are key to a successful implementation.

## 6.2 Lessons Learnt for the Project Set-Up

Generally, one of the most important lessons learnt pointed out in regard to the project set-up several times and across all projects was: **Policy advice is based on trust. It is built over a longer period of time and on a "common history"**. Hence, sometimes the need for policy advice emerges over time and during implementation of a project that was initially not meant to advise on political issues and has hence no indicator to monitor these activities. However, the request for policy advice may be interpreted as a sign of trust and an indicator for the quality of the relationship between the implementing agency and the political partner.

The following aspects were mentioned in regard to a successful project set-up:

- **Transparent project planning and implementation** (project proposals, drafting and awarding consultancy contracts and grants, etc.) is key for ownership and trust.
- **Proximity to the partner**, e.g. through the secondment of qualified (national) personnel to the partner institution, is important to ease communication, understand partner priorities and establish trust. If physical proximity is not possible for whatever reason, e.g. COVID-19, digital information and communication tools (and if needed the purchase of them) can be a good alternative.
- **A project steering committee** or supervisory board that is meeting regularly and where everyone is entirely open (or as open as it can be) is important to involve key stakeholders, to ensure shared responsibility and ownership and to regular question yourself and adjust accordingly.
- **A multi-level approach, i.e. working on the micro, meso and macro level, is important.** Knowing what is "going on" on the micro and meso level is very important to be able to advise on policies at national level. This may also include lessons learnt from piloting activities.
- **Monitoring policy advisory processes increases effectiveness but may also hinder much needed flexibility.** On the one hand, a monitoring system is an important tool for planning and implementation and for identifying weak spots and opportunities. It helps to focus on the targets and is a powerful tool for evaluating whether or not the project is on the right track. On the other hand, it can also limit the flexibility to adapt to changing circumstances and goals, which is not rare due to change in political priorities and conditions (e.g. new government). However, due to the short time horizon of GIZ advisory projects, impact assessments can hardly be performed.
- **Regional exchange** between countries with similar set-ups and conditions is important in the process of policy design and implementation. Some challenges can be better addressed regionally, where coordinated approaches, networking, exchange and learning leads to jointly developed harmonised solutions with great ownership of countries.



## 6.3 Lessons Learnt for the Team and qualities of “the” policy advisor

The team set-up was mentioned as a very important success factor by all interviewees. The most important message: **Policy advice works best in a mixed and gender-balanced team of respected national senior and junior experts together with international staff.** The importance of national staff was also clearly depicted in the results of the survey (see chapter 4). Especially senior national staff is perceived as very well qualified and experienced, connected and influential.

In addition, the following lessons learnt can be summarized:

- **“Allrounders” are needed** who understand the different elements of the set-up and are able to “think politically” in order to put elements together in a sensible way.
- Depending on the cultural context, **women can make communication easier** and are sometimes not seen as much as a “threat” as their fellow male (senior) team members. This can be used as an advantage. However, women, especially junior advisors, must be offered training on how to deal with sexual harassment and must be given council if having encountered with it.
- Experience both in public and especially in **private sector cooperation** is vital.
- **Ability to link research and politics:** policy advisors need to be able to translate scientific evidence into political language, for example by using political catch words, such as “jobs” and “taxes” instead of “productivity increases” or “capacity building”. This way it's easier for the partner to develop ownership and to also sell successes.
- **Clear communication structure** amongst the stakeholders and towards the partner. Face-to-face communication was also mentioned as an important success factor for building up trust.
- **Networkers are needed:** Networking activities are decisive to get access to certain institutions and people. People network in different ways; each may be important for the project's success.

## 7. RECOMMENDATIONS

In addition to the lessons learnt summarized in chapter six, we would like to add the following recommendations:

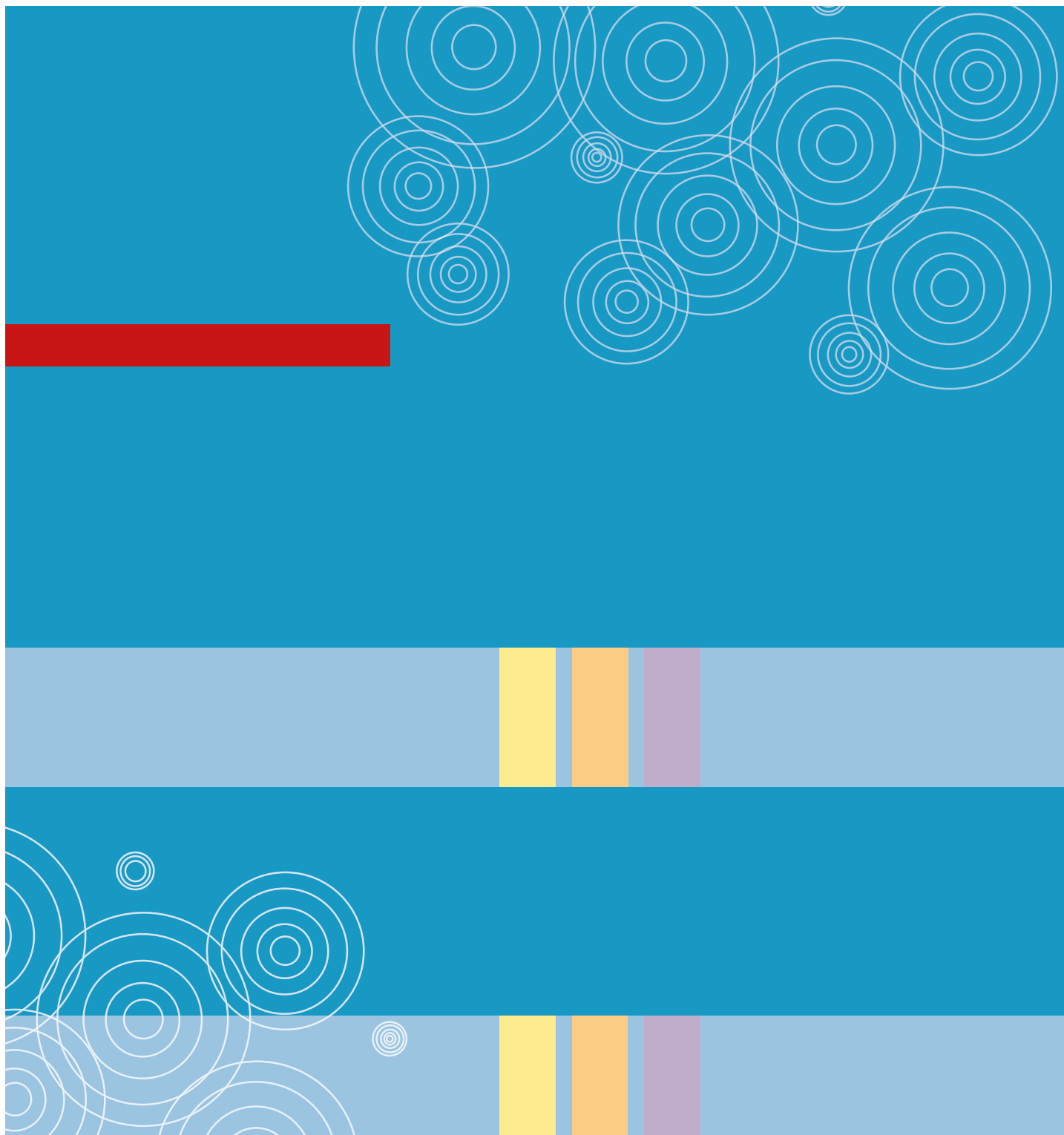
- **We would like to stress again that policy advice takes time. Time until you learn to see from a partners' perspective and to build trust to generate impact.** It also requires a flexible project design as **projects need be able to quickly react to a challenging and highly dynamic partner system.** Support should hence be granted realistic timeframes and be based on strategic and visionary thinking on the part of the development agencies as well as their commissioning parties. Policy advice cannot be laced in an evertighter project corset with predefined resource allocation to the last detail.
- The online survey, the in-depth interviews as well as the comments on this paper have shown that **some steps of the policy cycle seem to have a better reputation within GIZ** (e.g. policy formulation or implementation) than others (e.g. problem definition, agenda-setting or policy evaluation). However, **for a policy to be successful, all steps of the policy cycle as well as successes made within them should be equally valued**, as examples in chapter 5 have shown.
- The strong focus on policy formulation and implementation is also reflected in the indicators, which **mainly focus on contributions to policy papers or implementation.** Both are possibly owed to a wish of proofing one's work on paper or to the commissioning parties increasingly tightening design, leaving little flexibility. However, in order to reflect all steps of the cycle, apart from performance indicators (e.g. contributions to a National Policy), it could for example additionally be distinguished between
  - **Process indicators**, focusing on the relationship quality between partners as a precondition for trust and successful policy advice, measured for example by the number of exchange meetings or advisory requests.
  - **Evidence indicators**, focusing on the provision of research data prior to policy formulation and implementation by collaborating with research institutions, measured for example by the number of policy impact assessments.
  - **Organisational indicators**, that measure the involvement of relevant stakeholders in the policy process, measured for example by the composition of decision-making bodies or multi-stakeholder processes.
  - **Capacity indicators**, measuring the improved capacity of government staff due to coaching, international exchange or other capacity development measures.
- **Technical advisory support should always be accompanied by personal capacity-building measures.** Managing policy processes requires managerial skills and empathy, skills that can be learned, lying beyond technical knowledge and education. Politicians must be able to understand the overall context which is usually provided to them by technical staff. However, based on empathy and instinct they must also manage different interests and facilitate stakeholder processes accordingly, in particular when looking at the many different ministries and government institutions involved. They must be integrative instead of aggressive, always mediating for the best compromise.
- **Technical advisory support should always be accompanied by institutional capacity-building measures** in order to strengthen the institution and optimize processes within. This also includes building robust interministerial coordination and governance.

- There is a very **different understanding among projects and staff on what is the definition of evidence**. Some already consider decisions that are based on long-term experience to be decisions based on evidence. Colleagues should be made aware and be encouraged to engage with research institutions, within and beyond the agri-food sector to provide political partners with the facts needed for successful policy making.
- Based on the previous observation, it is important to **hire staff for policy advisory projects who has a basic understanding of economics**, quantitative analysis and is hence able to accompany and interpret scientific policy impact assessments as well as to translate them into easy and digestible language for policy makers.
- As survey results have shown, **policy advice mainly takes place on macro and upper management level**. **However, impact and success of a policy are rather evaluated (e.g. by voters) on micro level** where they are usually implemented by competent or local authorities. Including these levels into advisory services along the whole policy cycle is crucial for success, e.g. in terms of ownership. However, it is not only in the first three steps of the policy cycle until a policy is formulated, they should be included in, e.g. by participatory processes, but also by assisting with policy implementation and evaluation.
- Generally, more focus should be laid on **evaluating agri-food policy advisory services**, including the learning from mistakes.
- **The importance of senior national staff was mentioned several times and is also clearly depicted** in the results of the only survey (see chapter 4). However, we would like to stress, that it is also important to build capacity of junior policy advisory staff, especially women. It is important in order to build capacity for the future, in order to contribute to transformative change in regard to traditional gender roles, and it is important because women and youth complement the different perspectives and may introduce new and innovative methods for initiating positive change processes.
- **Exchange among GIZ policy advisory projects across countries and regions should be fostered**. It is a real advantage and was mentioned during several interviews. Even though exchange groups among policy advisors were created, they seem to be mostly dormant. Strategies should be thought of on how to wake them up again. Exchange is not only a great opportunity for (peer-to-peer) learning, it also offers opportunities for regional cooperation and integration, for harmonisation of data, methods and policies, building on a common comparative advantage.

## 8. ANNEX

### Annex 1: List of projects that took part in the online survey

No	Project	PN	Country
#1	Promotion of nutrition-sensitive potato value chains in East Africa	16.0110.3	Kenya
#2	CAADP Policy Advisory Module	16.2124.2	Africa NA
#3	Global project Food Security and Strengthening of Resilience – Country Package Zambia	14.0968.9	Zambia
#4	Promotion of sustainable agriculture and rural development in Tunisia	14.2495.1	Tunisia
#5	Global Project Soil protection and rehabilitation for food security – Country Package Burkina Faso	14.0156.1	Burkina Faso
#6	Integrated Rural Development in the South of Kyrgyzstan	17.2105.9	Kyrgyzstan
#7	Sector Project Agricultural Trade, Agribusiness, Agricultural Finance	18.2037.2	Germany
#8	Agricultural Policy Advisory Fund	17.0123.4	Global
#9	Water and Energy for Food (WE4F) – Kenya	19.0112.3	Kenya
#10	Micro, small and medium enterprises in employment-relevant sectors make use of the potentials of international markets	16.2206.7	Kosovo
#11	Private Sector Development in economically deprived regions of Serbia	16.2022.8	Serbia
#12	Competitive African Cashew Value Chains for Pro-Poor Growth	15.2165.7	Africa NA
#13	Sustainable Economic Development and Employment Promotion	17.2068.9	Afghanistan
#14	Sustainable Development of rural areas in Albania	17.2192.7	Albania
#15	Support to economic diversification of rural areas in Southeast Europe	18.2080.2	South East Europe
#16	Support to Sustainable Economic Development in selected regions of Uzbekistan	13.2206.4	Uzbekistan
#17	Sustainable Agricultural Development and Food Quality Initiative	16.2207.5	Myanmar
#18	Youth Employment in the agri-food sector in Western Kenya	18.2246.9	Kenya
#19	Food Security in Western Kenya	16.2106.9	Kenya
#20	Strengthening of agricultural economy	19.2052.9	Benin



Deutsche Gesellschaft für  
Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

Sitz der Gesellschaft  
Bonn and Eschborn, Germany

Friedrich-Ebert-Allee 36+40  
53113 Bonn, Germany  
T +49 228 44 60-0  
F +49 228 44 60-17 66

Dag-Hammarskjöld-Weg 1-5  
65760 Eschborn, Germany  
T +49 61 96 79-0  
F +49 61 96 79-11 15

E [info@giz.de](mailto:info@giz.de)  
I [www.giz.de](http://www.giz.de)