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STRATEGY GUIDE ON POLICY AND BUDGET MONITORING AND ADVOCACY IN AGRICULTURE



March, 2018



Made possible by the support of the American People through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and Trócaire.



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Chapter 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1. Context

Trōcaire with funding NO: AID-696-A-17-00011.” from USAID has secured a Cooperative award to implement a project entitled: “ Enhancing Participatory Governance and Accountability”. This is essentially to strengthen participatory and accountable governance through the participation of civil society and citizens, particularly women and youth. The focus is the formulation, implementation and monitoring/evaluation of development policies and programs in the agricultural sector in five districts of Rwanda namely; Rulindo, Gakenke, Nyanza, Nyamagabe and Nyaruguru. The overall objective of this project is to contribute to the strengthening of Civil Society organizations for transparent governance, public leader’s accountability and inclusiveness in public policy development.

The development of this agriculture policy advocacy guide for CSOs and FOs has the main objective as “to strengthen the capacity and enable CSOs and FOs to be in possession of sounding tools which will enhance their participation in agricultural policies formulation, implementation, monitoring, and advocacy at district levels”.

CSOs’ and FOs’ active engagement will ensure a more needs-responsive and inclusive policy-making, fostering a stronger governance and improved public authorities’ accountability.

In order for the CSOs and FOs to be active in the agriculture sector and fulfill their roles, the project will contribute to building an inclusive and empowered civil society in the field of agriculture through strengthening of existing organizations and networks and coalition building. It will open spaces for agricultural policy engagement and reposition farmer organizations and networks inclusive of women farmer groups to drive agricultural dialogues.

It is in this regard that the project has developed an agricultural policy and advocacy guide for CSOs and Farmer Organization (FOs) which will enhance their participation in agricultural policies formulation, implementation, monitoring, and advocacy.

1.2. Purpose of the guide

The main objective of the development of an agriculture strategy guide on policy and budget monitoring and advocacy for CSOs and FOs is to strengthen the capacity and enable CSOs and FOs to be in possession of sounding tools which will enhance their participation in agricultural policies formulation, implementation, monitoring, and advocacy at district levels.

The strategy guide will help CSOs and FOs to influence agriculture policies which may lead to reviewing the existing policies or and establishing new policies to ensure that the farmers and other stakeholders benefit effectively from agriculture policies.

Chapter 2: RWANDA AGRICULTURE POLICY

The mission of the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources is to initiate, develop and manage suitable programs of transformation and modernization of agriculture and livestock to ensure food security and to contribute to the national economy. Its Vision is to modernize Agriculture and Livestock to achieve food security.

One of the key pillars of this vision is the transformation of Agriculture from subsistence to a productive high value, market oriented farming that is environmentally friendly and has an impact on other sectors of the economy.

To attain its mission and vision, the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources set up an agriculture policy with focus: “To increase animal production, modernize farming, reduce poverty, ensure food security and have surplus for the market”. This will ultimately result in the increase of the standard of living of the population.

The Ministry of agriculture and animal resources also set up some strategic orientations which serve as guidelines for its policy.

2.1 International agriculture policies overview

Rwanda is not an isolated sovereign state. It is a member of the international, continental and regional communities. It is a member of the UN, WTO, WIPO, AU, ARIPO, COMESA and EAC. All these intergovernmental institutions develop policies related to agriculture, which Rwanda ratifies and domesticates through its national policies. The Rwanda agriculture policy is not secluded and draws from other international conventions as well as global and regional policies.

Rwanda subscribes to the SDGs and their targeted indicators. Although agriculture is mentioned in SDG 2 which is End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture, it also touches on other SDGs mostly 1,3,12 and 15 and to some extent 6, 8 and 13.

This policy guide is providing this information so that stakeholders can cross check their national agriculture policy and find out if they will respond and achieve the targeted indicators in the given time frame.

2.2. National agriculture policies

When referring to the national agriculture policies, there is attendance of looking at the Strategic Plan for the Transformation of Agriculture in Rwanda (PASTA). As earlier explained, Policies can be guidelines, rules, regulations, laws, principles, or directions. This policy guide provides the users with key documents that you can refer to when you want to clearly understand agriculture policies in Rwanda.

2.2.1 Rwanda agriculture Strategies

The following are set strategy documents in Rwanda's agriculture that this policy guide will highlight:

1. Strategic Plan for the Transformation of Agriculture in Rwanda Phase III,
2. Mechanization Strategy,
3. National Fertilizer Policy,
4. Strategic Plan for Animal Nutrition Improvement Programme for Rwanda,
5. Strategic & Investment Plan to Strengthen Meat Industry in Rwanda,
6. National Dairy Strategy,
7. Strategy & Investment Plan to Strengthen the Poultry Industry in Rwanda,
8. Strategy and Investment Plan for Small Animal Industry in Rwanda,
9. Animal Genetic Improvement Strategic and Investment Plan,
10. Master plan of milk chain in Rwanda,
11. Master Plan for Fisheries and Fish Farming in Rwanda,
12. National ICT 4RAG Strategy (2016 -2020), Rice policy.

2.2.2 Rwanda agriculture laws and regulations

Laws are rules and guidelines that are set up by the social institutions to govern behavior. These laws are made by government officials (law makers).

2.3. Agriculture policy implementation

2.3.1. Agriculture Development Programs

Agriculture policies are implemented to ensure that food and nutrition security is attainable at household level. The ministry of agriculture and animal husbandry and its subsidiary institutions work closely with local authorities and other law enforcing agencies to ensure that the policies in place are effectively implemented.

Table 1: Programs & sub-programs

Program 1: Agriculture and Animal Resource Intensification
SP1: Soil conservation and land husbandry
SP2: Irrigation and water management
SP3: Agriculture Mechanization
SP4: Agrochemical use and markets
SP5: Seed Development
SP6: Livestock development
SP7: Nutrition and Household Vulnerability
Program 2: Research and Technology Transfer, Advisory services & Professionalization of
Farmers
SP1: Research and Technology Transfer
SP2: Extension and proximity services for producers
SP3: Farmers' cooperative and farmers' associations
Program 3: Value Chain Development and Private Sector Investment
SP1: Creating an environment to attract private sector investment, encourage entrepreneurship and facilitate market access
SP2: Development of priority value chain: Food Crops
SP3: Development of priority value chains: export crops
SP4: Development of priority value chains: dairy meat and fish
SP5: Inception and certification
SP6: Market oriented infrastructure for post-harvest management systems
Program 4: Institutional Development and Agricultural cross cutting issues
SP1: Institutional capacity building
SP2: Decentralization
SP3: Legal and Regulatory Framework
SP4: Knowledge Management, Agricultural Statistical Systems and M&E
SP5: Cross Cutting issues in agriculture
PSTAll

2.3.2. Implementing organs

The Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources is the custodian of agriculture policies and strategies. It however works closely with other government ministries, parastatals, and other stakeholders to implement the existing policies and strategies. The following are the other agriculture policies implementing organs:

1. Rwanda Agriculture Board (RAB)
2. National Agricultural Export Development Board (NAEB)
3. Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning (MINECOFIN)
4. Ministry of Local Government (MINALOC)
5. Ministry of Justice (MINIJUST)
6. Districts
7. Non-governmental Organization (NGOs, national and international) and other development partners

2.4. Agriculture policy monitoring

Policy monitoring is a process of following on how the policy is being implemented, understanding if it is beneficial to those it targeted to serve, identifying if it could have some gaps, finding out if there are some obstacles to its implementation, identifying the challenges it may have created to the public and improving on implementation strategies or proposing some amendments if need be.

The following should play important roles in policy monitoring:

- i. Government at both local and central levels should monitor the agriculture policy to make sure that they meet the set objectives the policy was meant to achieve
- ii. Elected representatives of communities' right from national parliament to the cell level. These peoples' representatives should be able to advise if the policy is people supportive or if it has become a disaster and propose change
- iii. Development partners should monitor policies to ensure that funding goes for the right value for money and benefits their targeted rights-holders
- iv. Civil society organizations and religious organizations should play their watchdog roles and ensure that their advocacy is well informed by policy monitoring.
- v. Private sector has to monitor policy implementation so that their investments are protected and secure.

All these parties who ought to monitor policy implementation should as well understand the global policy context which the country signed to, ratified and domesticated. That is only when policy monitoring becomes holistic and informative to both policy makers and users.

Chapter 3: AGRICULTURE BUDGETING

Agriculture budgeting process is not considered to be a stand-alone process, it is linked with the existing country normal budget making process (National Budget Process).

3.1. Agriculture budget preparation

The Ministry of Finances and Economic Planning (MINECOFIN) determines the national budget process (calendar) from its preparation, elaboration, adoption by the Parliament, implementation, reporting to the budget evaluation (auditing) by the Audit General Office. This process is used by all Ministries (includes Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources), Provinces, Kigali City, local administrative entities (districts) and public services.

Figure 1: Budget process

PERIOD	BUDGET PROCESS					
	National Level			District Level		
July	Budget Execution	Budget Planning	Budget Execution	Budget Report		
August						
September						
October		Budget Formulation		Budget Formulation		Budget Formulation
November						
December						
January						
February						
March						
April		Budget Approbation		Budget Approbation		Budget Approbation by DC
May						
June						

The Ministry of agriculture has to follow this calendar provided by MINECOFIN to manage its agriculture budgeting process. The agriculture budget is prepared by the Ministry in charge of agriculture and her agencies (programmes) in collaboration with decentralized services in charge of agriculture at local level (districts). It has to put issues of small holder farmers into consideration from all levels (local and national level), focusing on issues affecting agriculture and small farmers at community level as they appear in Vision 2020.

The Gender and family is the main issues that will help to reduce poverty levels among men and women, decrease malnutrition, reduce gender based violence and other related conflicts at both family and community level.

3.2 Agriculture budget implementation

The implementation of the budget involves two main operations: commitments and payments. As regards the commitment of expenditure, a decision is taken to use a particular sum from a specific budgetary line in order to finance a specific activity. This is the responsibility of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning who provides the financial resources to implement activities in other Ministries, Provinces, Kigali City, Districts and Public Services.

The National Budget Department is in charge of Coordinating the implementation of the Fiscal Decentralization Strategy including supporting formulation of Districts' Budgets and monitoring their implementation. Also, the implementation of the budget involves taking responsibility for certain accounting operations which is the responsibility of the Treasury Service of MINECOFIN.

3.3. Agriculture budget monitoring

Budget monitoring is therefore a significant part of the budgetary control process. The main purpose of budget monitoring in public services is to ensure that total income and expenditure planned at the budget stage is used and adhered to as far as possible during the budget period.

According to the Rwandan Budget Organic law, the National Budget execution is done by the management organs of state including Ministries, Provinces, public institutions, agencies and districts. The management follows the standardized norms and procedures as stipulated in the Budget Act and the Organic Law on finance and properties.

However, the government has put in place strategies and mechanisms for monitoring and controlling public expenditures by the Office of the Auditor General who presents every year the budget report to the Parliament.

The Chief Budget Managers are responsible for implementing the recommendations of the Auditor General of State Finances aimed at improving the effective management and use of public funds. The Auditor General of State Finances ensures that the annual audit reports are published.

Table 3: Key highlights / who does what in the budget Monitoring in Rwanda?

INSTITUTION	Role to play in the Budget Monitoring Process
THE PARLIAMENT	The national parliament is the overall institution that approves the budget and hold to account as well, Budget Agencies on the implementation of public funds (Budget).
PARLIAMENTARY BUDGET COMMITTEE (PBC)	Under the national parliament, the parliamentary budget committee analyze and scrutinize proposed budget allocation by Budget Agencies. PBC advise to the national parliament on proper budget allocation in order to meet national development plans and on contraction of foreign aid
PUBLIC ACCOUNT COMMITTEE (PAC)	The Public Account Committee is the parliamentary committed that hold Budget Agencies to account after the Office of the Auditor General points fingers on the mismanagement and embezzlement of public money
OFFICE OF THE AUDITOR GENERAL OF THE REPUBLIC (OAG)	The Office of the Auditor General of the Republic (OAG) monitors and coordinate accounting activities for setting and promoting compliance with the accounting and financial reporting standards applicable to public entities.
CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS (CSOS)	Civil Society Organizations should follow up the implementation of the budget in the districts of their intervention by monitoring implementation of activities planned in the DDPs of their districts according to the priorities identified by the citizens in participatory planning approach from Cell level.

Chapter 4: LOBBY AND ADVOCACY GUIDELINES AND STRATEGIES

There are no specific strategies and guidelines for lobby and advocacy for the policy and budget monitoring in the agriculture sector which are not used in other socio-economic sectors such as health, education, trade and others. They differ only by the lobby and advocacy goals and objectives, target groups and stakeholders. This strategic guide provides to CSOs and FOs users some steps to follow while lobbying and doing advocacy for the agriculture policy and the budget.

CSOs who ought to monitor policy implementation and budget execution have to understand the global policy context which the country signed to, ratified and domesticated. That is only when policy monitoring and budget monitoring becomes holistic and informative to both policy makers and users.

The overarching objective of any lobby and advocacy strategy is to influence decision makers in order to advance and improve conditions for the selected target group. Decision-makers can be politicians and policy-makers as well as other crucial decisive stakeholders, such as international companies, but also church leaders or tribal leaders. Both lobby and advocacy enhance the scope of influence to improve policies and achieve structural change in key areas such as agriculture, health, education or trade¹.

4.1. Lobbying

Lobbying is a specialized form of advocacy. It is a strategic, planned and informal way of influencing decision-makers. Characteristics are: open two-way communication, influencing by linking the interests of different stakeholders, creating win-win situations and investing in long-term relationships with decision-makers.

Lobbying (often by lobby groups) is a form of advocacy where a direct approach is made to legislators on an issue which plays a significant role in modern politics.

4.2. Advocacy

There is no one or unique definition of advocacy. Advocacy can be defined as an act or process of supporting a cause or proposal. The legal definition of advocacy is a profession or a work of an advocate or again as the action of advocating, pleading for, or supporting a cause or proposal (W. O. Douglas).

Advocacy is an activity by an individual or group which aims to influence decisions within political, economic, and social systems and institutions. It is a public support for or recommendation of a particular cause or policy, the profession or work of a legal advocate. We can also define advocacy as an act of speaking on the behalf of or in support of another person, place, or thing. However, Common advocacy methods are often used to enforce changes by making demands. Most of the time these methods are primarily used to send out information to get a specific message across or to mobilise people in order to weaken the position of a particular decision-maker.

LIMITS OF LOBBY AND ADVOCACY :

The tools and methods used will highly depend on the context and (cultural) setting you are operating in. In case you have limited political space or access to decision-makers to engage in a constructive dialogue you might be more inclined to organise a demonstration or a petition. Whereas in some specific topics more can be achieved through personal dialogue or through close collaboration. It is important to define ones own terms of engagement.

4.3. Lobby and Advocacy Strategies

In this chapter, we present the approach with 10 steps which will serve as guidelines or

THE 10 STEPS TO ACHIEVE EFFECTIVE LOBBYING AND ADVOCACY INCLUDE:

- Step 1:** Clarify the objectives of your organization, **Step 2:** Define your target group,
- Step 3:** Choose your lobby and advocacy goal and set objectives, **Step 4:** Define the decision-makers,
- Step 5:** Prepare your organization for lobby and advocacy, **Step 6:** Identify other stakeholders,
- Step 7:** Check whether lobby and advocacy is possible, **Step 8:** Develop a lobby and advocacy action plan, **Step 9:** Implement the lobby and advocacy action plan,
- Step 10:** Ensure Monitoring and Evaluation and follow up of your activities.

Step 1: Clarify the objectives of your organization

The vision, mission and objectives of your organization, network or coalition need to be clear to all staff in particular to those members of staff who maintain the 'outside' contacts with decision-makers, other civil society organizations or companies.

Step 2: Define the target group

Ultimately, lobby and advocacy efforts should contribute to resolving the problems of the target group. The target group expect you to solve their problems, to inform them about policy changes, etc. A good lobbyist must manage these expectations throughout the influencing process. Ideally, there will be ongoing consultations and full integration of the target group into a lobby and advocacy programme.

Step 3: Choose lobby and advocacy goals and set objectives

Why is it important to choose lobby and advocacy goal and set objectives? What are the specific objectives that you wish to achieve? Which results can realistically be accomplished by influencing the decision-makers? It is very important to make distinction between your scope of concern and scope of influence. Always keep in mind that there are limits to what lobby and advocacy may achieve.

A first step is to determine the essence of a problem, its causes and its consequences, preferably in close cooperation with the target group. An effective methodology may be the “problem and solution tree”. Once causes and consequences have been determined, it may be possible to begin identifying possible solutions. These solutions need to be translated into lobby and advocacy goals and objectives.

Lobby and advocacy goals and objectives should be as specific as possible. Raising awareness agenda and setting public information campaigns are not lobby and advocacy objectives in themselves, but activities which support your final objective. Raising awareness doesn’t necessarily lead to the desired policy change. Take the example of female circumcision. The topic has been successfully put on the political agenda, however without providing clear solutions and clear directions. Meanwhile, the measures taken by decision-makers are not welcomed by the target group. There is a fear that the proposed measures will not have the desired effect and will force people to go underground. Successful approaches (such as encouraging communities in the countries of origin to abandon the practice of circumcision) have never even entered the debate. It is therefore crucial to distinguish between these possible means, in order to keep a sharp focus on the final objective.

Try to formulate your objectives as SMARTLY as possible: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound. This will help you to maintain your focus and to set up effective monitoring and evaluation of the influencing process. Remember. A lobby objective aims to change the policies, programmes or positions of decision-makers (at any level, from village head to prime minister). Your lobby objective is determined by:

- What you want to change,
- For whom,
- Who will make the change,
- By how much and,
- By when.

Step 4: Define the decision-makers

Pick out those decision-maker(s) who have the power and influence to change the policy related to the problem identified. Questions you need to ask yourself are: Who is responsible, who are the decision-makers who may solve the problem? Who do you want to influence? Who needs to change something and when is the most opportune moment to accomplish that? For any lobby and advocacy campaign to be successful it is essential to find out the positions, interests and needs / motivations of the decision-makers you are trying to influence.

Step 5: Prepare your organization for lobby and advocacy

The main question is to know why to prepare the organization for lobby and advocacy?

To gain more knowledge and control over your lobby and advocacy programme you have to prepare your organization, network or coalition. This often starts with an assessment to help you to get a better idea of the current organizational situation and of the actual resources available for lobby and advocacy. Such an assessment can give you a better feel for future developments, whether positive or negative.

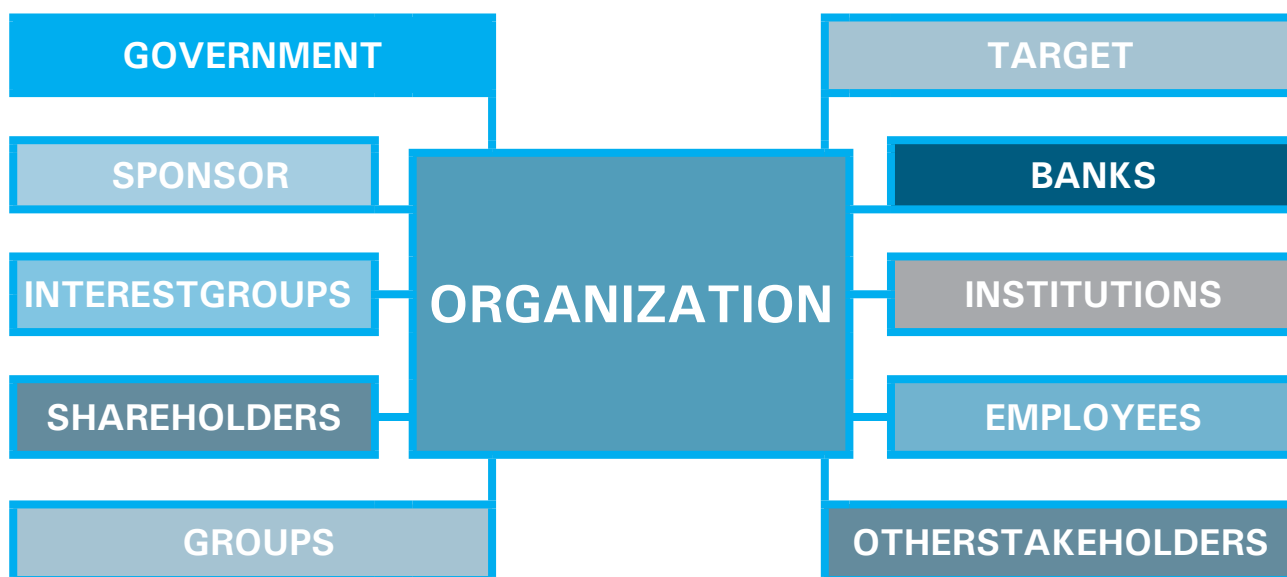
To make a SWOT analysis is the best tool to prepare your organization, network or coalition for lobby and advocacy.

- Assess the strengths and weaknesses of your organization, network or coalition for implementing a lobby and advocacy campaign aimed at the desired policy change by using a SWOT analysis:

Step 6: Identify other stakeholders

As a lobbyist you need to get an overview of all stakeholders working on your lobby and advocacy objectives: friends, neutrals and enemies. These constitute the so-called advocacy arena. You need to take the actions of these stakeholders into account as they may support/strengthen your lobby (allies) or start a counter lobby (opponents). Moreover, the neutrals are of particular interest as these may be influenced in such a way that they become allies. Gaining a better insight into the positions and capabilities of these stakeholders helps you to improve your lobby and advocacy strategy.

Figure 2: Stakeholders



Step 7: Check whether lobby and advocacy is possible

For effectiveness it is important to assess whether lobby and advocacy is in fact the most relevant influencing method to use. The internal and external environment in which you are operating may have changed, which may have an impact on your lobby and advocacy strategy. Depending on the conditions, other options, including legal steps, may be more opportune

Step 8: Develop a lobby and advocacy action plan

You need a clear lobby and advocacy action plan to be able to work strategically and to divide responsibilities and tasks within your organization and within your network or coalition. Define the methods you intend to use, and the resources you have available. Set a clear timetable and define responsibilities (who is doing what and when?).

Identify lobby and advocacy activities and messengers that may influence those in power. In order to accurately plan your lobby and advocacy activities, make sure you take into account the timing, procedures and budget cycles at the appropriate decision-making level(s).

Step 9: Implement the lobby and advocacy action plan

Implementation of your lobby and advocacy plan will move you on towards your desired end results. Make sure you remain flexible and well-informed throughout the implementation process.

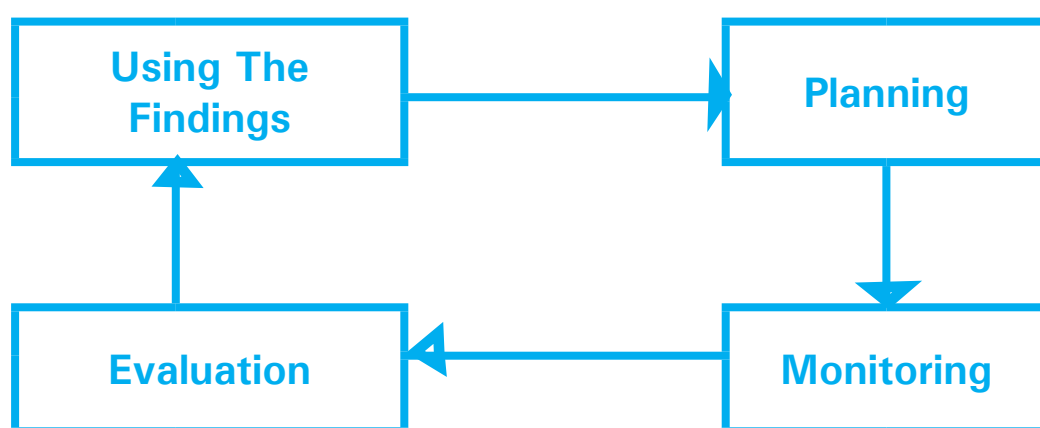
This will allow you to make any necessary adjustment to your chosen approach, as and when changing circumstances demand. Seek to operate from and build on the strengths of your organization, network or coalition when establishing relationships with decision-makers and potential allies. Don't expect quick results. Remember that establishing confidential relationships takes time. It helps to document your progress by listing the (immediate) results of your actions and activities.

Step10: Ensure Monitoring and Evaluation and follow up of your activities

Monitoring and evaluation is essential because lobbyists need to be :

- Accountable for their lobby and advocacy activities / the investments in human and financial resources of their organization, network or coalition
- Able to adjust their strategy according to changes in the internal and external environment
- Able to learn from their activities.

Effective monitoring and evaluation is facilitated if you have based your lobby and advocacy efforts on SMART objectives.



Chapter 5: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This strategy guide on policy and budget monitoring and advocacy in agriculture is developed to guide the users in policy and budget monitoring and advocacy. It is not a policy document in itself, but can help the users to understand how they can engage with policy makers from formulation to evaluation of policies and gives details about how users can as well engage with budget from formulation through implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

CSOs and FOs which intervene in agriculture sector must understand the global policy context which the country signed to, ratified and domesticated. They should also understand the national agriculture policy and strategies set up by the government to implement the global and international agriculture policies. They should also monitor day to day activities of the agriculture budget from its preparation, implementation, monitoring, reporting and evaluation. That is only when policy monitoring becomes holistic and informative to both policy makers and users.

Where advocacy and lobby work is required, the advocates and lobbyists have to develop the skills to perform their respective roles. They need to be able to analyze the political terrain they operate from, understand the policy makers' interests, analyze the interests of other stakeholders and prepare the ground for lobby and advocacy. This guide provides all the steps to take to ensure that the users are well equipped with all the tools to do lobby and advocacy. There is no one-size-fits-all recipe for effective lobby and advocacy.



2018 A Season Pre-planting meeting of Farm to Market Alliance (FtMA) Farmer Cooperatives.



Cooperatives who are the main stakeholders in the PPP Project.



Support Cooperative in post - harvest and quality management equipment