

AFRICA LEAD PROGRAM UPDATE

Capstone Learning Event Highlights Key Approaches to Achieving African-led Agriculture; Feed the Future Policy LINK announced as Africa Lead Follow-On

22 August 2018 (Nairobi, Kenya)

Africa Lead concluded its Final Year Learning Series at the end of October in Washington, D.C., with two events; a major capstone learning event, "Africa Leading on Agriculture: Supporting Country-Led Agricultural Transformation" co-hosted by Feed the Future and the African Union, and a separate resilience learning event co-hosted with the USAID Center for Resilience.



The week of learning events helped usher in the next era of USAID's support to African-led food security and resilience policy, collaboration, and learning efforts. Featuring opening remarks by representatives from African Union and USAID, as well as four panels including over 20 experts from across Africa and USAID staff, the day-long event focused less on "what" Africa Lead did, and more on "how" and "why" the central approaches that Africa Lead employed were so important. Attended by over 100 participants, the learning event featured four panels and audience discussions on central approaches employed by Africa Lead and how those approaches could be applied by future programs, donor efforts, and African leaders, institutions, and actors. Specifically the event reviewed Africa Lead's approaches to facilitative leadership, collaborative governance, joint work planning, and adaptive management and policy learning.

In her opening remarks, USAID's Maura Barry Boyle announces that Policy LINK will follow-on Africa Lead's programming, expanding the focus on Africa to also include global Feed the Future countries (photo: Liz Roll / Africa Lead).

In her opening remarks at the capstone learning event, Maura Barry Boyle, Senior Deputy Assistant Administrator in USAID's Bureau for Food Security, announced that Africa Lead II will be followed-on by a new global Feed the Future policy capacity support program called Feed the Future Policy Leadership, Interactions, Networks, and Knowledge (Policy LINK).

"USAID remains deeply committed to supporting locally-led, policy-driven agricultural transformation and resilience," stated Boyle. "We are excited to reaffirm and continue our support for the most important and impactful aspects of this work - and look forward to doing so alongside many of you here with us today - through our recently awarded Policy LINK program."

Policy LINK will have a major focus on Sub Saharan Africa, but it will also work with Feed the Future countries globally to support to local actors and institutions driving agricultural transformation.

Unlike other policy activities that focus on developing specific policies, LINK will focus on strengthening the leadership capacity of public, private, and civil society actors and fosters collective action among them to transform policy systems. Building on the successes of Africa Lead's nearly decade of programming, LINK does this through a range of core services, funded by USAID's Bureau for Food Security (BFS) and available to Missions worldwide. LINK not only has core funding from BFS to implement core services, it also is a five-year, buy-in mechanism available to USAID Missions, Bureaus and Operating Units for expanded activities. LINK runs through October 2024 and has a ceiling of \$38.5 million.

Just as Africa Lead was implemented by a consortium led by DAI, Policy LINK will be implemented and led by DAI. In the coming months, Africa Lead will complete its program close down and Policy LINK's will begin implementation.



(Top) Africa Lead's Robert Ouma speaks as a participant in the collaborative governance panel. (Middle) Panelists discuss the importance of facilitative leadership. (Bottom) Dr. Godfrey Bahigwa, the African Union Commission's Director of Rural Economy and Agriculture provides opening remarks.