Strengthen African Food Security/Food Policy Research, Policy Information & Capacity Building

A Partnership Venture to Build & Maintain A Food Security and Food Policy Information Portal For Africa

ASARECA/ECAPAPA
CILSS-INSAH/AGROSOCC
SADAOC Foundation
CWA-WCA/REPA
SADC/FANRPAN
UN-ECA/SDD
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Challenges Facing Researchers and Policy Makers At The Country-Level in Africa in the Era of Digital Resources?

• Improve Policy Outreach Materials & Methods
• Improve Applied Policy Research Methods
• Improve Digital/Internet Research Skills
• Position/Spotlight Digital Access to African Gray Policy Literature (Country-Level Working Papers Especially Need To Get Visibility and Credibility)
• Locate Needed Subject Matter Web Sites
• Locate & Access Journal Literature
• Locate & Access Complementary Data Sets
Problems Meeting These Challenges:

- Growing Desire/Challenge to Learn From Others in Policy Networks but Resources Are Still Limited
- Under Investment in Country-Level Working Papers & Other Practical Written Output for Local Clients
- Growing Availability of Internet Services but Still Slow Download Times
- Phone Charges are Frequently by Connect Time
- Rapid Growth in New Web Pages Available
- Overwhelming Information Management Demands
- Internet & Library Searching Skills Need Upgrading
- Searching Tools are Changing Very Rapidly
- Need an Organized Way to Find and Position African Insights, As Well As Obtain Outside Africa Materials

Objectives: At the Country and Regional-Level:

1. Assist Key African Regional Networks;
2. Position Topic and Skills Building Resources;

3. Find Easily, Important and High Quality Digital Sources of Data and Research/Policy Information;
4. Info on Key Topics by Country- & Topic Level Web Sites;

- Mali
- Donor Portals

Featured Links

Web Sites: Country-Specific:
- World Bank - Overview, Documents, Programs/Data Links
- African Development Bank
- Development Gateway - Country Profile Index
- International Monetary Fund - Documents/Data/MIF

Web Sites: Topic-Specific:
- ECD (Science and Technology Network - Foundational and Open)
- Directory of Development Organizations - Govt., privy, development, research, etc organizations
- Directory of Economic, Commodity, and Development Organizations
- Development Gateway - Accessible information on development activities (works very slowly over modem)
- USAID Development Experience Sharing System - DESC (works very slowly over modem)

World Links:
- Mali
- Donor Portals

Policy Briefs & Papers: Country-Specific:
- No links of this type are available yet

Policy Briefs & Papers: Topic-Specific:
- No links of this type are available yet

Build Your Own Research Skills

A mini-tutorial will be written, placed here, and linked here with the goal of sharpening internet searching skills in this specific topic area. Once skills are perfected, we invite you to submit to us your own suggestions for effective search tools, distinctive search words in this topic area and other smart linguistic analysis for words in text. A team of editors will review those to select unique and effective suggestions to be posted here for others to use. If you are interested, we will include your name and e-mail address, and assume you are willing to interact with others on research/search strategies in this topic area.

5. Offer to Others in Africa & Elsewhere Important Country/Topic Level Research & Policy Work-Gray Pubs;

- Mozambique
- Poverty Reduction

Featured Links

All links for Mozambique:
- Poverty Reduction
- Sector Facts
- Mozambique
- Economic Development
- Poverty Reduction
- Natural Resources
- Environmental Sustainability
- African Studies Portals
- Donor Portals
- Population
- Health & Nutrition
- HIV/AIDS
- Education
- Maps & GIS
- Information Technology

World Links:
- Mozambique
- Donor Portals

Policy Briefs:
- No links of this type are available yet

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6. Include Policy Briefs and Some Model ppt Presentations - Make a Space For Policy Makers as Well as Researchers;

8. Develop Internet Research Skills: Goal is Research Quality and “Deep” Internet Searching Skills To Find New Data & Information That is Increasingly Becoming Available in Digital Format via the Internet;

9. Develop Mini Search Tutorials by Country & Topic Area: Goal is to Use the “Teachable Moment” to Upgrade Research/Searching Skills in Specific Topic Areas;
Mechanisms: Assist African Food Security & Food Policy Networks To Reach Out to Country-Level Researchers & Policy Makers

- **UN-ECA** - Play the Role of Server for the Directory and for the clearing house for the Gray Literature as part of AVLIN
- African Network Coordinators will help set and improve standards for quality of gray literature
  - Submissions will mostly be allowed from country researchers as members of organizations
  - Use a simple rating system to set & provide incentive for upgrading minimum standards will help improve research/policy dialogue quality
- Offer easy/fast informational language translation

Mechanisms: Continued

- To the extent possible, all gray literature materials put on UN-ECA server will also be submitted to University of Minnesota-AgEconSearch to facilitate world-wide access and positioning of research/policy dialogue materials
  - AgEconSearch-University of Minnesota
    - [http://agecon.lib.umn.edu/](http://agecon.lib.umn.edu/)
- Figure 1 (next slide) show some of the working arrangements among participating partners to be used to obtain African country-level inputs/suggestions of gray literature and key country/topic web sights being used
Figure 1. Food Security/Food Policy Directory (Clearinghouse) Working Relationships (Using ECAPAPA, FANRPAN, AGROSOC & SADAOC Regional Networks as Examples)

Payoffs To Meeting These Challenges Via a Country-Level & User Friendly Internet-Based Information Portal System

• Timely Resources and Incentives to Improve Quality & Timely Policy Analysis
• Faster Response in Informing Policy Questions
• Better Policy Options via Easy Access to Comparative Perspectives Within and Across Countries
• Reduced Search Costs and Timely Access to Country-Topic Level Research Materials
• Reduced Costs Across Africa of Research Skills Upgrade & Greater Sharing Among Africans of Success Stories/Methods
• Improved Access to Teaching Materials for African Universities-Help Users get Journal Lit. via AGORA
• Enhanced Expression of African Perspectives on Issues
Directory Business Plan

- How
- What
- Resources
- Timing