

Institutional Capacity Strengthening in Africa



A few reflections

- Policy analysis “Ecosystem”
- Landscape is changing – center of gravity shifting to Africa
 - Pan-African organizations shaping the agenda (AU, AfDB)
- How can northern institutions work alongside African institutions and share resources and expertise without claiming our old position of the “lead” in development initiatives?

Insights from FSP Task 4 report: Institutional Capacity Strengthening

1. Effective leadership

- Providing incentives to attract and retain good staff
 - Personal remuneration terms
 - Provide opportunity for individual scholars to build a research program
 - Appreciation of individual's contribution to the institute / opportunities for promotion
 - opportunities for continued professional development and skills building, and to be mentored
- All this requires enlightened **leadership** and selfless, other-oriented **management ability**

- 1980s, 1990s: the constraint was supply of quality local researchers
- 2019: many more productive researchers, but they often go elsewhere
 - where they often compete for funding with local policy institutes
 - Individual capacity building w/o institution building focus may lock-in historical advantages of northern institutions
- Ecosystem issues

Insights from FSP Task 4 report on: Institutional Capacity Strengthening

2. How to generate demand by government for policy institutes' activities?

- Trust
- Responsiveness to government needs
- Produce quality policy analysis
- Help to shape the agenda, not just respond to it

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3. Long-term commitment of funding partners

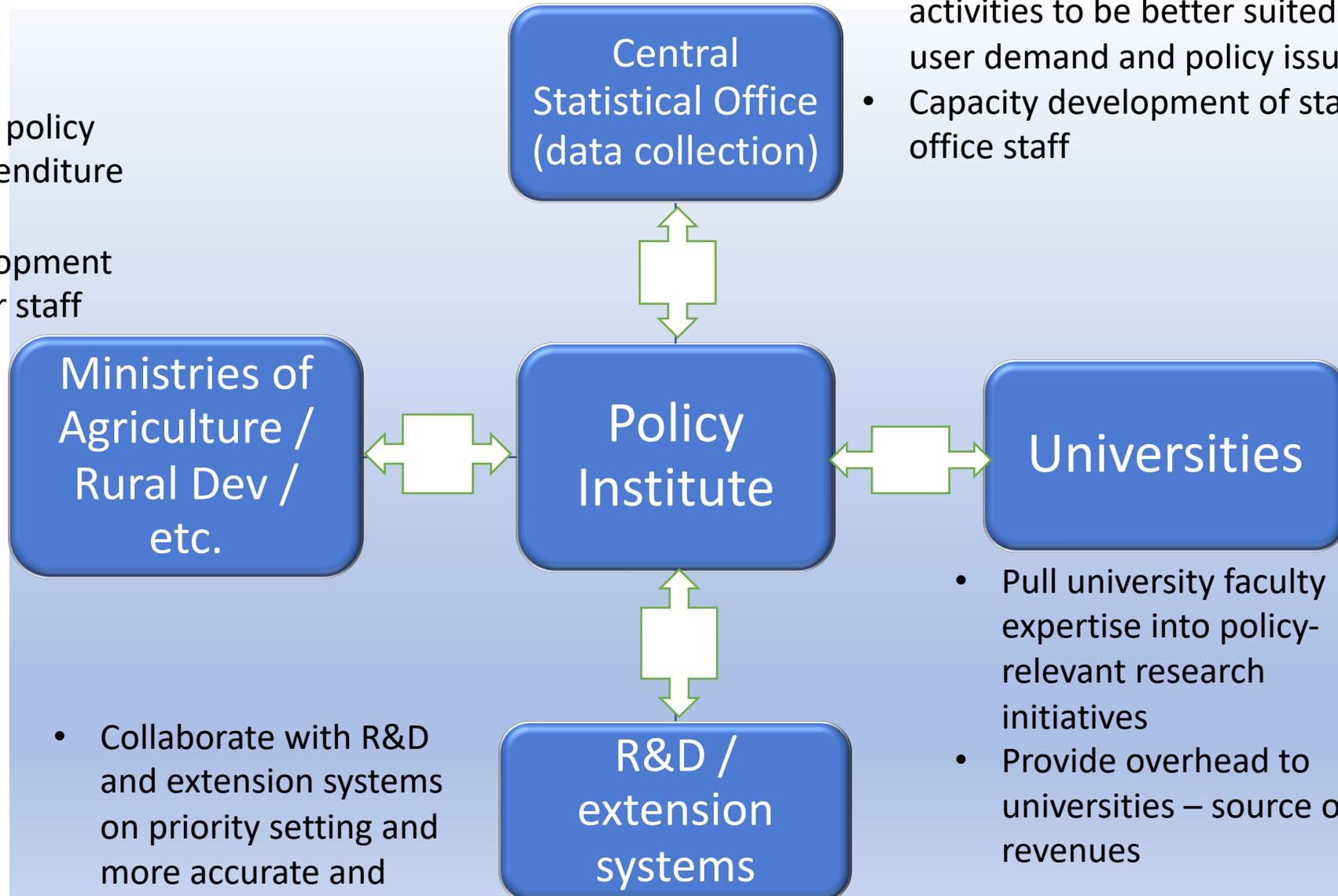
- Willingness to pay fixed cost, not just marginal costs
- Fixed costs include
 - institutional outreach activities
 - Training and skill development
 - Sabbaticals, retooling of researchers
 - Data collection activities
- But many donors want a relationship where they pay 1 month of a researcher's consulting time – **free rider problem**.
- Funding partners must recognize that the credibility of policy institutes depends on their academic standing

Summary: 3 key issues for building sustainable policy institutes

1. Good leadership / management
2. Generating demand by government
3. Long-term donor funding commitments

- Guide Ministry policy and public expenditure decisions
- Capacity development of public sector staff

- Guide statistical offices' data collection activities to be better suited to end user demand and policy issues
- Capacity development of statistical office staff



- Collaborate with R&D and extension systems on priority setting and more accurate and precise farmer mgt recommendations

- Pull university faculty expertise into policy-relevant research initiatives
- Provide overhead to universities – source of revenues

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