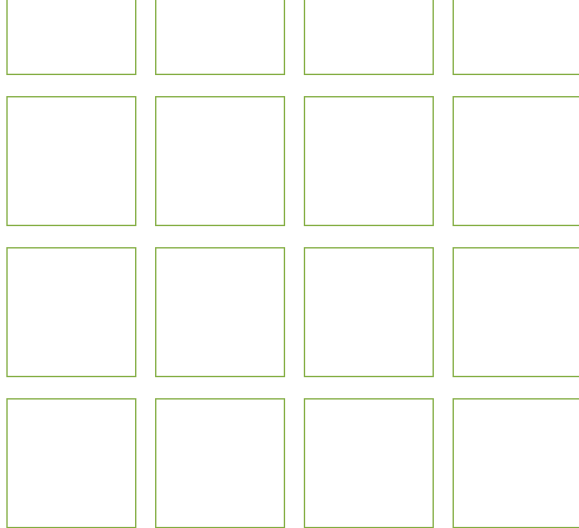


A STUDY OF INSTITUTIONAL AGRICULTURAL TRANSFORMATION MODELS IN AFRICA



**African Agricultural
Transformation Initiative**
Bridging Gaps between Strategy and Impact



**African Agricultural
Transformation Initiative**
Bridging Gaps between Strategy and Impact

**BILL & MELINDA
GATES foundation**

IFAD
Investing in rural people



**McKinsey
& Company**

ABOUT THE AFRICAN AGRICULTURAL TRANSFORMATION INITIATIVE

OUR PARTNERS

AATI is a partnership between the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the Gates Foundation, AGRA and McKinsey & Company. The purpose of the initiative is to support the establishment or strengthening of national delivery mechanisms designed to advance agricultural transformation policies and programs in Africa.

The AATI supports committed governments to drive inclusive and sustainable agricultural transformations by developing and enabling local delivery mechanisms to improve implementation of strategic agricultural initiatives with the final objective of alleviating poverty, promoting food security and strengthening climate resilience.

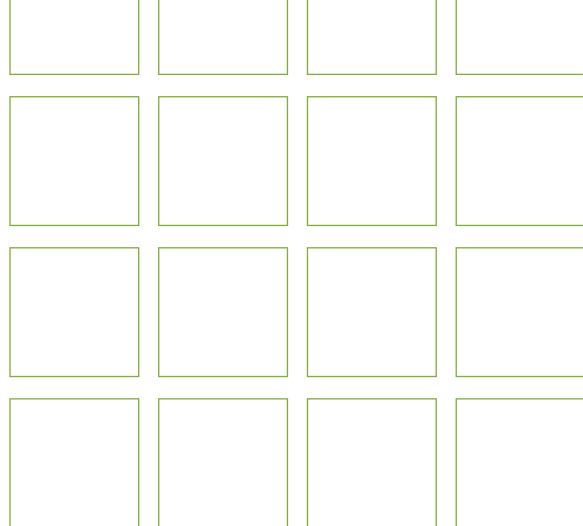
OUR JOURNEY

In 2021, the Gates Foundation and IFAD entered into an agreement for the establishment of the AATI following the approval of the IFAD Executive Board to establish the AATI Trust Fund and host of the Initiative. The Initiative was subsequently set in motion in July 2022, when the founding partners: Gates Foundation, IFAD, AGRA and McKinsey signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), transforming the idea into a concrete delivery platform. That same month, AATI's first Executive Director assumed office, and by early 2023, the central team became operational.

Building on this foundation and from the founding partners original vision to have the Initiative hosted in an African- led institution, the AATI is now entering a new phase in its evolution. AGRA has been identified as the next host of AATI, with the transition set to take effect on January 1, 2026.



The AATI supports committed governments to drive inclusive and sustainable agricultural transformation”



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report, *Agricultural Transformation: Institutional Models in Africa*, was prepared by Bristlepine Resilience Consultants, commissioned by the African Agricultural Transformation Initiative (AATI).

We are deeply grateful to the founding partners of AATI, as well as to the leadership and teams of ATI Ethiopia, ATA Togo, ATO Tanzania, and ATO Sierra Leone, for their engagement and support throughout the process. We also acknowledge the valuable contributions of institutional partners and colleagues, whose guidance and insights enriched the analysis with critical context and practical knowledge.

Finally, we extend our appreciation to the many stakeholders who generously participated in interviews, workshops, and consultations. Their perspectives have been vital in shaping a report that reflects both diverse experiences and shared aspirations for agricultural transformation across Africa.



FOREWORD FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Agricultural transformation does not happen overnight. It is built steadily through leadership and the collective effort of institutions that are rethinking how public systems function and strengthening implementation to achieve meaningful results. This comparative study reflects that journey. It brings together the experiences of governments, delivery teams, and partners who share a commitment to strengthening the systems that drive real change for farmers.

We extend our deep appreciation to the Governments of Tanzania and Sierra Leone for entrusting AATI to support their agricultural transformation agendas. Across both countries, we have seen encouraging progress as delivery structures take shape and as government ownership drives momentum. The establishment of ATO-Tanzania and ATO-Salome, and their early role in supporting national priorities, demonstrate the potential for sustained impact when delivery capacity is intentionally built within public institutions.

We also recognise the many contributors to this study, government officials, ATO teams, technical experts, and partners, whose insights were critical in helping translate national strategies into actionable, evidence-based lessons for the continent.

These lessons provide an important foundation for the work ahead. With committed leadership, aligned partnerships, and resilient institutions, Africa can continue building agricultural transformation models that are country-owned, data-driven, and built to last.

To all our government partners, delivery teams, and development partners, thank you for your collaboration and trust. The future of agricultural transformation in Africa is being shaped by the systems we strengthen today and by our shared commitment to sustained progress.

Safia Boly

Executive Director African Agricultural Transformation Initiative (AATI)

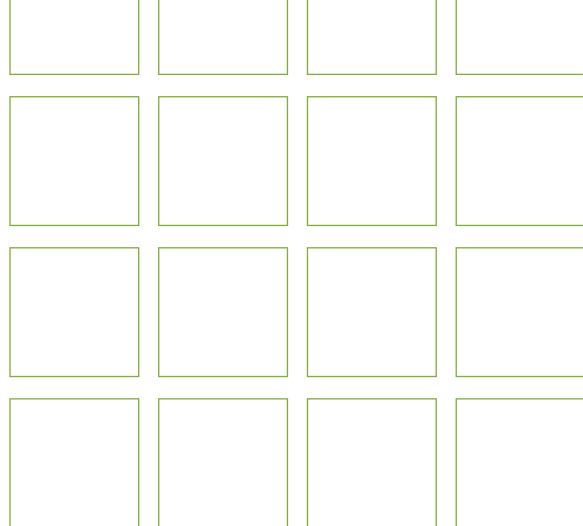


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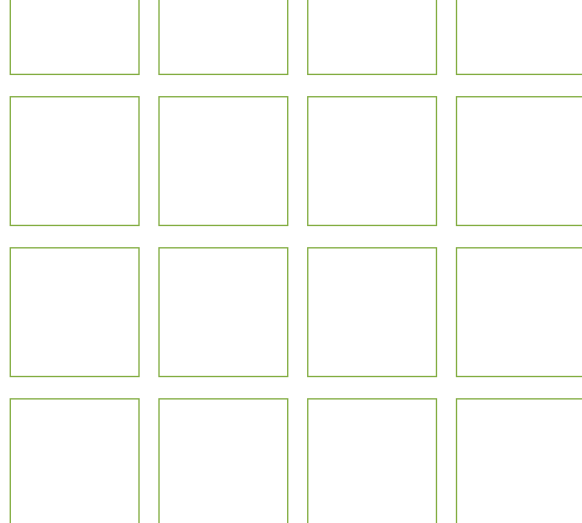
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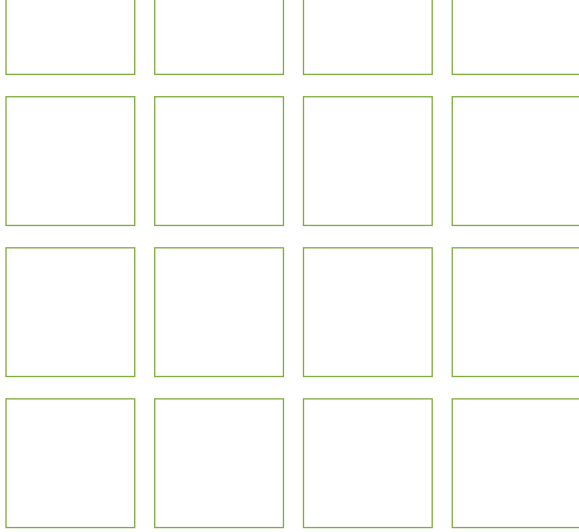
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ACRONYMS

AATI	African Agricultural Transformation Initiative
ACC	Agricultural Commercialization Clusters
AFD	French Development Agency (Agence Française de Développement)
AMP	Agricultural Master Plan
ATA	Agricultural Transformation Agency
ATI	Agricultural Transformation Institute
ATO	Agricultural Transformation Office
AT	Agricultural transformation institutions (agencies, institutes, and offices)
DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency
EU	European Union
FGDs	Focus group discussions
FMAFS	Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security (Nigeria)
FSWR	Food Security Warm Room
GDP	Gross domestic product
GIZ	German Corporation for International Cooperation (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit)
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
KIIs	Key informant interviews
MAEDR	Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Rural Development (Togo)
MAFS	Ministry of Agriculture [Forestry] and Food Security (Sierra Leone)
MoA	Ministry of Agriculture (Tanzania), of Agriculture and Natural Resources (Ethiopia)
MoLF	Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries (Tanzania)
SSA	Sub-Saharan Africa
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats
TASC	Transformation Agency Support Center
WFP	UN World Food Programme
ZAAPs	Planned Agricultural Development Zones




EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents a comprehensive study of agricultural transformation institutions (agencies, institutes, and offices) – referred to in this study as Agriculture Transformation models (AT) – in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), offering practical, evidence-based insights into their structure, operation, and evolution over time. Commissioned by the African Agricultural Transformation Initiative (AATI), the study aims to inform future design choices for governments, development partners, and implementing organizations involved in agricultural transformation efforts. The analysis examines how various AT models, particularly those in Ethiopia, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, and Togo, and the Food Security War Room in Nigeria, differ in their institutional design, governance and implementation modalities. The report is structured to move from context to application. It begins with an introduction, background, and methodology, followed by results from five country case studies, a cross-country analysis, and a synthesis of key findings. This is then followed by a discussion that explores implications, and a section offering practical tools—including a dimension cheat sheet and design tips—for future AT implementation. Annexes provide supporting literature and stakeholder consultation details.

The methodology employed a mixed-methods design, integrating a systematic desk review of over 50 documents, 11 key informant interviews (KIIs), and 2 focus group discussions (FGDs), utilizing a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) lens to analyze findings.

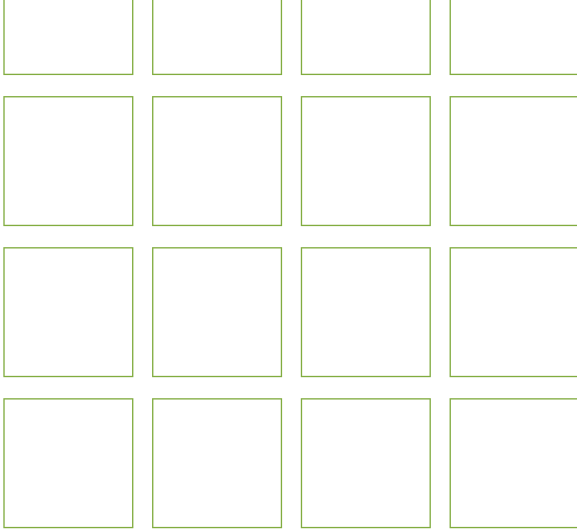
Key findings highlight that successful AT models are characterized by high-level political sponsorship and genuine government ownership, strategic institutional anchoring that balances autonomy with integration into national systems, clear mandates and focused flagship projects, strong in-house analytics capabilities for evidence-based policymaking, and demand-driven stakeholder coordination coupled with multi-partner resource pooling. Conversely, common challenges include vulnerability to political turnover and fragile leadership buy-in, parallel mandates, potential duplication of efforts, and associated tensions, cross-partner coordination gaps, and moving from strategy to effective implementation due to institutional capacity limitations. Importantly, beyond design features, effective management, especially during the transition from design to implementation, is often decisive in determining model effectiveness and lasting impact.



Drawing on these insights, a set of recommendations highlights several strategic design choices, structured along eight dimensions: *Institutional Anchoring*, *Governance*, *Financing*, *Stakeholder Coordination*, *Analytics*, *Political-Managerial Dynamics*, *Sustainability & Resilience*, and *Catalytic Impact*. Establishing clear mandates and reporting lines with high-level anchoring, such as under the Head of State, could accelerate decisions and cross-ministerial coordination, while granting decision-making autonomy allows AT teams to focus on delivery (*Institutional Anchoring and Governance*). Securing early catalytic funding is vital for rapid setup and experimentation, but AT models must also proactively develop long-term sustainability plans through diverse resource mobilization, including government contributions and pooled funding, by demonstrating early, visible results to build credibility (*Financing*). Establishing national multi-stakeholder platforms and fostering regular engagement with existing ministries is essential to align actors, prevent institutional friction, and integrate new initiatives with ongoing programs (*Stakeholder Coordination*). Embedding dedicated analytics units early and investing significantly in local staff development is central to evidence-based policymaking, problem-solving, and reducing reliance on external support (*Analytics*). The ability of an AT to maintain influence, especially during changes in political leadership, requires cultivating strong political champions who provide essential sponsorship, alongside building trusted technical leadership to engage stakeholders and delivering results, thereby reducing over-reliance on individual political access (*Political-Managerial Dynamics*). To ensure *sustainability and resilience*, a core focus should be on prioritizing local staff capacity building within the AT and government ministries, alongside ensuring programmatic entrenchment into core government systems, and fostering a learning mindset that enables adaptation to unforeseen shocks. Ultimately, interventions should target system-wide change by identifying systemic bottlenecks, implementing high-impact pilots, and planning for effective handover and integration of AT functions into core government systems for long-term continuity (*Catalytic Impact*).

While the analysis is rigorous, overlapping dimensions, country-specific contexts, and a limited sample size of five country case studies call for cautious interpretation.





INTRODUCTION

A) PROBLEM STATEMENT

Agricultural transformation is a central policy priority for many African governments seeking to enhance food security, build resilience to climate change, and reduce rural poverty. The Tanzania Agricultural Master Plan (AMP) for example aims to increase average smallholder income by >25% and lift 7 million people out of poverty.¹ However, the gap between ambitious strategies and on-the-ground implementation remains wide, as limited financing, weak coordination and institutional capacity gaps continue to hinder effective implementation. These gaps present persistent challenges prompting efforts to explore innovative means for transforming the sector. Certain countries have focused their efforts on developing targeted policies to respond to these gaps. Mozambique in 2013, initiated the Programa Nacional de Investimento do Sector Agrário (PNISA 2013-2017 and PNISA 2022-2030) to mobilize financing and strengthen coordination for agricultural development. However, despite these efforts, progress has been slow; in 2023, only 3.5% growth in the agricultural sector was achieved over a target of 7%.²

In recent years, multiple African countries have explored new institutional models, as they experiment with the creation of Agriculture delivery mechanisms or Transformation models (AT), specialized delivery institutions designed to accelerate implementation of national agricultural strategies by addressing systemic coordination gaps, capacity shortfalls, and policy execution bottlenecks.

B) RATIONALE

Literature on agricultural transformation highlights that effective delivery mechanisms can significantly accelerate implementation of national strategies. In Malaysia, PEMANDU (Performance Management & Delivery Unit), the government’s central delivery engine of the

[1] The United Republic of Tanzania, “Tanzania Agriculture Master Plan 2050: Roadmap to Transform the Crops Livestock and Fisheries Sectors.”

[2] African Development Bank (AfDB) “Mozambique: Country Food and Agriculture Delivery Compact” 2023.
https://www.afdb.org/sites/default/files/documents/publications/mozambique_country_food_and_agriculture_delivery_compact.pdf

Economic Transformation Programme established in 2009, contributed to accelerating indicators under the National Key Economic Areas (NKEA). For instance, by 2015 the Agriculture NKEA achieved 104% of its KPI targets, supported by improvements recorded in productivity, exports, and private investment.³

Similar institutional innovations have emerged in Africa. Ethiopia established an Agriculture Transformation Agency (ATA) in 2010, while Morocco created the National Agricultural Development Agency (ADA) in 2016 to implement the *Plan Maroc Vert*.⁴ Both countries have recorded clear improvements in agricultural coordination and growth.⁵ FAO's Ten Years evaluation of the Ethiopian ATA confirms that a specialized transformation agency can raise sector GDP (USD 1.7 billion between 2013–2019).⁶

The literature consistently emphasizes that successful agricultural transformation requires three key conditions: political readiness, credible plans, and effective delivery mechanisms.⁷ However, while several case studies document the performance of individual models, there remains a gap in comparative analysis of how these agricultural delivery mechanisms operate across different African contexts.

In response, this study was commissioned by the African Agricultural Transformation Initiative (AATI) to generate comparative evidence and lessons learned on the design, performance, and evolution of AT models in four African countries. By filling this gap, the analysis aims to inform future design choices for governments, development partners, and implementing organizations involved in agricultural transformation efforts.

The purpose of this study is to generate practical, evidence-based insights into how these ATs are structured, operate, and evolve over time in SSA. Specifically, the study seeks to:

- Examine how AT models differ in their institutional design, governance structures, financing approaches, and implementation modalities.
- Identify the key success factors, challenges, and threats that shape AT performance across diverse country settings.
- Provide comparative insights across eight core dimensions: Institutional Anchoring, Governance, Financing, Stakeholder Coordination, Analytics, Political-Managerial Dynamics, Sustainability & Resilience, and Catalytic Impact (Figure 1).

[3] World Bank. Driving Performance from the Center: Malaysia's Experience with PEMANDU. Washington, DC: World Bank, 2017. Available at: <https://documents.worldbank.org/en/publication/documents-reports/documentdetail/>.

[4] <https://www.ada.gov.ma/fr/missions>

[5] McKinsey, Successful agricultural transformations: Six core elements of planning and delivery, 2017.

[6] FAO. *Ten Years of the Ethiopian Agricultural Transformation Agency: Lessons for Scaling Up.* Rome: FAO, 2021.

[7] McKinsey & Company. *Readiness for Agricultural Transformation: Insights from Africa.* New York: McKinsey, 2019

- Offer tools containing guiding questions and actionable tips to guide the design and management of future AT models.

Scope: The study focuses on four countries where AT models are operating or emerging, with support from AATI and the Agri-Food Transformation Agency Support Center (TASC), specifically Ethiopia, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, and Togo. Some details are also provided for the Food Security War Room in Nigeria. The evidence base draws on both mature experiences (e.g., the Agricultural Transformation Institute (ATI) in Ethiopia) and more nascent institutional models still in the early implementation phase.

Methodology: Evidence was collected through a mixed-methods approach, including a structured desk review of over 50 documents, 11 KIIs with AT stakeholders, and 2 FGDs in selected countries, and internal team analysis using a comparative framework across eight dimensions.

Audience and Use: This report is intended for multiple audiences involved in supporting agricultural transformation in Africa, including:

- Government ministries and national policy makers responsible for agricultural policy, planning, and delivery.
- AATI Founding partners, IFAD, Gates Foundation, AGRA and McKinsey & Company, international development agencies, multilateral organizations, and donors contributing financing and technical assistance to agricultural transformation.
- Practitioners designing or managing national AT institutions seeking comparative lessons and operational guidance.

The report is intended as both an analytical reference and a practical resource. In addition to summarizing cross- country evidence, the report provides tools as practical, analysis-based resources to support practitioners and decision- makers involved in the design and setup of AT.

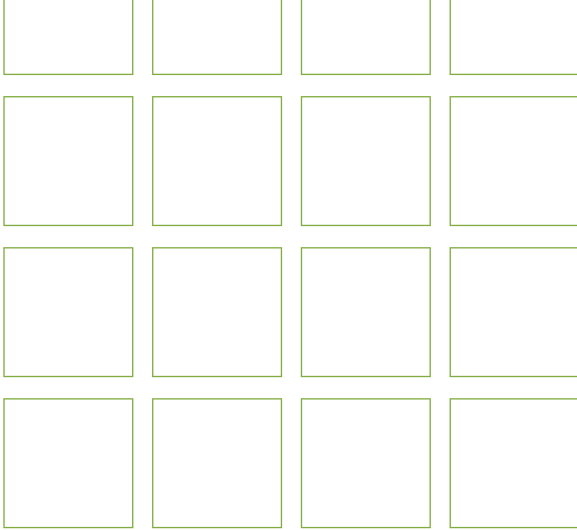
When interpreting cross-country comparisons, it is important to consider the varying maturity of AT models. Institutions such as Ethiopia’s ATA/ATI are well-established and have accumulated over a decade of operational experience, whereas others—like ATO Tanzania, and ATO Salone—are still in their formative phases.

FIG. 1: ANALYTICAL DIMENSIONS





Agricultural transformation is a central policy priority for many African governments seeking to enhance food security, build resilience to climate change, and reduce rural poverty.”



02

BACKGROUND

Agricultural transformation is a multifaceted process of significant change within the agriculture sector. It is a key driver for employment⁸ and economic growth, particularly for countries moving towards middle-income status.⁹ Across SSA, agriculture accounts for 20–40% of gross domestic product (GDP) (~34% in Ethiopia, 25% in Sierra Leone, 20% in Nigeria, 23% in Tanzania, and 18% in Togo)¹⁰, underscoring its importance to national development.

In Africa Agricultural transformation has progressed through distinct phases shaped by evolving political and economic priorities. Early efforts focused on modernization through irrigation, education, and state-led production models. In Ethiopia, reforms began as early as the 1900s and expanded in the 1960s with technical assistance and extension services.¹¹ During post-independence, countries like Tanzania pursued collective farming and rural villagization under Ujamaa,¹² while Ethiopia’s Derg regime (1974–1991) implemented land nationalization and state farms—approaches that expanded government involvement but did not significantly improve productivity.¹³

By the 1990s, most countries had shifted toward market-based, growth-led strategies centered on smallholder intensification and commercialization. Ethiopia’s Agricultural Development-Led Industrialization strategy (1993) and the creation of the Agricultural Transformation Agency (ATA) in 2011 marked a turn toward coordinated, results- oriented implementation.

[8] Minot et al., Role of Agricultural Commercialization in the Agricultural Transformation of Ethiopia: Trends, Drivers, and Impact on Well-Being.
[9] Järnberg et al., “Green Niche Actors Navigating an Opaque Opportunity Context: Prospects for a Sustainable Transformation of Ethiopian Agriculture.”
[10] “World Bank Open Data.”
[11] Diriba, “Agricultural and Rural Transformation in Ethiopia: Obstacles, Triggers and Reform Considerations”; Mulesa, “Politics of Seed in Ethiopia’s Agricultural Transformation.”
[12] Note: Ujamaa was Tanzania’s post-independence socialist policy, introduced by President Julius Nyerere, which promoted collective farming and rural “villagization” based on African communal values. The United Republic of Tanzania, “Tanzania Agriculture Master Plan 2050: Roadmap to Transform the Crops Livestock and Fisheries Sectors.”
[13] Mulesa, “Politics of Seed in Ethiopia’s Agricultural Transformation.”

In 2013, Nigeria introduced institutional innovations like Nigeria Incentive-Based Risk Sharing System for Agricultural Lending (NIRSAL)¹⁴ and Staple Crop Processing Zones (SCPZ) to attract private investment.¹⁵ Recent national strategies—such as Tanzania’s AMP 2050¹⁶, Togo’s Agricultural Policy Accompanied by the Strategic Plan for Agricultural Transformation in Togo (PA-PSTAT) 2030¹⁷, and Sierra Leone’s Feed Salone Strategy (FSS)¹⁸—reflect a shift toward large-scale, system-oriented transformation focused on irrigation, inputs, market linkages, and resilience.

This evolution has led to a more integrated understanding of agricultural transformation, one that is no longer defined solely by production goals, but by a complex set of interlinked processes involving institutions, markets, technology, and sustainability. Conceptually, transformation involves several interacting and self-reinforcing processes.

2.1 CORE PROCESSES OF TRANSFORMATION

Transformation requires firstly, *institutional and policy changes*. A new approach to policy making and implementation, characterized by greater integration, coordination, and partnership. These shifts include formal and informal institutional changes that may be sociological or political in character.¹⁹ It involves, internal reforms and reorganizations within ministries of agriculture, as well as broader public sector restructuring aimed at improving service delivery, alignment, and accountability across the agricultural system.

Key features of agriculture transformation include: (1) *the transition from subsistence to commercial farming*,²⁰ (2) productivity gains through improved inputs and technology,²¹ and (3) value chain development that connects producers to markets.²²

Over time, these changes drive a *broader economic shift* as labor moves from agriculture to non-agriculture sectors (manufacturing, services).²³ This shift results in a relative decline of basic subsistence agriculture and a falling share of agriculture in economic output and employment, alongside a rising share of urban economic activity. Increasingly, achieving agricultural transformation requires adopting practices that ensure sustainability and climate resilience,²⁴ by enhancing the natural resource base.²⁵

[14] https://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Generic-Documents/Session_3_NIRSAL_PRESENTATION_FOR_AFDB_ENABLE_YOUTH.pdf

[15] Obayelu A. E and Obayelu O. A., “Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities And Threats (Swot) Analysis Of The Nigeria Agricultural Transformation Agenda (Ata).” 2014

[16] The United Republic of Tanzania, “Tanzania Agriculture Master Plan 2050: Roadmap to Transform the Crops Livestock and Fisheries Sectors.”

[17] République Togolaise, Ministère de l’Agriculture, de l’Élevage et de l’Hydraulique, “La Politique Agricole Assortie du Plan Stratégique pour la Transformation de l’Agriculture au Togo à l’Horizon 2030 (PA-PSTAT 2030): Document de Politique Agricole pour la Période 2016-2030.”

[18] “Feed Salone – For a Food-Secure and Prosperous Sierra Leone.”

[19] Obayelu and Obayelu, “Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities And Threats (Swot) Analysis Of The Nigeria Agricultural Transformation Agenda (Ata).”

[20] Obayelu and Obayelu (2014)

[21] Diriba, “Agricultural and Rural Transformation in Ethiopia: Obstacles, Triggers and Reform Considerations”; Minot et al., Role of Agricultural Commercialization in the Agricultural Transformation of Ethiopia: Trends, Drivers, and Impact on Well-Being; Resnick, Diao, and Tadesse, 2020 Annual Trends and Outlook Report.

[22] Obayelu and Obayelu, “Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities And Threats (Swot) Analysis Of The Nigeria Agricultural Transformation Agenda (Ata)”; Resnick, Diao, and Tadesse, 2020 Annual Trends and Outlook Report.

[23] Boettiger, Denis, and Sanghvi, “Readiness for Agricultural Transformation”; Minot et al., Role of Agricultural Commercialization in the Agricultural Transformation of Ethiopia: Trends, Drivers, and Impact on Well-Being; Resnick, Diao, and Tadesse, 2020 Annual Trends and Outlook Report.

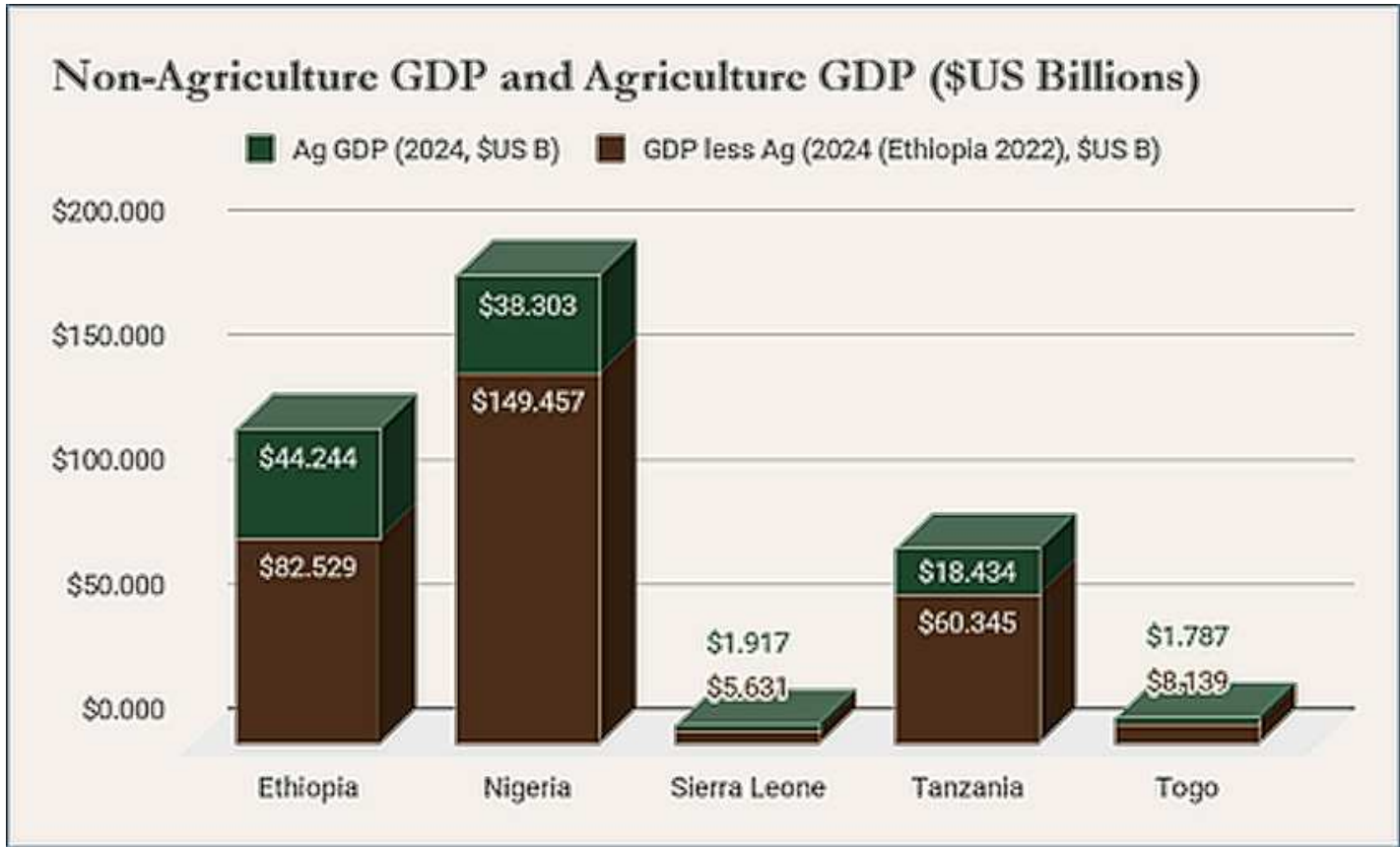
[24] Verdier Chouchane and Boly, “Introduction: Challenges to Africa’s Agricultural Transformation.”

[25] Järnberg et al., “Green Niche Actors Navigating an Opaque Opportunity Context: Prospects for a Sustainable Transformation of Ethiopian Agriculture.”



To understand the appropriate scope and ambition of an AT model in any country, it helps to look at the size of the economy and how important agriculture is to it. For this study’s focus countries, Figure 3 shows the size of the economy in billions of US dollars, broken down by agriculture and non-agriculture sources of GDP. This figure highlights the significant role of agriculture in Ethiopia’s economy, where it accounts for 35% of GDP in a relatively large economic context. In contrast, agriculture represents a smaller share of GDP in Togo (18%), which also has one of the smallest overall economies among the focus countries. Sierra Leone, despite its small economic size, has a comparatively higher agricultural share (25%)—second only to Ethiopia.

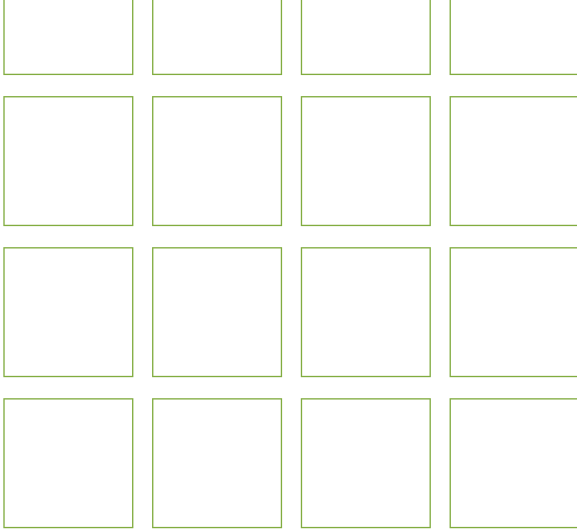
FIG. 2: NON-AGRICULTURE GDP AND AGRICULTURE GDP, BY COUNTRY



These structural and economic differences influence how governments organize to deliver agricultural transformation. The following section describes some delivery mechanisms used across countries to translate agricultural strategies into measurable results.



Agricultural transformation is a central policy priority for many African governments seeking to enhance food security, build resilience to climate change, and reduce rural poverty.”



03

TYPOLOGY OF AGRICULTURE TRANSFORMATION DELIVERY MECHANISMS (AT)

Countries have adopted diverse institutional models to drive agricultural transformation, each reflecting different reform ambitions, political structures, and administrative capacities.²⁶ Broadly, there are seven types of delivery mechanisms that support governments in translating agricultural transformation visions into measurable results : (1) Nodal agencies, or, Agriculture Transformation Agencies (ATAs), (2) Delivery Units (DUs) at the Centre of Government, (3) DUs at the Ministry of Agriculture, or, Agriculture Transformation Offices (ATOs), (4) Economic Boards, (5) Cross Government Task Force, (6) Value Chain Specific Commodity or Marketing Boards, and (7) Cabinet committees.

This study focuses on three models, ATAs, ATOs, and Task Forces, described below:

1) NODAL AGENCIES/AGRICULTURAL TRANSFORMATION AGENCIES (ATA)

An ATA is an institution with a time-bound mandate established as a separate agency to support the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA). It coordinates and accelerates implementation of national agricultural strategies. Ethiopia pioneered this model in 2010, creating an agency that combines technical assistance and direct implementation functions. ATAs typically report to high-level inter-ministerial councils chaired by the Head of Government, enabling them to problem- solve system bottlenecks and strengthen delivery capacity across ministries.

[26] AGRA and the Tony Blair Institute (TBI), 2022, “Toolkit: Implementing Delivery Mechanisms for Agri Food Transformation”



2) DELIVERY UNITS (DUS) WITHIN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE / AGRICULTURE TRANSFORMATION OFFICES (ATO)

ATOs are internal units within the MoA, focused on implementation tracking within the sector, embedded within the Ministry of Agriculture.²⁷ They are also designed to strengthen planning, monitoring, and interdepartmental coordination within the agricultural sector. Focused solely on the MoA, they are less likely to be involved in cross- government coordination but work with MoA devolved agencies and staff in the regions. Kenya’s Agriculture Transformation Office (ATO) under the Ministry of Agriculture (created in 2020), focusing on tracking, performance management of the Agriculture Sector Transformation and Growth Strategy 2019-2029 (ASTGS).

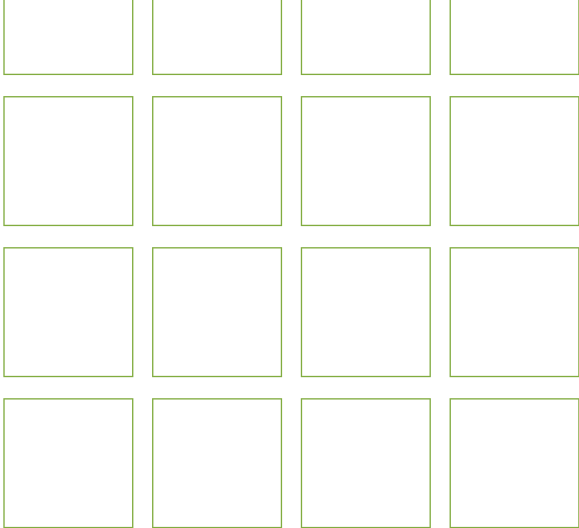
3) CROSS-GOVERNMENT TASK FORCES

A task force, committee, or working group is a delivery mechanism commonly used by governments to align multiple institutions and partners around a specific issue, often urgent challenges. Task forces are temporary, formed coordination platforms bringing together multiple ministries and partners, and may be supported by a dedicated secretariat responsible for delivery functions such as progress tracking, and reporting bottlenecks. The success of a Task Force will depend heavily on political authority, clarity of mandate and quality of the secretariat. An Example of this, is Nigeria’s Food Security War Room (FSWR).

[27] Note: A Delivery Unit within an MoA, should not be confused with Dus at the Centre of Government (Office of the Head of State; Office of the Vice President; Office of the Prime Minister, Ministry of Finance). DUs in the Centre of Government work from President or Prime Minister’s Office, focusing on national priorities, to help prioritise, plan and track the implementation of the development vision, through regular stocktakes and performance reviews. The unit does not provide direct implementation but supports the full delivery cycle—from policy design and planning to troubleshooting and monitoring implementation, working closely with implementing agencies such as Ministries, Departments and development partners.



Countries have adopted diverse institutional models to drive agricultural transformation, each reflecting different reform ambitions, political structures, and administrative capacities”

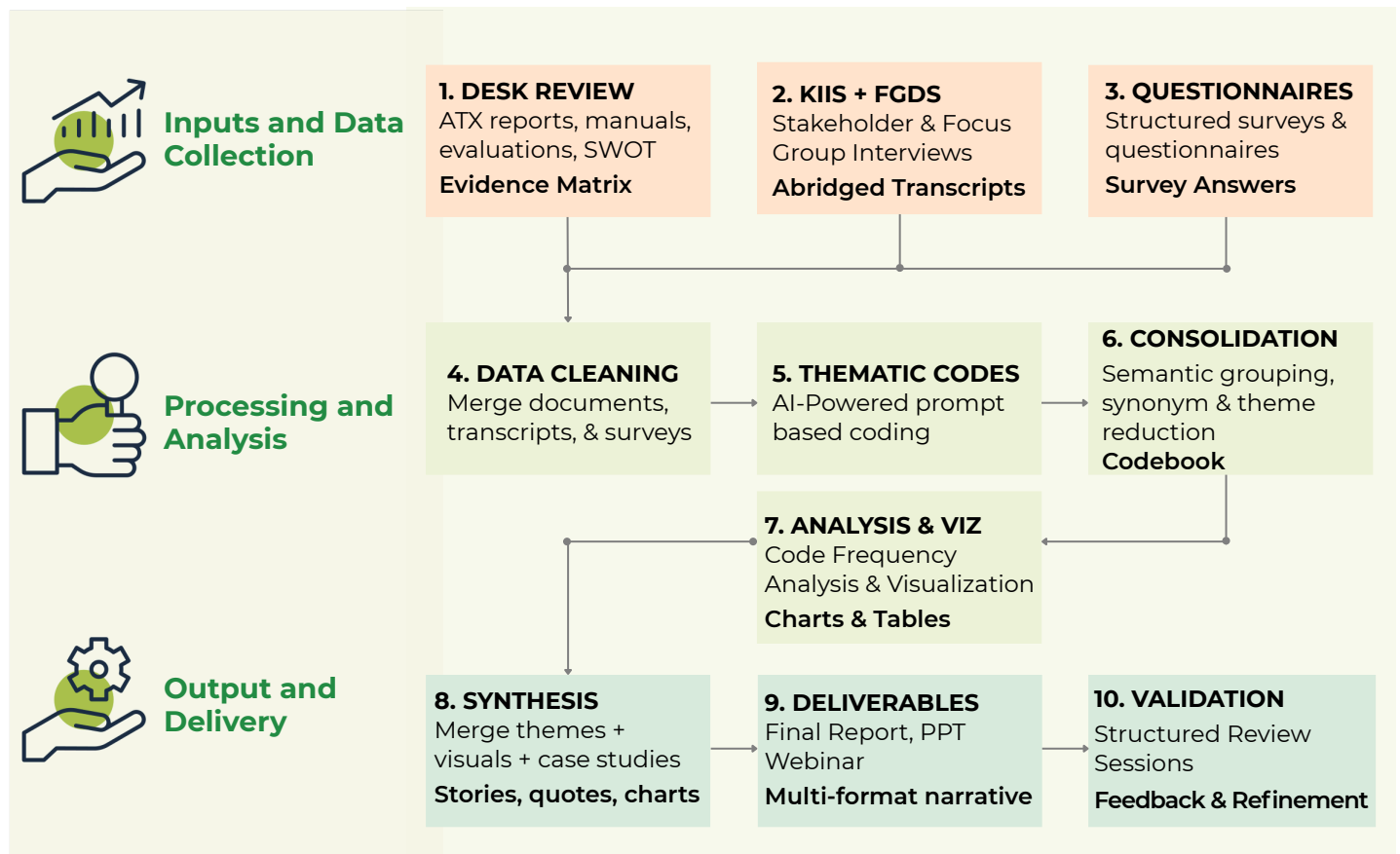


04

METHODOLOGY

This study used a comparative, mixed-methods approach to assess how AT are structured, operate, and evolve across different country contexts. The methodology combined structured qualitative analysis with reproducible data processing workflows. As shown in Figure 3, the process followed three stages: data collection, processing and analysis, and output delivery. Each stage was iterative, allowing for feedback loops and progressive refinement of emerging themes.

FIG. 3: WORKFLOW FOR COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS AND DATA PROCESSING



Analytical Framework: The analysis was organized around eight predefined dimensions of AT institutional performance: Institutional Anchoring, Governance, Financing, Stakeholder Coordination, Analytics, Political– Managerial Balance, Sustainability and Resilience, and Catalytic Impact. These dimensions provided a consistent structure for coding and comparing evidence across sources. Within each dimension, findings were classified using a SWOT framework, capturing recurring strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats across country cases. In this study, SWOT was applied as a structured, code-based classification system, using keywords and information drawn from transcripts and documents to surface thematic patterns (Figure 4). Code frequency data was used to generate a library of visual tools: quadrant diagrams, heatmaps, and theme trees. These figures were used to inform and shape the direction of analysis. Quadrant charts highlighted skewed sentiment in specific dimensions (e.g., heavily clustered weaknesses), while heatmaps flagged areas with dense but contradictory evidence. These visuals helped the team decide where to probe further, validate assumptions, and prioritize themes for synthesis (Annex 3). This structure enabled the team to detect patterns across diverse institutions and to distinguish areas of consensus, divergence, and ambiguity.

FIG. 4. PROMPT-BASED CODING IN NOTEBOOKLM, USING THE SWOT FRAMEWORK

The screenshot displays the NotebookLM interface. On the left, the 'Sources' panel shows a document titled '3. IFAD Investment Document for Gates Foundation_v106 (1).docx.pdf'. Below it, a 'Source guide' section provides a summary of the document's purpose: to launch the African Agricultural Transformation Initiative (AATI) by strengthening government capacity in African nations. Key topics listed include 'Grant proposal det...', 'Investment project speci...', 'African agricultural transform...', 'Project bud...', and 'Global access and sustainabi...'. A callout box labeled 'Analytical Source for SWOT Criteria' points to a specific text snippet in the source guide: '• Networking with development partners: Furthermore, the BMGF will leverage its wide networks to further strengthen the AATI's stakeholder management and networking, including in the political space, relevant business communities, but also by extending its reach of development partners.' On the right, the 'Studio > Note' panel shows a generated note titled 'Stakeholder Coordination'. The note includes a section titled 'SWOT Criteria for "Stakeholder Coordination"' and lists several strengths: '[Multi-Org Governance]', '[Experienced Partners]', '[Leveraging Networks]', '[Demand-Driven Approach]', and '[Government Ownership]'. Each strength is accompanied by a brief description and a reference to the source document (e.g., 'Evidence Quality: High').

Data Sources: This analysis drew on four primary sources of evidence:

- **Desk Review:** A systematic desk review of over 50 relevant documents, including internal AATI files, country- level program documents, gray literature, and academic studies was



conducted. A structured extraction matrix was used to code findings across eight dimensions using a SWOT lens.

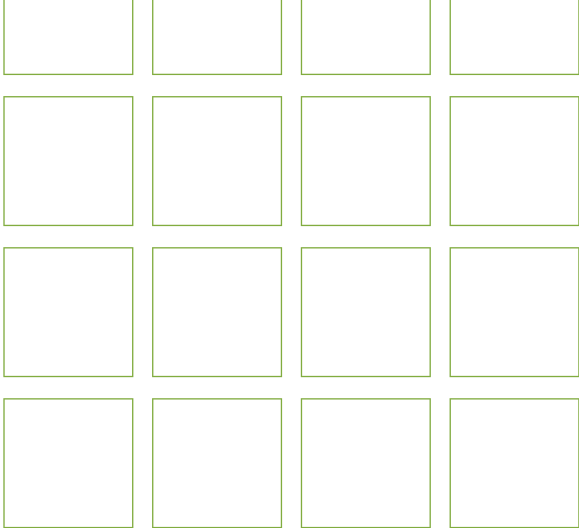
- **Key Informant Interviews (KII):** Eleven semi-structured KIIs were conducted with AT leadership, government officials, development partners, and technical experts involved in AT design or delivery.

- **Focus Group Discussions:** Two FGDs were held with ATI Ethiopia and Agricultural Transformation Office (ATO) Salone (Sierra Leone).

Quality Assurance & Reproducibility: The research process included several layers of quality control. All data was cleaned and standardized using custom preprocessing scripts, which extracted bracketed codes, normalized formatting, and merged document sources. A codebook was generated and refined using artificial intelligence-based consolidation techniques to group semantically similar tags. Visual outputs were reviewed in collaborative synthesis sessions and shared during a multi-country workshop for feedback and validation.

Note on Data Maturity: While the eight analytical dimensions—including Catalytic Impact—were applied consistently across all case studies, it is important to acknowledge that the two newer ATOs (Tanzania and Sierra Leone) are still in formative stages of establishment. Consequently, available evidence on their catalytic impact remains preliminary. Findings related to these dimensions should therefore be interpreted as indicative of emerging potential rather than conclusive evidence of impact. Nevertheless, the diversity of models provides a continuum of learning on how to design, operationalize, and sustain delivery institutions for agricultural transformation in Africa.

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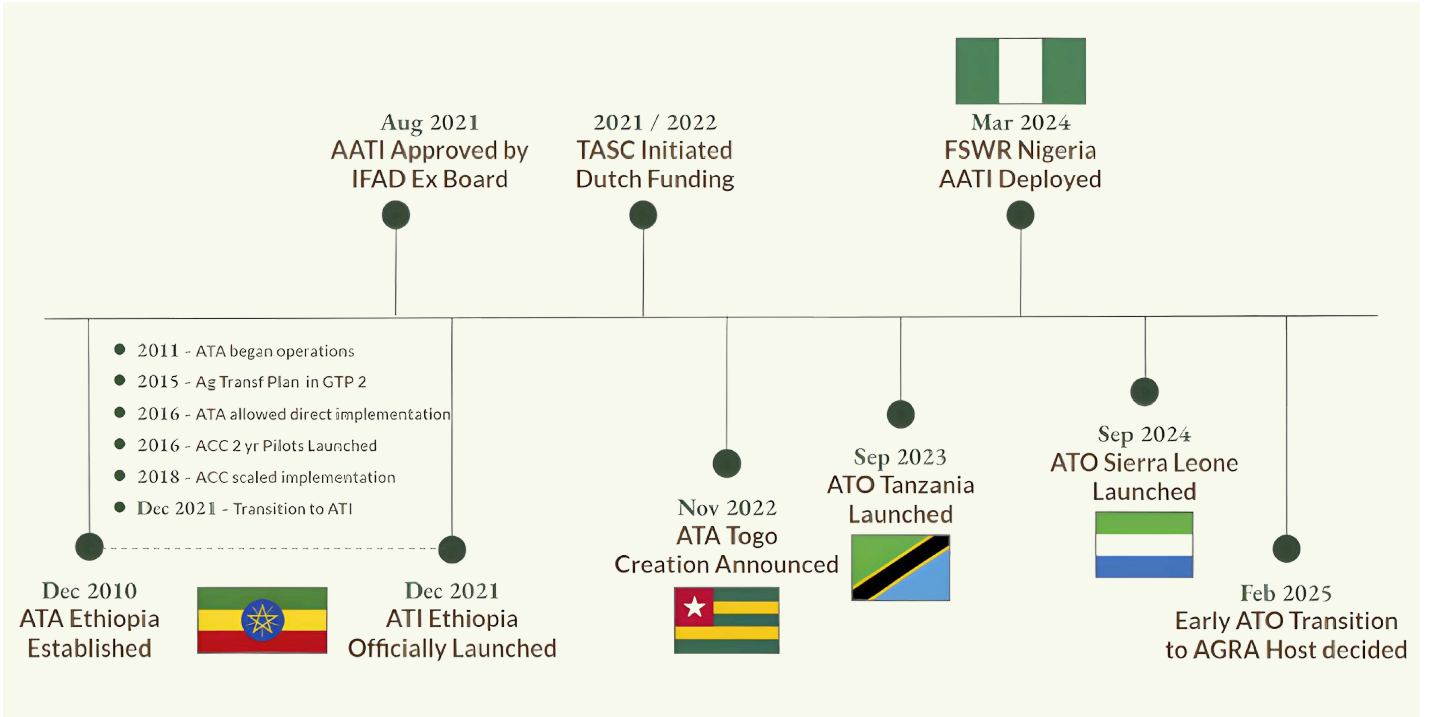


O5

RESULTS

ATs have taken shape differently across African contexts, reflecting diverse political priorities, institutional structures, and implementation pathways. This section profiles five country experiences, including Ethiopia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, and Togo, highlighting how each model was established, how it operates, and what lessons it offers. From early efforts such as the ATA/I in Ethiopia to more recent models like ATA Togo and ATOs in Tanzania and Sierra Leone, the case studies illustrate the practical realities of building and adapting transformation institutions. Figure 5 below outlines key milestones in the development of these models over time.

FIG. 5: EVOLUTION OF AT MODELS



CASE STUDY: ETHIOPIA

ETHIOPIA ATA /ATI INSTITUTIONAL PROFILE



Context: Ethiopia's agriculture sector contributes 34.9% to GDP and employs 69% of men and 53% of women. Guided by the Agricultural Development-Led Industrialization policy framework since 1993 and various subsequent national plans, including the National Agriculture Investment Plan (2021-2030) and revised Agricultural and Rural Development Policy (2024), the country emphasizes productivity, food security, and rural livelihoods. Strategic investments in irrigation, inputs, and technology reflect this goal. 2.4% (\$US 177 M) of the 2025 national budget is allocated to agriculture.²⁸

Type of AT Model: Nodal Agency

Date of Commencement: Decreed in 2010 and operational in 2011, an Agency (ATA) transitioned to an Institute (ATI) in 2021 to better meet the sector's needs.

Official Mandate: The official current mandate of the ATI is:

1. To identify systemic constraints of agricultural development, through conducting studies, and recommend solutions in order to ensure sustainability and structural transformation.
2. To support the establishment of strong linkages among agricultural and related institutions and projects in order to ensure the effectiveness of agricultural development activities.

[28] "World Bank Open Data"; Fortune, "Ambitious Federal Budget Exhibits Urban Glitz Over Rural Grit"; Haile, "Industrialisation: Towards a Development Agenda for Structural Transformation"; "Ethiopia - Agriculture and Rural Development Public Expenditure Review 1997/98–2005/06."

3. To identify capacity gaps, design and provide capacity building programs through training, consultancy, and technical support services to develop enhanced institutional capacity.
4. To manage and lead innovative projects of specific deliverables within the sector that catalyze and drive agricultural transformation.

Official Organizational Structure and Key Roles: Staff in headquarters and four regional Agricultural Transformation Center, organized under a CEO and Deputy CEO, with core verticals including Agricultural Commercialization Clusters (ACC), Operations, and Cross-Cutting Initiatives.

Coordination Mechanism: Initially, ATA reported to the Transformation Council, chaired by the Prime Minister and composed of senior leadership from key ministries—including Agriculture (as Chair), Trade, Transportation, and Finance—as well as regional bureau heads. The Council, functioned like a board of directors to guide strategy, facilitate cross-ministerial coordination, and enable rapid decision-making. The ATA provided quarterly reports to this Council. While the ATA's coordination mandate has existed since its inception, the ATI's role has expanded to encompass broader food systems coordination. It connects and harmonizes the efforts of government ministries (Agriculture, Finance, Trade, Transport), regional and local offices, research institutions, private businesses, NGOs, and farmer organizations. Initiatives such as the Digital Agriculture Roadmap exemplify how ATI works to align diverse actors, reduce fragmentation, and ensure that agricultural development activities translate into improved farmer livelihoods. The ATI also serves as the secretariat of the Ethiopian Food Systems Transformation and Nutrition initiative, playing a key coordination role and reporting directly to an Inter-Ministerial Steering Committee that includes 15 ministries. ATI has also been mandated with the operationalization of the revised Agricultural and Rural Development Policy, which requires inter-ministerial coordination for new proclamations, amendments, and regulations. At the grassroots level, ATI establishes coordination platforms within the ACC regions, leveraging regional transformation councils as anchors. It facilitates value chain alliance meetings and has signed MOUs with over 22 national and international organizations.

Number of Staff: Approximately 400 (2023/2024).

Budget: From approximately \$US 20 M annually to \$US 68 M for 2025/2026.

Funding Sources: Primarily funded by international donors including the French Development Agency (AFD), the Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA), European Union (EU), Gates Foundation, MasterCard Foundation, Norway, Netherlands Embassy in Ethiopia.

CASE STUDY: **TOGO**

TOGO ATA INSTITUTIONAL PROFILE



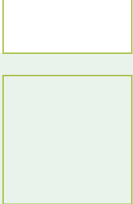
Context: Togo's agriculture sector represents 18% of GDP and employs 35% of men and 25% of women. The national agricultural policy (2016-2030) emphasizes modernization, innovation, and resilient food systems through cluster zones and smart farming. The 2024–2030 food security roadmap aims to transform agriculture structurally and economically. 2.33% (~\$101 M) of the 2025 national budget is allocated to agriculture.²⁹

Type of AT Model: Nodal Agency

Date of Commencement: Established in late 2022 and operational in January 2023.

Official Mandate Statement: Its overarching objective is to accelerate the structural and sustainable transformation of the agricultural sector in Togo. This includes conducting analytical studies to identify and remove obstacles to the structural transformation of the sector; implementing priority agricultural projects such as Planned Agricultural Development Zones (ZAAPs); implementing support measures for priority agricultural projects; and establishing linkages and coordination among agricultural and related institutions and projects to ensure integrated effectiveness in agricultural development activities. There is a strong focus on the implementation of the ZAAPs.

[29] "World Bank Open Data"; First, "Togo"; First, "Togo Allocates CFA19 Billion for Food Security in 2025"; République Togolaise, Ministère de l'Agriculture, de l'Élevage et de l'Hydraulique, "La Politique Agricole Assortie du Plan Stratégique pour la Transformation de l'Agriculture au Togo à l'Horizon 2030 (PA-PSTAT 2030): Document de Politique Agricole pour la Période 2016-2030."



Official Organizational Structure and Key Roles: Independent agency under Presidency with technical oversight by Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Rural Development (MAEDR) and operational authority vested in the Director General, supported by a Delivery Director. The ATA Board includes the President; Prime Minister; Minister of Economy and Finance; Minister of Agriculture, Livestock & Rural Development; and the Chief Executive Officer of the ATA.

Coordination Mechanism: ATA provides monthly written updates to ministries/agencies connected to its work, such as the Ministry of Water, Ministry of Environment, and Ministry of Digital Economy. In-person meetings are also held when relevant projects are being developed or implemented.

Number of Staff: 20 fulltime staff (as of 2023) with a planned increase to approximately 100 by 2025.

Budget: \$US 4 M (2023) annually including \$US 1.5 M for ZAAP implementation.

Funding Sources: Funded by the Government of Togo with planned future funding from the Global Green Growth Institute (to be coordinated by ATA and shared with other ministries, \$US 50 M), German Corporation for International Cooperation (GIZ, \$US 13 M), and the World Bank (mobilized by the ATA to be shared with other ministries, \$US 100 M).

CASE STUDY: TANZANIA

TANZANIA ATO INSTITUTIONAL PROFILE




Context: Agriculture contributes 26.1.% of Tanzania’s GDP and employs over 60% of the population (64% of men, 67% of women). Guided by Agenda 10/30 and the Agriculture Master Plan , the country aims for 10% agricultural growth by 2030 through irrigation, mechanization, and enhanced seed systems. With 2.4% (~\$0.53 bn) of the 2025 national budget allocated to agriculture, the government supports block farms and value chain strengthening. These reforms position agriculture as a central pillar in Tanzania’s long-term economic transformation.³⁰

Type of AT Model: Delivery Unit

Date of Commencement: Launched in 2023 and operationalized in 2024.

Official Mandate Statement: The mandate of the ATO is to implement the AMP, as well as coordination, monitoring and evaluation, capacity building, and agricultural investment mobilization. This includes monitoring and evaluating agricultural transformation programs and supporting the coordination and implementation of crucial agriculture initiatives like those supporting Tanzania’s Agenda 10/30.

[30] “Tanzania Plans to Raise Spending by 13% in Fiscal Year from July, Draft Shows | Reuters”; “World Bank Open Data”; The United Republic of Tanzania, “Tanzania Agriculture Master Plan 2050: Roadmap to Transform the Crops Livestock and Fisheries Sectors.”



Official Organizational Structure and Key Roles: The ATO serves as a national coordination and delivery unit, anchored within the MoA and working in close collaboration with the Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries (MoLF). The AATI, in collaboration with the MoA and MoLF, coordinated the recruitment process. Both ministries seconded staff members and nominated staff to lead and join the selection committee. ATO staff were recruited through this joint effort and initially issued IFAD contracts. They were later transitioned to AGRA, which now serves as the hosting institution for the ATO Tanzania.

Coordination Mechanism: The planned governance framework for the ATO, although not fully operational, includes a high-level Steering Committee, which serves as the highest decision-making body for the AMP. This committee comprises ministers and Permanent Secretaries from MoA and the MoLF, along with the Director of the ATO. It meets bi-annually to oversee AMP progress, resolve high-level bottlenecks, make strategic decisions, align with national priorities, and facilitate trade-offs between stakeholders. A Technical Committee, consisting of Permanent Secretaries from sectoral lead ministries, the ATO Director, and private sector representatives, meets quarterly to resolve inter-ministerial bottlenecks, provide strategic guidance for AMP implementation, and validate the annual workplan, ensuring initiatives are coordinated effectively across ministries. The ATO is working closely with the Ministry of Planning to integrate the Agricultural Masterplan (AMP) into the broader national Vision 2050 framework, resulting in the development of AMP 2050. ATO also works closely with financial institutions, development partners (the agricultural donor group), and relevant agricultural boards

Number of Staff: 19 staff approved in 2024 (Revised from original number of 21 in 2023) – of which 9 were recruited in 2024.

Budget: Just over \$US 1 M annually.

Funding Sources: Catalytic funding from the AATI Trust Fund and in-kind support from the government.

CASE STUDY: NIGERIA

NIGERIA INSTITUTIONAL PROFILE - FOOD SECURITY WARM ROOM (FSWR)





Context: Agriculture contributes 20.4% of Nigeria’s GDP and employs a significant rural workforce (42% of men and 26% of women). The National Agricultural Technology and Innovation Policy (2022-2027) promotes mechanization, commercial agriculture, and partnerships like Agro-Brazil. Less than 2% (~\$US 236 M) of the 2025 national budget is allocated to agriculture.³¹

Type of AT Model: Temporary emergency delivery platform (war room).

Date of Commencement: Spurred by the President’s declaration of a state of emergency in July 2023, government officials including the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security (FMAFS) formally requested technical support from AATI in November, which the AATI Steering Committee endorsed in December. AATI undertook an introductory mission in February 2024, which was followed later that month by a direct request from the office of the Vice President for the establishment of the FSWR. AATI mobilized short-term support in 2024.

Official Mandate Statement: Its immediate priority was to mitigate a pressing food security crisis. It functioned as a Command Centre aimed at ensuring the efficient execution of a Rapid Response Plan to address the crisis. The key functions included operations, data analytics, acquisition and distribution, and strategic communications.

[31] “World Bank Open Data”; Federal Republic of Nigeria, Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, “National Agricultural Technology and Innovation Policy (NATIP) :2022-2027”; Adeduyite, “N’Assembly Approves Record N54.99tn Budget for 2025”; Svsion, “Nigeria’s 2025 Agricultural Budget.”



Official Organizational Structure and Key Roles: The FSWR was established following a request from the Office of the Vice President on 28 February 2024 and was subsequently transferred to the FMAFS, with continued support from the AATI team comprising an Operations Lead, a Communication Officer, a Database Developer, and a Logistics Officer.

Coordination Mechanism: A key function was to coordinate and consolidate interventions across critical ministries.

Number of Staff: Four AATI-supported roles.

Budget: USD 173,683 for a period of four months

Funding Sources: Catalytic funding from the AATI Trust Fund

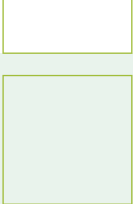
CASE STUDY: SIERRA LEONE

SIERRA LEONE ATO INSTITUTIONAL PROFILE



Context: Agriculture accounts for 25.4% of GDP and employs 44% of men and 42% of women in Sierra Leone. The “Feed Salone” strategy (2023-2028) promotes staple crop productivity, value chains, infrastructure, and smallholder support. \$96M or 8% of the 2025 national budget is allocated to agriculture in 2025.^[32] The Government of Sierra Leone has outlined a vision for rapid progress in inclusive agriculture transformation by positioning and supporting the agriculture sector as an economic growth engine, acknowledging its essential role in the food system. This is encapsulated in the Feed Salone Strategy. In 2018, the Government developed the National Agricultural Transformation Programme (NAT 2023), and implemented a private sector led approach dubbed ‘The Agriculture Policy Shift’. This strategy laid the foundation for the prioritisation of agriculture – Feed Salone as one of the Big 5 Game Changers in the SLPP Manifesto. This Strategy underscores the Government of Sierra Leone’s steadfast dedication to agricultural transformation and the pursuit of food sovereignty. Recognizing the pivotal role that agriculture plays in the nation’s economy, the Feed Salone Strategy aims to boost agriculture productivity to fuel inclusive growth, increase access and availability of locally produced nutrient dense and safe food, reduce our dependence on food imports, reduce hunger, increase export earnings, create jobs, and build resilient food system.

[32] “Maada Bio’s Government Announces NLe35.3 Billion for Citizens”; “BudgIT Sierra Leone Raises Concern over Viability and Priorities in 2025 National Budget”; “Feed Salone – For a Food-Secure and Prosperous Sierra Leone”; “World Bank Open Data.”



The Feed Salone Strategy is all about heightening agricultural transformation. The transformation journey calls for shifting from small-scale farming to a competitive agricultural economy requires the right conditions. Strong political will must translate into action, with institutions working together, smallholder farmers gaining real power, businesses expanding, and policies unlocking the bottlenecks so agriculture can truly thrive. Feed Salone is a presidential flagship program that brings the entire government together to drive this transformation; this is essentially ‘*A Whole-of-Government Approach to Food Systems Transformation*’. The Presidential Council for Feed Salone ensures that food is treated as a national priority, not just an agriculture issue. This coordinated approach aligns the key ministries of agriculture, finance, trade, infrastructure, and environment to create a strong, unified food system. It also ensures that government institutions speak the same language, streamline efforts, and engage the public in a shared national mission.

The Feed Salone’s strategic interventions will be implemented through the following six (6) pillars:

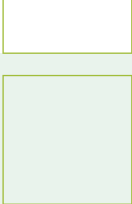
- Pillar 1: Mechanization and Irrigation
- Pillar 2: Seeds and Inputs System
- Pillar 3: Aggregation, Processing and Marketing
- Pillar 4: Access to Finance
- Pillar 5: Agricultural Technology and Climate Smart Agriculture
- Pillar 6: Empowering Women and Youth

This strategy is premised on the belief that the interventions under the strategic pillars will improve the functioning and efficiency of the value chain of our priority crops, culminating in higher levels of productivity, increased export earnings, resilience to climate change, reduction in hunger and food insecurity, and job creation.

The government of Sierra Leone forged a partnership with AATI to establish the ATO. The ATO is set up as an agile, collaborative, and results-oriented auxiliary arm of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security (MAFS), the ATO’s primary function is to support the Ministry in achieving the ambitious goals of the Feed Salone Strategy. The ATO support package is structured around three thematic areas: diagnosing key bottlenecks to agrifood sector transformation, developing evidence-based strategies to address them, and ensuring effective implementation of the Feed Salone priorities.

Type of AT Model: Delivery Unit

Date of Commencement: 2024



Official Mandate Statement: The official mandate of the ATO Salone is to support and strengthen the delivery mechanism of the MAFS, which it accomplishes by providing the MAFS with enhanced capacity for strategic delivery and coordination. It functions as a technical and strategic support entity, rather than a direct project implementation unit. Key aspects of its mandate include supporting Feed Salone strategy implementation; strategic oversight, coordination, delivery support; capacity building and technical support; fostering collaboration; and addressing key government priorities. As a specialized unit, the ATO supports the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security (MAFS) through monitoring priority initiatives to ensure bottlenecks are identified and addressed promptly; promoting evidence-based planning ensuring that strategies and plans are grounded on data and bridging gaps between policy and practical execution; providing technical support to improve sector performance. With a focus on achieving the objectives of the Feed Salone Strategy, the ATO operates across strategic pillars prioritized by the MAFS, employing a ‘Delivery’ approach led by an agile team of technical and delivery experts.

Official Organizational Structure and Key Roles: Embedded in the MAFS, its structure is specifically designed around the six pillars of the Feed Salone strategy. The structure includes a Director; Head of Programmes; and six Pillar Leads.

Investment Areas: As mentioned above, the ATO-Salone plays a pivotal auxiliary role in complementing government efforts by providing enhancing delivery capacity and providing technical expertise. The priority areas of focus for the year 2025 include the following.

- 1) *Enhancing Agricultural Finance:* The current financial ecosystem does not sufficiently meet the needs of smallholder farmers and agri-businesses, who struggle with high collateral demands and limited tailored products. The ATO-Salone is assisting the Ministry in a feasibility study for establishing a dedicated agricultural financial institution to address these gaps.
- 2) *Improving Stakeholder Coordination:* Efforts are underway to create a Mutual Accountability Framework (MAF) and optimize the Agriculture Advisory Group. These measures aim to strengthen dialogue among stakeholders and the private sector, align investments, and tackle implementation challenges.
- 3) *Innovative Value Chain Hubs:* Transformation clusters and Value Chain Hubs are being developed to drive commercialization in smallholder agrifood systems. While progress has been made in establishing rice hubs, further work is needed to operationalize them, foster private sector involvement, and ensure that smallholder farmers access profitable markets with effective public sector facilitation.

4) *Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL)*: A robust MEL system is being established for the Feed Salone strategy, focusing on outcome-based and evidence-driven decision-making. This includes refining the Theory of Change and developing a comprehensive learning agenda.

5) *Strengthening Data Collection*: Improved protocols for the annual rice production survey are being piloted to enhance data accuracy. Successful approaches will be expanded to surveys of other key crops.

6) *Feed Salone Communications Strategy*: ATO-Salone is supporting the review, validation, and implementation of a communications strategy to ensure stakeholders are well informed, increase their understanding, and promote greater engagement with Feed Salone activities.

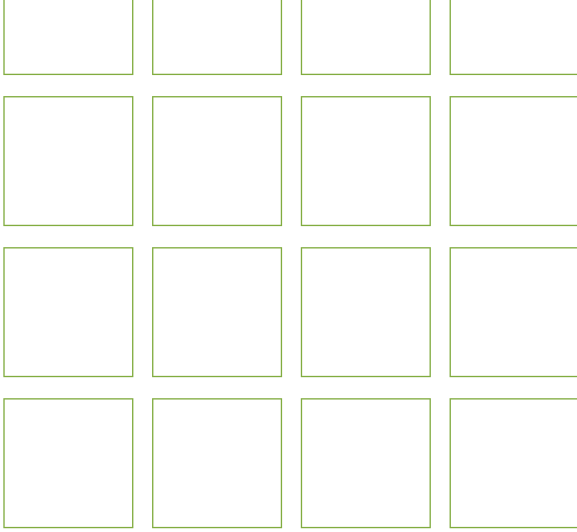
Number of Staff: 11 approved positions, many currently need to be recruited.

Budget: Approximately \$US 750,000 annually.

Funding Sources: Catalytic funding from AATI with in-kind support from the government.



“ATs have taken shape differently across African contexts, reflecting diverse political priorities, institutional structures, and implementation pathways.”



06

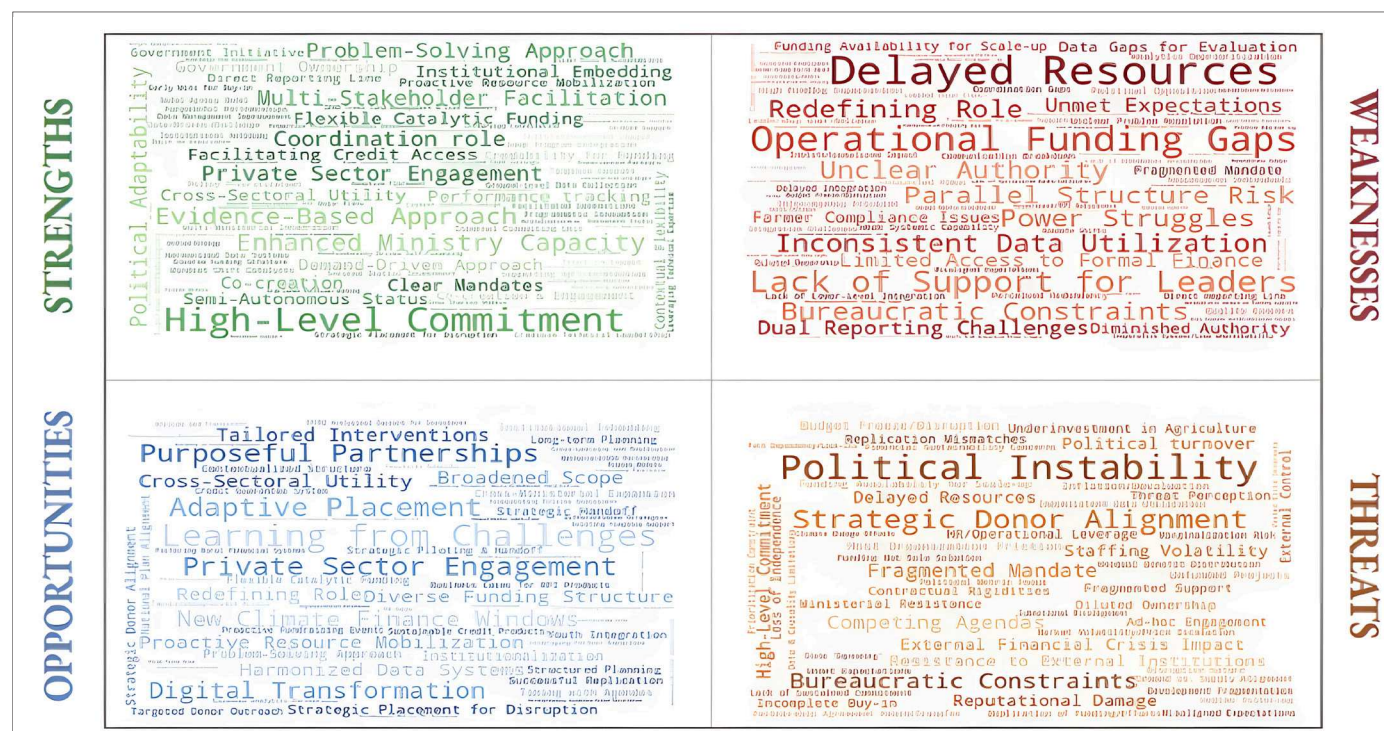
CROSS-COUNTRY COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

This section analyzes how AT models compare across eight core dimensions that shape their ability to drive results, adapt to change, and achieve long-term impact. While the pathway to transformation varies by context, most AT models evolve through a series of phases—starting with political and institutional alignment, progressing through operational delivery and coordination, and ultimately focusing on sustainability and sectoral scale-up. Certain dimensions, such as institutional anchoring and governance, tend to influence early momentum, while others, including financing, analytics, and stakeholder coordination, become central to implementation. Over time, sustaining impact requires resilience to political and financial shifts, strong internal systems, and the capacity to catalyze broader policy and market reforms.

While the analysis is as rigorous as practicable, the overlap between dimensions, country-specific contexts, and relatively limited sample size mean that definitive conclusions should be approached with appropriate caution. Additionally, although certain AT design features may present theoretical strengths or risks, the way a model is managed—particularly how it transitions from design to delivery—often plays an equally, if not more, critical role in determining its effectiveness and long-term impact.

To support this comparative analysis, the quadrant chart in Figure 6 synthesizes themes emerging from literature reviews, interviews, and FGDs, mapping the most commonly cited strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats across AT models. Rather than ranking performance, the chart surfaces recurring dynamics—such as the value of high-level commitment and government ownership, the operational risks posed by funding complexities or unclear mandates, and the potential of adaptive, cross-sectoral approaches to unlock scale. These patterns provide a diagnostic frame for the discussion that follows.

FIG. 6: KEY THEMES EMERGING FROM THE STUDY ORGANIZED BY STRENGTHS, WEAKNESS, OPPORTUNITIES, & THREATS



INSTITUTIONAL ANCHORING

Institutional anchoring refers to how AT are positioned within government structures. Models initially placed under senior political leadership, such as the presidency or prime minister's office—as seen in early stages of the ATA Ethiopia and ATA Togo—often gain rapid traction by signaling high-level commitment and enabling cross-ministerial coordination.³³ However, this approach can be vulnerable to leadership transitions if roles are not institutionalized within government systems.³⁴ Ethiopia's experience illustrates a full cycle: while ATA was legally affiliated with the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) from the outset, its reporting through the Prime Minister–chaired Transformation Council gave it strong visibility and influence across government. However, this dual anchoring occasionally created tension and ambiguity in roles between the MoA and the Prime Minister's Office, underscoring the need for clear accountability mechanisms even under strong political sponsorship. With the arrival of a new Prime Minister in 2018, the Council stopped convening and bilateral meetings between the ATA CEO and the PM also stopped. Without the Transformation Council and meetings with the PM, the ATA lacked access to the PM's Office and the ability to act as a center of government institution. This limited the ATA's ability to coordinate operations across the government and hold institutions accountable for their specific transformation deliverables in the agricultural sector. By 2019, due to lack of meetings with the Transformation Council there was consolidation under the MoA. This transition, and subsequent delegation of reporting to the State Minister of Agriculture in 2020, marked a shift from high-level political oversight to closer ministerial integration, reshaping its role and influence within the agricultural sector.³⁵


[33] Redacted (KII 1), Key Informant Interview.

[34] Redacted (KII 2), Key Informant Interview.

[35] Redacted (KII 1), Key Informant Interview. "ATA to ATI timeline v2" Document from ATA Ethiopia



Conversely, models embedded from the outset within line ministries, such as in Tanzania and Sierra Leone, may build stronger alignment with policy and administrative systems, but often face slower uptake due to institutional inertia or overlapping mandates.³⁶ In some cases, unclear roles and reporting lines have led to resistance or implementation delays.³⁷ For new AT models, careful attention to anchoring is critical. Balancing strategic autonomy with institutional integration, securing clear mandates, and planning for long-term embedding within national systems can help ensure both early momentum and lasting impact.³⁸

<div> INSTITUTIONAL ANCHORING</div>	
ATA/ATI Ethiopia	<p>Parent Ministry and Legal Status: The ATA was established in December 2010 through Council of Ministers Regulation No. 198/2010 as an autonomous federal agency with its own legal personality, legally accountable to the MoA but overseen by a Transformation Council chaired by the Prime Minister. In 2016, its mandate was expanded by Regulation No. 380/2016, which authorized ATA not only to provide studies, coordination, and linkages but also to directly implement agricultural transformation projects.</p>
	<p>This amendment gave ATA responsibility for leading flagship initiatives such as the Agricultural Commercialization Clusters (ACCs), while the Transformation Council continued to act as its strategic oversight body. In 2021, ATA was reconstituted as the Agricultural Transformation Institute (ATI) under Regulation No. 474/2021, with a mandate as a public institution possessing legal personality and administrative and financial autonomy.</p>
	<p>Autonomy and Integration: ATA combined elements of autonomy — as a federal agency with its own legal personality, administrative and financial independence, and authority to implement projects — with integration, being legally affiliated to the MoA and strategically overseen by the Prime Minister–chaired Transformation Council. Its later transition into ATI in 2021 deepened ministerial integration while retaining institutional autonomy through its legal status as a public establishment.</p> <p>An Institute is defined as an institution “that is accountable to the relevant Ministry or to other Government organ and that focuses on training, study and research and consulting services.” This change meant that the ATI would primarily focus on studies that provide policy and systems recommendations. Further, the ATI would no longer be time-bound in its duration as originally envisioned. This means that the ATI would operate within existing structures and not be driven by a sense of urgency that motivated the original ATA.</p>

[36] TASC, “Final Report TASC Workshop 17-19 June 2025.”
[37] Redacted (KII 8), Key Informant Interview.
[38] Redacted (KII 2), Key Informant Interview.



INSTITUTIONAL ANCHORING

ATA Togo	<p>Parent Ministry and Legal Status: The ATA is a state (national) agency formally established by decree on November 17, 2022, as a public administrative establishment—a legal status that grants it its own legal personality and autonomy in administrative and financial management. While it operates under the supervision of the Presidency, with technical oversight from the MAEDR and financial oversight from the Ministry of Economy and Finance, its autonomous status allows it to function independently from typical ministerial structures. This setup is designed to enable greater flexibility, responsiveness, and a culture of innovation and high performance in delivering on its mandate.</p> <p>Autonomy and Integration: The ATA’s autonomy enables it to act as a dedicated, agile body, distinct from traditional ministries. The MAEDR oversees the ATA’s technical operations and they support each other to achieve structural transformation. As a Doing agency, not just a Thinking one, the ATA implements flagship initiatives—such as contract farming and mechanization pilots—and provides analytical and operational support to strengthen the Ministry’s delivery capacity and advance shared transformation goals.</p>
ATO Tanzania	<p>Parent Ministry and Legal Status: The ATO Tanzania was established by AATI to support the Government of Tanzania. It serves as a national coordination and delivery unit under the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), working closely with the Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries (MoLF) and other relevant ministries. The ATO acts as the central coordinating body for the implementation of the Agricultural Master Plan (AMP).</p> <p>Autonomy and Integration: The ATO is integrated with the MoA and aims to work closely with the MoLF to drive the transformation agenda by supporting implementation of the AMP.</p>
FSWR Nigeria	<p>Parent Ministry and Legal Status: The FSWR was initiated by a specific request for technical support from the Vice President’s Office to AATI. It was subsequently anchored to the FMAFS.</p> <p>Autonomy and Integration: The FSWR was designed to “coordinate and consolidate interventions across critical ministries,” though the temporary nature and fully-external team limited integration.</p>
ATO Salone	<p>Parent Ministry and Legal Status: The AATI launched and staffed the ATO Salone. Similar to the ATO Tanzania, it is a national delivery unit structure embedded in the MAFS and supported by AATI.</p> <p>Autonomy and Integration: The ATO was co-designed with and embedded in the MAFS, with its structure built around the six pillars of the Feed Salone strategy to enable close collaboration, capacity building, and strategic support; its integration plans include pairing technical leads with ministry counterparts, facilitating joint planning, and transferring skills to strengthen long-term delivery within the Ministry.</p>

GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES

Governance in the context of AT refers to the formal mandates, leadership structures, and decision-making processes that enable these entities to operate with legitimacy and coordinate stakeholders. Country experiences show that strong political sponsorship and clearly defined mandates are central to early effectiveness. The ATA Ethiopia gained cross- sectoral influence through its alignment with a high-level Transformation Council chaired by the Prime Minister,³⁹ while in Tanzania, the ATO was established at the request of the Minister of Agriculture and formally tasked with coordinating the national AMP through a collaboratively developed project framework endorsed by key ministries—providing it with strategic legitimacy despite the absence of a formal legal decree.⁴⁰ The leadership of the ATA Togo, including former directors from the MoA’s mechanization directorate and the extension institute, facilitates connections and alignment with existing systems.⁴¹ When supported by formal decrees and clear institutional placement within the Head of State office or host ministries, AT models benefited from enhanced credibility and alignment.

In cases where governance structures lack clarity, such as unclear institutional authority, overlapping mandates or dual reporting lines, coordination becomes more difficult and slows implementation. Dual reporting lines introduce added complexity where ATOs are embedded within government ministries but staffed and supported through external initiatives. These arrangements—designed to enable rapid deployment of expertise and facilitate strategic alignment with international partners—can also create tensions between programmatic accountability to external funders and political or operational accountability to national authorities. In practice, staff may find themselves navigating competing expectations, fragmented communication, and procedural inconsistencies. These tensions can undermine perceptions of ownership, delay implementation, and complicate alignment with ministry leadership. Ensuring a clear and jointly agreed governance arrangement, along with transparent communication protocols and strong ministerial engagement from the outset, is critical to balancing these dual roles and fostering trust across institutions.

A key lesson from AT models is that unclear mandates can hinder their ability to integrate effectively with host ministries. For instance, at the outset the ATO Salone faced challenges related to the communication of a clearly defined mandate, which limited the ability of the ATO personnel to 1) engage ministry staff effectively and 2) demonstrate its added value through consistent participation and tangible outputs.⁴² Resistance may arise from existing government institutions if the AT is perceived as duplicating efforts or overlapping with established mandates, particularly when roles are not clearly defined from the outset. Although collaboration has been strong, a significant challenge for ATA Togo has been perceived duplication with the MAEDR, as both entities work on similar sectors and report to the presidency, suggesting a need for clearer demarcation of roles.⁴³

[39] “Khalid Bomba - Presentation on Nodal Agency Concept and Ethiopian ATA (2010 - 2020).”

[40] TASC, “Final Report TASC Workshop 17-19 June 2025.”

[41] Redacted (KII 2), Key Informant Interview.

[42] Redacted (FGD 2), Focus Group Discussion.

[43] Redacted (KII 10), Key Informant Interview, 10.

Multi-partner governance arrangements, while valuable for pooling resources and expertise, function best when supported by consistent communication, shared decision-making processes, and strong national engagement. Overall, clear mandates, aligned leadership, and well-structured coordination systems have proven essential for effective, credible, and adaptive governance.



GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES

ATA/ATI Ethiopia	<p>Structures & Mandates: Features a Transformation Council chaired by the Prime Minister as its senior accountability body. Mandate includes studies and action-based research, linkage and coordination, implementation support, and innovative pilot project implementation. Goes beyond studies to pilot and implement solutions, ensuring practicality and scalability.</p> <p>Decision-Making Processes: Evidence-based decision-making is emphasized, with studies from ATI's analytics team used to inform both strategic and operational priorities. Strategic decisions—such as those related to policy direction, program selection, and major investments—were overseen by the Transformation Council (for the ATA) and are currently overseen by the ATI CEO often jointly with the Minister of Agriculture or a Council of Ministers. Implementation-related decisions, including project design and execution planning, are handled by ATI leadership and technical teams in coordination with the MoA.</p> <p>Escalation Mechanisms: The agency's accountability to the Transformation Council and Ministry implies established reporting and escalation paths, though specific mechanisms are not detailed in the provided sources.</p>
ATA Togo	<p>Structures & Mandates: The ATA's primary objective is to accelerate structural and sustainable transformation of the agricultural sector. Its mandate includes conducting analytical studies, implementing priority agricultural projects, providing support measures for projects, and establishing linkages and coordination. Governance includes a Council of Orientation and Supervision (chaired by the President) and a General Directorate.</p> <p>Decision-Making Processes: Decisions are made through a hierarchical process from analysts to project leads, directors, and the Chief Executive Officer, ultimately overseen by the ATA Board. The Council of Orientation and Supervision defines political and strategic orientations, and approves plans and budgets.</p> <p>Escalation Mechanisms: The multi-level organizational structure with an ATA Board and Council of Orientation and Supervision implies clear escalation paths for issues, though specific mechanisms are not detailed in the provided sources.</p>



GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES

ATO Tanzania	<p>Structures & Mandates: The ATO Tanzania is a delivery unit established in collaboration with the AATI. It is primarily tasked with coordinating the implementation of the Agricultural Master Plan (AMP) and strengthening institutional capacities within the government. Serving as a strategic coordination body for the AMP, the ATO operates under the leadership of the Ministry of Agriculture, working closely with the Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries and other relevant ministries.</p> <p>Decision-Making Processes: The ATO is designed to manage a centralized dashboard and database for collected data, integrated with implementing entities' systems. It is responsible for producing comprehensive quarterly, bi-annual, and annual reports for governance committees and stakeholders. Decision-making typically takes place through governance committees and inter-ministerial steering groups, where the ATO presents consolidated analysis, options, and progress reports.</p> <p>Escalation Mechanisms: Reports are intended to be shared with flagship, steering, and technical Committees, which implies an escalation mechanism for issues and decisions.</p>
FSWR Nigeria	<p>Structures & Mandates: The FSWR was set up as a rapid response 'war room' to coordinate emergency action on food insecurity, and expanded to include support for developing coordination mechanisms, strategic frameworks, and communication plans for the FMAFS.</p> <p>Decision-Making Processes: Specific decision-making processes for Nigeria's FSWR are not explicitly detailed in the provided sources.</p> <p>Escalation Mechanisms: Specific escalation mechanisms for Nigeria's FSWR are not explicitly detailed in the provided sources.</p>
ATO Salone	<p>Structures & Mandates: The ATO Salone is a delivery unit that AATI, in collaboration with the Government of Sierra Leone, supported and operationalized to strengthen local delivery mechanisms. Its core work includes institutional strengthening and coordination, including for flagship implementation.</p> <p>Decision-Making Processes: Specific decision-making processes for the Sierra Leone ATO are not explicitly detailed in the provided sources.</p> <p>Escalation Mechanisms: Specific escalation mechanisms for the Sierra Leone ATO are not explicitly detailed in the provided sources.</p>

FINANCING MODELS

Financing for AT entities focuses on securing and managing the financial resources needed to sustain their operations, provide technical support, and drive long-term transformation across multiple countries. The size of the AT budgets vary dramatically across contexts.

AT models typically begin with catalytic donor funding—such as flexible early-stage support which allows them to establish institutional capacity and credibility—and diversify their sources of support over time. For instance, the Ethiopia ATI, originally launched with seed funding from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, has since attracted substantial financial backing from various international donors, including DANIDA and the Netherlands Embassy, EU, AFD, and the Norway Embassy and MasterCard Foundation. A defining characteristic of the ATI's funding model is its significant autonomy stemming from the Ethiopian government's financial contribution, which has remained below 10% of its budget and primarily covers operational costs like office rent.⁴⁴ This broader donor base and minimal government financial input have allowed the ATI to operate with considerable independence.⁴⁵ The ATA Togo was largely government-funded initially, receiving, for instance, \$4 million for 2023 operations from the President's office. It has also mobilized strategic support from the UN World Food Programme (WFP) and funds from the World Bank for infrastructure.⁴⁶ It is seeking to successfully pilot innovative, integrated value chain models in select ZAAPs to spur broader support and take-up.

If an AT moves into broad implementation of agricultural programs (rather than providing technical assistance or implementing small pilots), proactively securing strategic, pooled, and predictable funding for large scale programs is key. The first phase of the Ethiopia's Agricultural Commercialization Clusters (ACC) 2019-2024, implemented under the ATI, exemplified this approach. By demonstrating results in other programs, donor confidence was reinforced and significant pooled resources were mobilized (US\$133 M), which covered both program activities and institutional support costs. The first phase of ACC reached over 4.4 million farmers, of whom 2.5 million were organized into Farmer Production Clusters (FPCs). The program delivered significant results, with grain yields 86% higher than baseline levels and horticulture yields increasing six-fold. Overall production volume rose by 56%, raising the share of grain production in ACC areas from 28% in 2019 to 58% in 2024.⁴⁷

Building on this foundation, Ethiopia launched ACC Phase II (ACCII) in September 2025 during the Africa Climate Summit.⁴⁸ ACCII reflects a broader vision—emphasizing climate-smart agriculture, resilience, gender and youth inclusion, and private sector engagement—expanding to nine regions and directly targeting vulnerable groups, including internally displaced persons and refugees. This evolution underscores how pooled, results-driven financing can enable AT models to both deliver short-term wins and transition into long-term, system-wide transformation.

[44] Redacted (KII 4), Key Informant Interview, 4.

[45] Redacted (KII 4), Key Informant Interview.

[46] "Togo ATA Strategy, Planning, and Operations Retreat."


[47] Agricultural Transformation Institute. (2025, September 10). Ethiopia launches second phase of ACC: Agricultural Commercialization through Climate-smart and Inclusive Innovations (ACCII) at Africa Climate Summit. <https://ati.gov.et/ethiopia-launches-second-phase-of-acc-agricultural-commercialization-through-climate-smart-and-inclusive-innovations-accii-at-africa-climate-summit>

[48] Ethiopia launches second phase of ACC: Agricultural Commercialization through Climate-smart and Inclusive Innovations (ACCII) at Africa Climate Summit.

The more recent ATO Tanzania was established with technical support and initial resources from AATI and in collaboration with partners is actively seeking funding for flagship projects from various sources including from various channels, including grants from the Norwegian Embassy, African Development Bank Group (AfDB), and the African Capacity Building Foundation.⁴⁹

Heavy reliance on external partners presents risks, as shifting donor priorities or delays in disbursement can hinder progress. AT entities vary in how they manage budget allocations. Some, like ATA Togo, benefit from internal fund management systems, which enhance their ability to plan and disburse resources effectively. Others, such as those in Tanzania and Sierra Leone, may not manage funds internally but can still benefit from having robust resource mobilization strategies and financial management plans to ensure efficient disbursement regardless of the funding source.

In the long term, AT models must also position themselves to access domestic funding sources, whether through national budget allocations or partnerships with the private sector. Without dedicated strategies for financial independence and long-term viability, AT entities risk stagnation once initial funding cycles end. Therefore, building a credible track record of results, institutionalizing strong governance systems, and proactively engaging both traditional and innovative financing sources will be critical for the sustained catalytic function of AT models across Africa.

<div> FINANCING MODELS</div>	
ATA/ATI Ethiopia	<p>Sources of Funding: Catalytic funding was provided by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Primarily funded by international donors including MasterCard Foundation, AFD, DANIDA, EU, Kingdom of Norway, Netherlands Embassy Ethiopia.</p> <p>Budget Allocation & Flexibility: Initial funding from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation was characterized as catalytic and flexible, allowing for frequent budget revisions (multiple times a year). This flexibility enabled the ATA to allocate resources towards innovation and learning. ATA spending increased gradually from 2012. A key shift occurred around 2019 when the ATA transitioned to proactively defining and engaging multiple donors to fund large-scale programs as a cohesive package, such as the ACC. This pooled funding approach further enhanced its autonomy. Current budget is approximately \$US 68 M in 2025/2026.⁵⁰</p>
ATA Togo	<p>Sources of Funding: Currently the ATA is supported with government funds. ATA Togo will be receiving funding from international partners such as the Global Green Growth Institute (to be coordinated by ATA and shared with other ministries, \$US 50 M), German Corporation for International Cooperation (GIZ, \$US 13 M), and the World Bank (mobilized by the ATA to be shared with other ministries, \$US 100 M). It also engages with the EU and KfW for various projects.</p>

[49] “AATI Progress Report (Grant INV-006368 P4).”
[50] Note: The ATI’s budget includes program implementation costs.



FINANCING MODELS

ATA Togo	Budget Allocation & Flexibility: The ATA has a budget of \$US 4 M (2023) annually including \$US 1.5 M for ZAAP implementation. The ATA is responsible for preparing its budget and has internal processes for accessing funds. It ensures external funds are effectively deployed for agricultural development.
ATO Tanzania	Sources of Funding: The ATO has funding from the AATI trust fund with in-kind support from the government. It is actively seeking funding for the 15 flagships identified in the AMP. The AATI is reinforcing its resource mobilization efforts for country support. Budget Allocation & Flexibility: The ATO Tanzania has a budget of just over \$US 1 M annually. It is proactively developed project proposals targeting funding from various external sources, including the Norwegian Embassy, AfDB, AGRA and the African Capacity Building Foundation, to address resource gaps for key flagship projects, as well as operational funds from MoA given annually. While AATI funding covers core ATO operational costs, these additional resources are intended specifically to support the implementation of the AMP.
FSWR Nigeria	Sources of Funding: The FSWR had initial non-financial strategic and contextual support from the Government of Nigeria with subsequent technical assistance from AATI. Budget Allocation & Flexibility: Specific details on budget allocation and flexibility for Nigeria's FSWR are not explicitly detailed in the provided sources.
ATO Salone	Sources of Funding: The ATO has catalytic funding from the AATI Trust Fund with in-kind support from the government. Budget Allocation & Flexibility: The ATO Salone budget is approximately \$US 750,000 annually. Specific details on budget flexibility are not explicitly detailed in the provided sources.

STAKEHOLDER COORDINATION

Stakeholder coordination refers to the ability of AT to convene, align, and sustain engagement across a diverse network of actors, including government ministries, donors, private sector partners, and civil society. Effective coordination hinges on several factors which support advancing shared goals, minimizing duplication, and addressing systemic challenges in agriculture.

Political commitment: Strong political commitment from higher leadership, particularly at the initial stage, was found to address systemic bottlenecks and enable quick decision-making. The leadership of the ATA Togo includes former directors from the MAEDR's mechanization directorate and the extension institute (ECOT), which helps maintain coordination and alignment despite the ATA's independent status.⁵¹ Having an explicit coordination mandate provides legitimacy for this function. For instance, the ATO Tanzania coordinates the implementation of the AMP and facilitates alignment among donors and the private sector. In addition to program coordination, ATOs also play a role in coordinating policy dialogues and analysis, and advocating for regulatory reforms that enable agribusiness development, including export facilitation.⁵² Regular inter-agency coordination meetings are intended to align efforts and monitor progress, with the ATO playing a central coordinating role.⁵³

Stakeholder Identification and Engagement: Successful AT engage a variety of stakeholders, from government ministries to the private sector and civil society; clearly identifying partners and establishing mechanisms for engagement. Mechanisms for engagement include monthly meetings held by the ATOs as part of their delivery routines, such as those planned by the ATO Salone.⁵⁴ Where expectations between AT entities and stakeholders are not fully aligned at the outset, early communication and role clarification help reduce friction and clarify responsibilities. The ATO Salone has the ambition to institutionalize coordination through a mutual accountability framework to institutionalize coordination and avoid duplication of efforts within the MAFS.⁵⁵ Across countries, high-level structures such as Ethiopia's Transformation Council or multi-ministerial leadership in Tanzania have enabled strong cross-government collaboration, particularly when supported by formal mandates and joint planning processes. Long-term influence is built through credibility and trusted relationships with civil servants, ensuring initiatives are owned and sustained by government staff rather than being seen as temporary political projects.⁵⁶

Multi-stakeholder platforms: Multi-stakeholder platforms and participatory mechanisms—such as steering committees, value chain alliances, stakeholder meetings, and coordination platforms—foster inclusive dialogue, collective problem-solving, and strengthened communication, trust, and alignment among partners.⁵⁷

For example, the National Soybean Stakeholders' Market Linkage Forum, organized by the ATI Ethiopia with relevant ministries, brought together over 100 participants from government, production clusters, cooperative unions, and processing companies.

[51] Redacted (KII 2), Key Informant Interview.

[52] Redacted (KII 6), Key Informant Interview.


[53] AATI, "Project Document Transition of ATO Tanzania."

[54] Redacted (FGD 2), Focus Group Discussion.

[55] Redacted (FGD 2).

[56] Redacted (FGD 2).

[57] Redacted (FGD 2); Redacted (KII 7), Key Informant Interview.



This direct engagement resulted in a sales contract valued at 1.4 billion ETB between farmer cooperative unions and off-takers, demonstrating how dialogue and trust can translate into tangible market linkages.⁵⁸

At the same time, ATI's broader role as secretariat of the Ethiopian Food Systems Transformation and Nutrition initiative illustrates how multi-stakeholder coordination can be institutionalized at a national level. In this role, ATI convenes several ministries, regional governments, development partners, and private actors to align agricultural and food system transformation, providing a platform for sustained policy coordination, accountability, and joint action.

Leveraging analytical expertise and pooling partner resources through collaborative governance arrangements, as seen in AATI's multi-partner model, further enables coordinated, system-wide action. Active relationship management and strategic communication help to build trust and align expectations—especially in complex political environments.

Coordination Processes: Embedding the AT entity or individual implementation staff within ministries, facilitates horizontal and vertical linkages across government levels and supports effective coordination. The ATO Tanzania is hosted by the MoA and also supports the MoLF, with staff largely seconded from these ministries, aiming to strengthen institutional alignment and coordination. The Ethiopia ATA did not, at first, have its own implementation structures at the grassroots level and therefore relied on the federal and regional agricultural offices.⁵⁹ To overcome initial resistance and delays, the ATA engaged regional governments and established regional implementation teams, with staff from the ATA being seconded or placed within the MoA itself as part of delivery units.⁶⁰ This inclusion of ATA staff within the MoA aimed to facilitate detailed implementation planning, define targets, and support problem-solving for Transformation Agenda Deliverables.⁶¹ The ATI currently has a Delivery Unit in the MoA and staff embedded in research institutions and regional bureaus of agriculture, acting as “ambassadors” and “champions” to scale and convince those around them. This structure helps align stakeholders from the federal to the district level. The ATI also expanded its regional presence by establishing four regional branch offices and four satellite offices when the Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Region split, bringing its total offices to eight. The ATI works closely with the government and the MoA, leveraging their vast network of development agents for large-scale implementation.⁶²

[58] Ethiopian ATI Annual Report (2023-2024).

[59] Redacted (KII 5), Key Informant Interview.

[60] Redacted (KII 5).

[61] TASC, “Ethiopian ATA(I) Analytics Evolution Case Study.”

[62] Redacted (FGD 1), Focus Group Discussion.



STAKEHOLDER COORDINATION

ATA/ATI Ethiopia	<p>Interministerial Engagement: Engaged 15 ministries and over 16 affiliated institutions for diagnostic studies and program gap identification. Coordinated inter-ministerial initiatives like the Ethiopian Food System Transformation and Nutrition.</p> <p>Donor & Non-State Actors: Signed MOUs with over 22 national and international organizations and garnered interest from 10+ potential development partners. Works to strengthen linkages and coordination across agricultural and related institutions.</p>
ATA Togo	<p>Interministerial Engagement: Maintains weekly in-person updates with the Secretary General of MAEDR and monthly written updates with other ministries. The MAEDR oversees the ATA's technical operations and collaborates to fulfill mandates.</p> <p>Donor & Non-State Actors: The ATA works to establish linkages and coordination among agricultural and related institutions and projects. The ATA also directly facilitates access to financing and market access for producers.</p>
ATO Tanzania	<p>Interministerial Engagement: The AMP design involved key ministries (MoA, MoLF), regional, and local government officials to ensure alignment with national policies.</p> <p>Donor & Non-State Actors: The AMP development involved extensive consultations and validation workshops with over 200 stakeholders, including farmers, private sector, civil society organizations, development partners, and research institutions. Draft project documents indicate that the ATO's annual progress report should be developed and published to increase visibility for increased stakeholder engagement.</p>
FSWR Nigeria	<p>Interministerial Engagement: The FSWR was initially formed with members from various ministries and agencies. A key planned function was to coordinate and consolidate interventions across critical ministries.</p> <p>Donor & Non-State Actors: AATI supported the FSWR in strategic communications, which support effective stakeholder coordination. Discussions have been held with GIZ on establishing an ATO in Nigeria, with GIZ expressing interest in embedding technical support. The African Development Bank (AfDB) and the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) have also shown interest in supporting or financing future ATO initiatives.</p>



STAKEHOLDER COORDINATION

ATO Salone

Interministerial Engagement: As part of its 2025 workplan, the ATO has prioritized efforts to enhance the coordination function within the MAFS. This includes supporting the Ministry's existing stakeholder platforms that monitor progress toward Feed Salone goals and helping to operationalize new coordination mechanisms. Notably, under the leadership of the Minister, an Agriculture Advisory Group is planned to facilitate strategic dialogue among government, development partners, and the private sector. The ATO will contribute to the establishment and functioning of this group by promoting inclusive engagement, addressing implementation bottlenecks, and aligning external support and investment with Feed Salone priorities. Its role would include embedding mutual accountability practices to encourage collaboration and joint problem-solving across stakeholders.

Donor & Non-State Actors: The AATI facilitates partnership efforts for the Government-led Delivery Unit at the country level. Sierra Leone's presentation at the AT workshop in June 2025 was made by AATI, indicating AATI's role in representation.

ANALYTICS

Analytics refers to the systems, capacities, and processes through which an AT generates, manages, and applies data to guide decision-making. Effective use of analytics strengthens strategy development, target-setting, implementation, and course correction, enabling AT models to operate based on evidence rather than assumptions.⁶³

In Ethiopia, an embedded analytics team has served as an internal consulting unit, delivering targeted studies, real-time problem-solving, and performance tracking that enhance cross-ministerial coordination. By institutionalizing these capabilities, AT entities help build long-term government capacity and improve policy responsiveness.⁶⁴

In Togo, for example, the analytics function was initially deprioritized to focus on field implementation, which limited early contributions to strategy and program design.⁶⁵ To adapt, the model maintained the role of a Director of Analytics and is gradually building internal analytical capacity over time.⁶⁶

Maintaining relevance and credibility depends on articulating a clear value proposition, aligning with ministry systems, and investing in staff skills and data infrastructure.⁶⁷ When strategically positioned and adequately supported, analytics functions enhance accountability, enable adaptive learning, and reinforce the AT role as a trusted source of insight in agricultural transformation.

[63] Redacted (KII 8), Key Informant Interview; Redacted (KII 9), Key Informant Interview.

[64] Redacted (FGD 1), Focus Group Discussion.

[65] Redacted (KII 1), Key Informant Interview.

[66] Redacted (KII 2), Key Informant Interview.

[67] Redacted (FGD 1), Focus Group Discussion; Redacted (FGD 2), Focus Group Discussion; Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, "Ten Years of the Ethiopian Agricultural Transformation Agency"; Redacted (KII 4), Key Informant Interview.



ANALYTICS

ATA/ATI Ethiopia	<p>Systems & Tools Used: Features an Analytics Unit/Team for knowledge generation, bottleneck identification, and policy/investment analysis. The Analytics team manages a directory of cases by type across the years and aims to provide national intelligence for decision-making.</p> <p>Insights & Influence: Delivers action-oriented studies to inform policy and implementation, with over 80% used for decision-making. Tracks, reports, and verifies activities and resources, with specific measuring metrics for each project.</p>
ATA Togo	<p>Systems & Tools Used: Features a Directorate of Analytics (DA) responsible for analytical studies, including sector strategies, seed system assessment, and training. The ATA emphasizes analytics across its five focus areas: Mechanization, Irrigation, ZAAPs of Excellence, Digital Extension, and Value Chains.</p> <p>Insights & Influence: Conducts analytical studies to identify systemic constraints and recommend solutions. Strives for systematic analysis, monitoring, and communication of results from field missions. Initial scoping consultants conducted deep-dives on ZAAPs, commodity value chains, and digital extension.</p>
ATO Tanzania	<p>Systems & Tools Used: The ATO's MEL Unit, supported by a Deputy Director and an Analyst, will utilize advanced data analytics tools and methodologies. A secure, centralized dashboard and database, integrated with implementing entities' systems, will be managed by the ATO. In addition, the Agriculture Investment Tracking Tool has already been developed and is soon to be launched, providing a concrete mechanism to operationalize data collection and reporting. A data governance policy and protocols will also be developed and implemented by the ATO to ensure consistency, accountability, and secure data use.</p> <p>Insights & Influence: The AMP provides baseline data for all flagships. The MEL framework tracks progress against three critical outcome areas (government capacity, flagship implementation, knowledge exchange). The ATO will also maintain a comprehensive archive of lessons learned, best practices, and knowledge products.</p>
FSWR Nigeria	<p>Systems & Tools Used: The AATI supported the FSWR with digital capabilities, performance management, and strengthening monitoring and evaluation capabilities.</p> <p>Insights & Influence: Specific indicators or feedback loops for Nigeria's FSWR are not explicitly detailed in the provided sources.</p>



ANALYTICS

ATO Salone

Systems & Tools Used: The ATO has a Head of M&E and a Data Scientist as part of its envisioned team structure. The 2025 workplan includes a goal for a scalable model for farm level data collection.

Insights & Influence: A goal is to have more reliable and disaggregated data on farm level yield and national output for rice.

POLITICAL-MANAGERIAL BALANCE

Political-managerial balance refers to the ability of an AT to simultaneously leverage political sponsorship for visibility and decision-making authority, while maintaining strong technical and managerial leadership to ensure credible, consistent delivery.⁶⁸ This balance is essential to securing early momentum while sustaining credibility through delivery. Across countries, strong political backing from presidents, prime ministers, or senior ministers has enabled AT models to operate with visibility and influence across ministries.⁶⁹ In Ethiopia and Tanzania, early traction was supported by high-level endorsement that helped fast-track decision-making and foster inter-ministerial alignment. Over time, technical leadership and program delivery play a central role in reinforcing institutional credibility, particularly during leadership transitions.⁷⁰ Models that consistently delivered results, maintained strong in-house analytical and project management capacity, and aligned with national strategies were better positioned to retain support even as political dynamics shifted. For example, ATI Ethiopia initially gained strong visibility through its anchoring under the Transformation Council, chaired by the Prime Minister. Even after the Council became inactive and the institution was more directly aligned under the Ministry of Agriculture, ATI retained high-level backing, largely due to its delivery track record and alignment with national priorities.

When AT models lack formalized mandates or rely too heavily on individual champions, they can face setbacks when political leadership changes.⁷¹ These risks can be mitigated by institutionalizing the AT's mandate, clarifying reporting lines, and ensuring that core functions are embedded in national systems.⁷² Maintaining strong in-house expertise, aligning with national development priorities, and cultivating relationships across the political spectrum further helps safeguard continuity. Overall, balancing political alignment with technical professionalism is critical to ensuring that AT models remain effective and resilient in dynamic governance environments.

[68] Redacted (KII 2), Key Informant Interview; Redacted (KII 3), Key Informant Interview.

[69] Redacted (KII 7), Key Informant Interview; Redacted (KII 8), Key Informant Interview; Redacted (KII 11), Key Informant Interview.

[70] Redacted (KII 4), Key Informant Interview.

[71] Redacted (FGD 2), Focus Group Discussion; Redacted (KII 2), Key Informant Interview.

[72] Redacted (KII 2), Key Informant Interview; IFAD, "BMGF Investment Document - Grant"; Redacted (KII 6), Key Informant Interview.



POLITICAL-MANAGERIAL BALANCE

ATA/ATI Ethiopia	<p>Political Backing: Established at the Prime Minister's request, indicating strong high-level political support. Possesses high-level authority to influence stakeholders due to its elevated position.</p> <p>Technical Leadership: Strives for a fast-paced organizational culture informed by international best practices and internal innovation. Emphasizes a technical and data-driven orientation for evidence-based decision-making.</p>
ATA Togo	<p>Political Backing: The ATA's creation was officially announced by the Head of State and is supervised by the Presidency. Its strategic orientations and objectives are directly influenced by presidential ambitions and national plans.</p> <p>Technical Leadership: The ATA aims to be the agency of "how," focusing on implementation of ZAAPs and operational excellence. It emphasizes the importance of people and skills, clear value proposition, and operational excellence for success.</p>
ATO Tanzania	<p>Political Backing: The ATO Tanzania was officially established following a request from the government to AATI. Its establishment was specifically championed by the Minister for Agriculture, who initiated the need for Tanzania to have an ATO to drive its agricultural transformation agenda. The final AMP was endorsed by senior ministry officials and key development partners, reflecting broad consensus and commitment.</p> <p>Technical Leadership: The ATO's MEL Unit focuses on ensuring data accuracy, consistency, and reliability, emphasizing technical rigor.</p>
FSWR Nigeria	<p>Political Backing: The FSWR in Nigeria was operationalized by AATI in response to government requests. These requests originated from the Senior Special Assistant to the President on Agribusiness and Productivity Enhancement, the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, and the Deputy Chief of Staff of the Office of the President.</p> <p>Technical Leadership: The AATI's support focused on strengthening technical areas like performance management and M&E within such units.</p>
ATO Salone	<p>Political Backing: The ATO Sierra Leone was officially launched following an official request from the government to AATI. Its establishment was championed by the Minister of Agriculture and Food Security, who actively requested and demonstrated strong political will for its creation.</p> <p>Technical Leadership: The ATO team includes technical roles like Head of M&E and Data Scientist.</p>

SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCE

Sustainability and resilience refer to the ability of AT to maintain their effectiveness over time, especially in the face of political change, funding variability, or institutional turnover. Across countries, AT models have shown that early investment in local staff capacity, formalized mandates, and embedding programs within existing ministry systems enhances institutional staying power.⁷³ The ATI Ethiopia, for example, prioritized recruiting and developing skilled local teams and integrated large-scale programs like the ACC into national strategies, making the institution more difficult to displace even amid political shifts. Similarly, the ATO Tanzania strengthened long-term viability by aligning its mandate with national priorities such as Agenda 10/30 and AMP 2050, and by embedding its coordination and monitoring functions within government systems.

Sustainability is further strengthened through government ownership, co-investment from partners, and inclusive stakeholder engagement; for example, Togo's ATA began with full government funding and has since mobilized major donor support, while ATI Ethiopia has sustained pooled donor financing and broad multi-stakeholder collaboration — reflecting the trust and long-term commitment enabled by shared ownership and inclusive engagement.

Formal mandates, cross-sectoral coordination, and clear institutional roles help models manage political transitions and avoid dependence on individual leaders.

Underinvestment in agriculture, capacity gaps, and unclear mandates can undermine long-term success. In Ethiopia, external shocks disrupted recruitment of foreign staff, highlighting the importance of building local capacity over time.⁷⁴ Security issues in Amhara and Western Oromia and the conflict in Northern Ethiopia led to continuous disruptions of the services provided by the ATI, impacting continuity. To navigate these challenges, adaptive strategies such as continuously monitoring situations both on the ground and federally from the headquarters, engaging closely with the public sector for operational direction, confirming security clearance for field support, and using virtual communication methods to implement activities in inaccessible areas proved important.⁷⁵

Regional learning and multi-partner platforms, including those convened by AATI, provide valuable opportunities to build resilience through shared experience and resource pooling. Ultimately, long-term sustainability depends on institutional integration, domestic resource mobilization, and the ability to adapt while maintaining strategic clarity.

[73] "Khalid Bomba - Presentation on Nodal Agency Concept and Ethiopian ATA (2010 - 2020)"; Redacted (KII 4), Key Informant Interview; Redacted (KII 5), Key Informant Interview.

[74] Redacted (KII 4), Key Informant Interview.

[75] ATI Ethiopia, "Ethiopian ATI Annual Performance Report (ACC)."



SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCE

ATA/ATI Ethiopia	<p>Ownership: Aims to build local capacity and long-term ownership for sustainable impact. The ATI model's evolution is critical, adapting to external and changing circumstances.</p> <p>Institutional Continuity: Its success relies on distinct characteristics and capabilities that enable delivery. The analysis helps shift discussions from replicating the ATA to focusing on its essential functions for agricultural transformation, which can be adapted to other contexts.</p>
ATA Togo	<p>Ownership: The ATA is designed to be a long-term institution, independent of government changes. It envisions a phased approach to scaling services, requiring systematic learning and documentation for hand-over.</p> <p>Institutional Continuity: Focuses on developing services that are economically and technically viable and replicable at the national scale, such as the ZAAPs. Emphasizes the importance of documentation for hand-over and continuous learning.</p>
ATO Tanzania	<p>Ownership: The ATO seeks to strengthen its delivery unit for capacity building, data management, and private sector investments.</p> <p>Institutional Continuity: Regular audits of financial and procurement processes are planned to ensure efficient resource use and timely adjustments for impact and sustainability. At the same time, the ATO is working to ensure the existence of regulations and policies that enable the inclusive participation of smallholder farmers, with a particular focus on youth and women. The ATO also aims to foster private sector investment and establish strong partnerships and coordination bodies that can sustain transformation efforts beyond individual projects or political cycles.</p>
FSWR Nigeria	<p>Ownership: Specific details on ownership or local financing for Nigeria's FSWR are not explicitly detailed in the provided sources.</p> <p>Institutional Continuity: Specific details on institutional continuity or risk mitigation for Nigeria's FSWR are not explicitly detailed in the provided sources.</p>
ATO Salone	<p>Ownership: Embedded within MAFS from the outset, ATO Salone already reflects strong institutional ownership. Long-term sustainability will require increased domestic resourcing and capacity to attract and coordinate external investments aligned with Feed Salone priorities.</p> <p>Institutional Continuity: AATI seeks to ensure that its support leads to sustained delivery beyond intensive in-country phases.</p>

CATALYTIC IMPACT ⁷⁶

Catalytic impact refers to the ability of AT to drive systemic change across agriculture—shaping policy, strengthening institutional coordination, and enabling inclusive, market-driven growth. The most advanced AT models have moved beyond isolated projects to influence national programs and delivery systems. In Ethiopia, for example, flagship initiatives like direct seed marketing, digital soil mapping, and the Agricultural Commercialization Clusters (ACC) have tackled systemic constraints across input systems, information gaps, and market access. These initiatives were designed and implemented with a problem-solving orientation and have demonstrated scalable, results-oriented approaches by delivering tangible outcomes such as improved seed access, evidence-based soil fertility planning, and increased farmer commercialization through clustered support models.⁷⁷ Elsewhere, such as in Tanzania and Togo, newer AT models are beginning to lay the groundwork for broader impact through national master plans, inter-ministerial coordination, and pilot initiatives that reflect early momentum.⁷⁸

Catalytic value is often achieved when AT entities help governments break complex problems into sequenced, cross- sectoral solutions, mobilize partnerships, and build delivery capacity within ministries. At the same time, translating strategy into system-level change requires sustained political commitment, strong technical capacity, and the flexibility to adapt interventions to local institutional and political realities. Risks to catalytic impact include over-reliance on external models, limited private sector participation, and weak integration with national systems.⁸⁰

Social inclusion remains a challenge, particularly where program benefits skew toward more commercially oriented producers.⁸¹ Going forward, AT models can strengthen their catalytic role by investing in government capacity, embedding scalable innovations, and forging partnerships that align public, private, and community interests. To maximize long- term impact, AT models benefit from scaling proven interventions, building durable institutional partnerships, and fostering locally led innovation that supports inclusive agricultural transformation.

[76] Note: As noted in the Methodology section, assessments of newer AT institutions such as ATO Tanzania and ATO Salone remain preliminary given their early stage of operationalization.

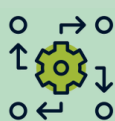
[77] Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, “Ten Years of the Ethiopian Agricultural Transformation Agency.”

[78] AATI, “Project Document Transition of ATO Tanzania”; TASC, “Togo ATA Strategy Session.”

[79] Redacted (KII 7), Key Informant Interview.

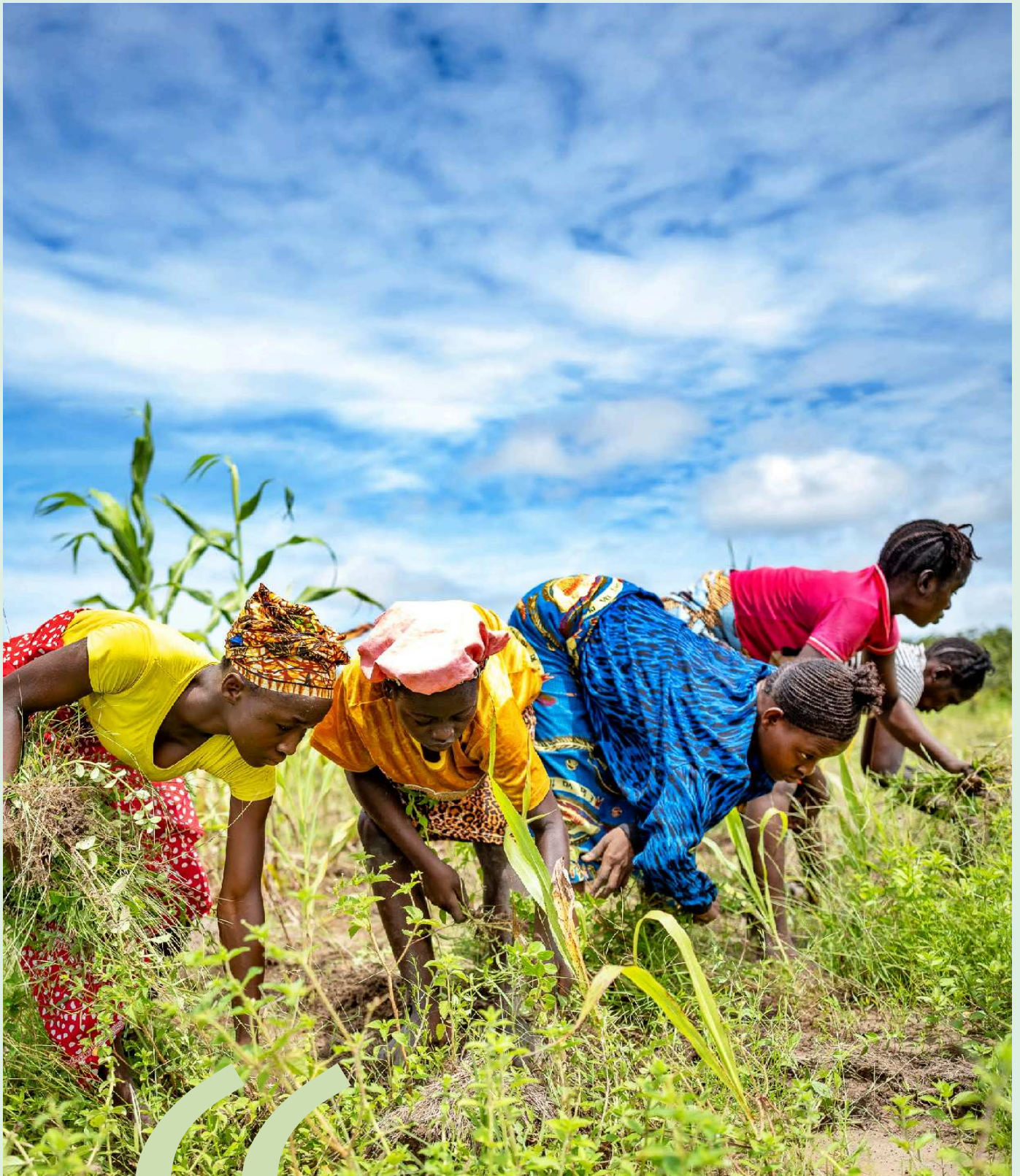
[80] Redacted (KII 7); Redacted (KII 8), Key Informant Interview; Redacted (KII 1), Key Informant Interview.

[81] Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, “Ten Years of the Ethiopian Agricultural Transformation Agency.”

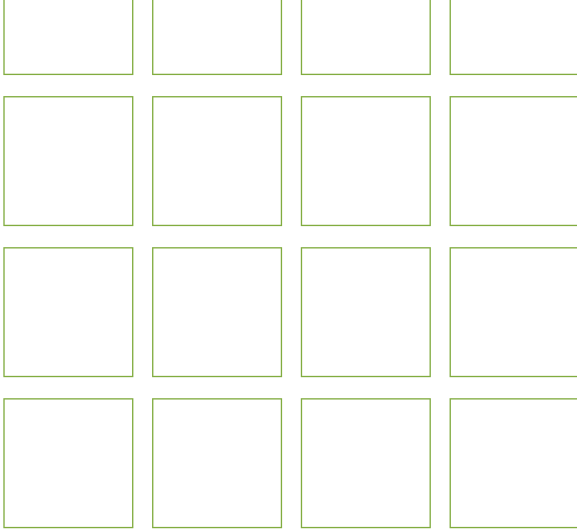


CATALYTIC IMPACT

ATA/ATI Ethiopia	<p>Policy and Program Contributions: Supports evidence-based policy-making across the value chain and has developed a rural development strategy for the government. Contributes to national strategies and policies.</p> <p>Outcomes and Results: Yielded over 100 deliverables addressing systemic bottlenecks, including EthioSIS, which spurred over \$US 3 B in private investment. Contributed to national GDP growth and poverty reduction, creating 11,000 jobs and lifting 286,000 people out of poverty between 2010 and 2020.</p>
ATA Togo	<p>Policy and Program Contributions: Implements specific projects on behalf of the MAEDR and provides analytical and implementation support. Designs a range of services for farmers to increase farm productivity and income.</p> <p>Outcomes and Results: In 2023, the ATA delivered services to 1770 producers in 6 ZAAPs for maize, rice, soya, and cotton. Expanded its services to 60 ZAAPs in 2024, organized into 9 clusters. Results from 2023-24 indicate improvements in adoption of good agricultural practices, organization of cooperatives, and reimbursement rates.</p>
ATO Tanzania	<p>Policy and Program Contributions: The ATO's project document outlines a structured, phased approach around four key activity pillars to drive progress in the agricultural sector. The AMP leveraged existing analyses, best practices, and identified additional flagship projects to create a cohesive roadmap.</p> <p>Outcomes and Results: The AMP includes 80 flagship-specific indicator metrics. Evaluations will measure the progress and impact of flagship initiatives, providing feedback to refine strategies.</p>
FSWR Nigeria	<p>Policy and Program Contributions: The FSWR focused specifically on responding to the food security crisis.</p> <p>Outcomes and Results: Although the FSWR laid a foundation for ongoing efforts to address Nigeria's food security challenge, specific outcomes or results attributed to Nigeria's FSWR are not explicitly detailed in the provided sources.</p>
ATO Salone	<p>Policy and Program Contributions: The ATO's 2025 workplan includes initiatives like a scalable model for farm level data collection for the rice value chain.</p> <p>Outcomes and Results: While it is still early in ATO Salone's operationalization, initial efforts are focused on laying the groundwork for catalytic impact, including designing a scalable farm-level data collection model for rice and mainstreaming gender within the Feed Salone strategy.</p>



Regional learning and multi-partner platforms, including those convened by AATI, provide valuable opportunities to build resilience through shared experience and resource pooling.”



07

SYNTHESIS OF KEY FINDINGS

This section synthesizes key insights emerging from the full body of evidence. Findings below are organized thematically to highlight common success factors and recurring challenges across country models. While the analysis identifies common factors that appear consistently across the AT models, their weight and how they manifest varies by institutional typology. Nodal agencies (e.g., ATAs) for instance, derive their strength primarily from political sponsorship, their cross-ministerial convening power, and operational autonomy. In contrast, the ATOs depend more on ministerial alignment, buy-in from the civil servants, and internal technical capacity. Task Forces (e.e., FSWR), meanwhile, are highly sensitive to the intensity of political coordination.


7.1. SUCCESS FACTORS ACROSS MODELS

Across diverse experiences, several consistent factors emerge as critical to the effectiveness and sustainability of AT models:

a) High Political Backing and Government Ownership

High-level political sponsorship combined with *government ownership* has been central to launching and sustaining AT models. Direct requests from national leadership (as seen in Tanzania, Nigeria, and Sierra Leone) and prime ministerial backing (as seen in Ethiopia and Togo) provided the political momentum needed to secure early resources, shape reform agendas, and overcome bureaucratic resistance. Nevertheless, at the operational stages of the AT this factor would have different effects on their functioning. Political sponsorship enables rapid traction and resource mobilisation for autonomous agencies like ATAs. Whereas, for ATOs it ensures legitimacy within ministerial hierarchies. ATOs operate inside an existing bureaucracy.

For them to function effectively, especially when introducing new ways of working or monitoring performance, they need acceptance and recognition from senior civil servants,



directors, and departments within the ministry. Their authority and influence depend on being recognized as a legitimate part of the ministry's own structure — not as an external or donor-driven project. Consequently, political backing from the Minister gives them the authority to coordinate across departments and request accountability.

b) Strategic Institutional anchoring

Strategic institutional anchoring within the structures of government allowed AT models to balance proximity to executive power with integration into line ministries. Effective models balance proximity to executive power, with the ability to mobilize high-level decisions, and integration into ministry systems to sustain their operations over time. ATAs, such as Ethiopia's and Togo's, gain strength from their closeness to the centre of government (Prime minister and president), allowing them to coordinate across ministries and leverage political authority to accelerate reforms. However, this visibility also makes them more vulnerable to leadership changes unless their mandates are formally institutionalized. ATOs benefit from being inside the Ministries, where they are part of the ministry's planning, staffing, and budget systems, giving them more stability to sustain leadership changes. Furthermore, linkage to a national agenda (i.e. ATO Tanzania and the AMP 2050) helps institutionalise delivery functions within the government structures.

c) Clear mandates

Defining what the AT is meant to do, not just where it sits, has been a decisive factor in its ability to deliver results. Across models, clear mandates provided operational clarity, enabling AT entities to focus efforts on well-defined policy priorities and programmatic interventions. Togo's ATA focused its efforts on implementing the ZAAPs—an operationally clear, outcome-oriented mandate that positioned it as driving delivery on a visible flagship.

d) Strong analytics capabilities

Strong analytics capabilities embedded within - AT models to use data to inform policy decisions, design interventions, validate targets, and monitor progress. Institutions like the ATI Ethiopia function as internal consulting units for the government, using evidence to build credibility and course-correct as needed. However, nascent ATOs are progressively developing these capabilities, by starting with monitoring and reporting functions.

e) Demand-driven stakeholder coordination and multi-partner resource pooling

By design, an AT acts as convener—bringing together ministries, development partners and private sector actors to align on shared priorities and reduce duplication of efforts. Thus effective coordination has been central to how AT models deliver on their mandates. For instance, ATI Ethiopia, Coordinator of the Food Systems Transformation and Nutrition Initiative, and engages over 15 ministries and 22 partner organizations through formalized platforms that translate dialogue into resource pooling and implementation alignment. Similarly, ATA Togo holds regular coordination meetings with the MAEDR and development partners, facilitating access to financing and markets for producers. AT

f) Problem-solving orientation with adaptive sequencing

A problem-solving mindset and adaptive sequencing allowed AT models to break down ambitious reform agendas into smaller, manageable phases that demonstrated early wins, built government and farmer confidence, and laid the foundation for scaling. ATAs often pilot reforms through flagship initiatives that demonstrate systemic impact (e.g., ACCs in Ethiopia), whereas ATOs emphasise incremental improvement within government programs by applying prioritization tools and setting clear roadmaps for implementation.

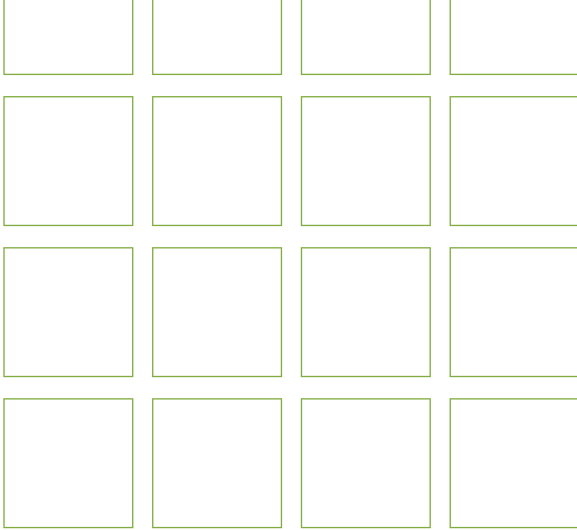
g) Capacity building within government ministries and AT teams

A co-creation approach to policy and programme design facilitates knowledge transfer to government counterparts, while hiring and training local staff within AT institutions builds internal expertise and reduces dependence on external consultants. This approach has enabled ATI Ethiopia to strengthen national institutional capabilities over time. For ATOs, their success depends on strengthening in-house ministerial planning, coordination, and monitoring processes; however they may still rely on external technical consultants for specific or time-bound projects.

7.2. COMMON CHALLENGES AND THREATS

Despite success factors, AT models face recurring challenges that limit or threaten their effectiveness and sustainability. Across both ATAs and ATOs, we observe recurring structural and operational challenges that threaten institutional effectiveness.

- **Vulnerability to political turnover and fragile leadership buy-in** creates risks to continuity, especially where models are highly dependent on individual political champions without broader institutional embedding. However, ATAs, given their proximity to the executive, are more vulnerable to leadership transitions or shifts in political priorities, as seen in Ethiopia's ATA when the Transformation Council ceased convening. ATOs, though less politically exposed, risk being deprioritised when ministerial attention shifts or when champions within the ministry are reassigned.
- **Tensions with existing ministries and parallel mandates often generate resistance**, power struggles, and coordination gaps when roles are not clearly defined or when ministries perceive AT entities as duplicative or externally imposed. ATAs may be viewed as parallel structures competing for visibility or resources, whereas ATOs face internal resistance when their coordination roles overlap with existing planning or M&E departments.
- **Misaligned expectations about the nature of support** provided by AT models can lead to credibility risks. In some contexts, there has been confusion between the intended role of AT institutions—as facilitators of coordination and technical support—and perceptions that they would bring direct financial investments. This has been the case particularly for ATOs. Clarifying mandates and support modalities early on is essential to align with and reinforce national leadership and ownership.
- **Operational rigidities, resource delays, and budgetary bottlenecks** (including contractual constraints, treasury processes, and inflation) create frustrations that erode trust and slow implementation.
- **Analytics-delivery tradeoffs sometimes lead to deprioritization of data-driven problem solving** as AT models shift toward rapid delivery pressures, potentially weakening evidence-informed program design.
- **Private sector engagement gaps and social inclusion concerns persist**, with limited mechanisms in some models to ensure meaningful participation by private investors, vulnerable farmers, and marginalized groups.
- **Cross-country replication risks arise when AT models are copied without careful adaptation** to local governance structures, political economies, and state capacity realities.



08


DISCUSSION

This section critically reflects on the findings presented above, drawing lessons from AT models to guide future institutional design and implementation.

AT across SSA are designed to improve coordination, evidence-based decision-making, and delivery capacity in complex agricultural systems. This study has shown that while these institutions share common coordination and delivery functions, their structures, entry points, and outcomes differ significantly, shaped not only by institutional typology and context but also by time. ATI Ethiopia, now in its second decade, offers a rare opportunity to study the evolution of a mature AT model. Other institutions, such as ATA Togo, ATO Tanzania, and ATO Salone, are in much earlier phases of development. Hence, outcomes not only reflect the maturity of each model but also the stability of political and financial backing.

Institutional Design Choices Reflect Contextual Trade-Offs: AT models have taken diverse forms, reflecting both political priorities and the institutional environments into which they were introduced. ATA Ethiopia was launched in 2011 under the Office of the Prime Minister. This high-level anchoring enabled the agency to act with speed and authority in its formative years, advancing over 100 strategic initiatives by 2020. Its evolution into the ATI in 2021, with re-anchoring under the MoA, reflects a deliberate shift toward long-term integration into government systems, a process supported by lessons accumulated over more than a decade.

By contrast, ATO Tanzania and ATO Salone, both launched in 2023 and 2024, were embedded within line ministries from the outset. This choice ensured immediate policy alignment and reinforced ministerial ownership. While some stakeholders stressed the need to clearly define the roles of the AT during the initial set-up, especially to avoid confusion or overlap with existing departments. Such challenges are common when new structures are introduced within established institutions.



This can be addressed through formal planning processes that clarify responsibilities; establish staff co-location to encourage collaboration between the AT team and the Ministry staff; and by creating joint implementation mechanisms that promote shared accountability – setting up formal structures that make the different teams work together on delivery while holding each other responsible for results.

ATA Togo, established under the Presidency, represents a somewhat hybrid model: politically elevated yet closely linked with the MAEDR. This structure provided momentum for delivery, particularly in implementing innovative support to the ZAAPs, reaching over 60 sites by 2024. The experience highlights that the balance between autonomy and alignment should not be viewed as a one-time institutional choice but as a dynamic relationship that should evolve over time. AT models can initially benefit from proximity to executive leadership to gain visibility, mobilize resources, and drive early reforms. Over time, however, deeper integration within core public institutions becomes essential to strengthen ownership and continuity. Countries wanting to design new AT models should therefore plan for this gradual transition—from politically driven acceleration to institutionally embedded delivery capacity.

Early Results Help Build Institutional Credibility and Support: The achievements of AT models must be interpreted relative to their age and developmental stage. ATI Ethiopia has had over 12 years to build credibility, systems, and staff capacity. Its role in shaping the national extension roadmap, driving fertilizer policy reforms, and piloting scalable interventions like the ACC clusters reflects the long-term potential of AT models when continuously supported and institutionally embedded.

Newer institutions are, by necessity, focused on foundation-building, but we have learned that quick visible results, such as ATA Togo’s early rollout of ZAAPs or ATO Tanzania’s completion of the AMP, have helped secure political and stakeholder confidence. This early momentum is vital for maintaining support during the institution-building phase. In Togo, the ATA began field implementation within its first year of operation. The delivery of services to 1,770 producers across six ZAAPs in 2023 and plans to expand to 100 zones, demonstrate a strong emphasis on quick wins and visible results. Feedback from field visits indicated early improvements in farmer organization, access to inputs, and uptake of recommended practices. The ATO Tanzania has focused on strategic planning. By mid-2024, it had supported the completion of the AMP, identified flagship projects, and established a cross-ministerial Steering Committee to guide implementation. These steps lay the groundwork for a whole-of-government approach to agricultural transformation.

Coordination and Analytics Play a Central Role in Institutional Effectiveness: Two functions consistently emerged as central to AT effectiveness: stakeholder coordination and use of analytics. ATI Ethiopia’s coordination capabilities remain deeply institutionalized, now anchored in



its role as secretariat to the Ethiopian Food Systems Transformation and Nutrition initiative. While ATI previously coordinated through a Transformation Council chaired by the Prime Minister, ATI currently leads coordination via an Inter-Ministerial Steering Committee, regional transformation councils, and formal co-leadership of ministerial working groups. The ATO Tanzania is also building a coordination platform through its AMP Steering Committee, involving key ministries, agencies, and development partners. The ATA Togo conducts regular joint planning with the MAEDR and is formalizing multi-stakeholder mechanisms to guide ZAAP rollout.


Analytics are equally vital. The ATI Ethiopia has an established Analytics Unit whose work has informed policy decisions in over 80% of cases. Its studies have shaped programs ranging from subsidy reforms to extension service restructuring. The ATO Tanzania is setting up a Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning unit with a real-time dashboard and AMP baseline data. The ATO Salone has hired technical experts to establish data systems that support Feed Salone targets and accountability frameworks.

The early focus of ATA Togo was on service delivery, with analytics capacity now expanding to include program monitoring and performance reviews. This sequencing reflects an adaptive approach, prioritizing urgent field demands while gradually building internal learning systems. In all contexts, analytics are not just tools for measurement but mechanisms for strategic learning, course correction, and policy influence.

Sustained Impact Depends on Integration, Capacity, and Long-Term Planning: As AT models mature, a key challenge is how to transition from catalytic entities into sustainable institutions embedded in public systems. The ATI Ethiopia offers one model, following its re-anchoring under the MoA, it has formalized job structures, aligned with federal planning cycles, and continued operating through regional bureaus, ensuring both vertical integration and policy continuity.

Ensuring long-term sustainability also requires predictable financing and government ownership: AT budgets should gradually transition from donor dependency to joint financing models embedded in national budget frameworks. Ethiopia's experience with pooled donor funding under ATI demonstrates how government-led financing mechanisms can sustain institutional continuity. In countries such as Sierra Leone, where donor support remains dominant, co-financing arrangements and inclusion of AT activities in Medium-Term Expenditure Frameworks (MTEFs) will be key to ensuring sustainability. Establishing multi-donor trust funds or pooled financing mechanisms aligned with government systems can further strengthen coordination, accountability, and long-term resource flow.

Across countries, scaling is not being approached as a one-time expansion, but as an iterative process grounded in government leadership, cross-sector partnerships, and adaptive delivery models



early experience of these institutions suggests that scale is best achieved when flexible delivery systems are built, with feedback loops, and data-driven mechanisms to support continuous learning and adaptation during scale-up.

Key Takeaways for Future AT Design: Best practices emerging from this study include securing high-level political sponsorship early, embedding robust analytics and coordination mechanisms, and planning for long-term institutional integration from the outset. At the same time, challenges persist around mandate ambiguity, stakeholder resistance, and over-reliance on external funding or individual champions. Addressing these trade-offs deliberately—rather than reactively—is central to AT resilience and catalytic impact.

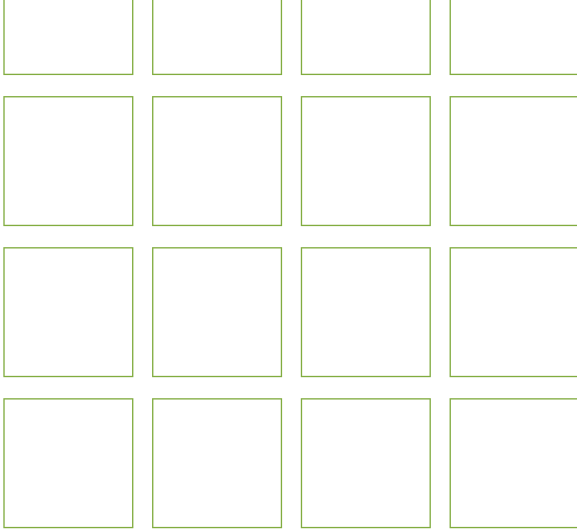
AT models in Africa represent a relatively new class of delivery institutions tailored to the demands of agricultural transformation. Their early performance reflects the interplay between institutional design, political alignment, and operational maturity. While the ATI Ethiopia illustrates what can be achieved with sustained investment and time, newer models in Togo, Tanzania, and Sierra Leone are actively building the foundations for long-term impact. Ensuring their success will require sustained investment in institutional capacity, early planning for integration into national systems, and a gradual transition from externally supported structures to fully embedded public institutions.

Although not many lessons can be drawn from short-term AT models such as the FSWR in Nigeria as its design was explicitly temporary and crisis-driven, such model can be used to test government coordination capacity and can be restructured into mechanisms that can evolve into more permanent structures.

As these models continue to mature, they offer valuable insights into how governments and partners can accelerate results—not through parallel systems, but by building institutions that strengthen delivery from within.



Effective models balance proximity to executive power, with the ability to mobilize high-level decisions, and integration into ministry systems to sustain their operations over time.”





09

PRACTICAL TOOLS




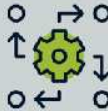
The ‘Dimension Cheat Sheet’ and ‘Tips & Considerations for Designing AT Models’ presented below have been developed as practical, analysis-based tools to support practitioners and decision-makers involved in the design and setup of AT models. Drawing from comparative analysis across priority countries, they offer strategic questions to guide implementation choices and highlight key considerations based on real-world strengths, gaps, and lessons.

They are intended to be used in the early stages of AT planning, when countries are still exploring institutional options and shaping their overall vision. Rather than presenting prescriptive models, the tools distill insights from diverse experiences into actionable guidance that can help governments and partners anticipate challenges, weigh tradeoffs, and make informed design decisions grounded in evidence and practice.

9.1. DIMENSION CHEAT SHEET

 INSTITUTIONAL ANCHORING	 GOVERNANCE	 FINANCING	 STAKEHOLDER COORDINATION
<p>Where an AT model is housed and how this affects its autonomy, integration, political neutrality, and effectiveness during transitions</p>	<p>The structures, mandates, decision-making processes, and escalation mechanisms that determine how an AT operates and resolves conflicts</p>	<p>The sources of funding, budget allocation, flexibility, and cost recovery measures that sustain an AT model, including reliance on donor funding</p>	<p>The processes through which an AT engages with other ministries, donors, and non-state actors to sustain multi-stakeholder platforms</p>
<p>How will the AT's legal status be designed to optimize its function and influence?</p> <p>How will the AT manage its relationship with the host ministry to avoid duplication and ensure clear demarcation of roles and responsibilities?</p> <p>What strategies will ensure genuine political buy-in and ownership from the government from the outset, and how will this be maintained through political changes?</p>	<p>What is the optimal legal status and reporting structure for the AT, and where will it be anchored to ensure effectiveness?</p> <p>How will clear decision-making processes be outlined, including role allocation, responsibility for validating deliverables, and reporting timelines to the Minister, donors, or other high-level bodies?</p> <p>What mechanisms will be put in place to address and resolve problems or conflicts within a multi-partner governance structure?</p>	<p>What are the initial and long-term funding sources, and how will financial sustainability be achieved, for instance, through resource mobilization or government contributions?</p> <p>How will the AT access and manage its budget, including the establishment of bank accounts and efficient procurement processes?</p> <p>What strategies will ensure financial flexibility for the AT, especially when navigating rigid donor or government financial processes?</p>	<p>How will the AT engage and coordinate effectively with diverse stakeholders such as other ministries, government departments, the private sector, civil society, and development partners?</p> <p>What mechanisms will be established to ensure mutual accountability among partners and prevent duplication of efforts?</p> <p>How will the AT manage relationships with donors and effectively leverage their expertise and networks for the transformation agenda?</p>

9.1. DIMENSION CHEAT SHEET

 ANALYTICS	 POLITICAL– MANAGERIAL BALANCE	 SUSTAINABILITY & RESILIENCE	 CATALYTIC IMPACT
<p>How monitoring and evaluation, data, and analytical insights are generated and used to influence budget or policy decisions across AT models</p>	<p>The conditions that enable technocratic leadership to maintain influence and effectiveness, even when political champions or administrations change</p>	<p>How an AT model contributes to long-term institutional stability, focusing on aspects like ownership, local financing, institutional continuity, and risk mitigation</p>	<p>The ability of an AT to drive significant policy reforms and widespread outcomes, rather than focusing on implementation</p>
<p>Will the AT establish a dedicated analytics unit (or integrate analytical functions), and what will be its specific mandate and scope of work?</p> <p>How will data be collected, managed, and utilized to inform decision-making, track progress, and assess the impact of interventions?</p> <p>What M&E framework and tools will be developed to track performance against objectives and flagship initiatives, including indicators and feedback loops?</p>	<p>How will strong political backing from high-level leadership be secured and consistently maintained for the AT?</p> <p>What are the critical attributes and skills required for the AT leader to effectively manage stakeholders, build trust, and ensure consistent delivery of results?</p> <p>How will the AT navigate and mitigate potential pushback or tensions from existing ministries due to its independent status or perceived overlapping mandates?</p>	<p>How will the AT ensure its long-term financial and institutional sustainability, moving beyond initial catalytic funding to self-sufficiency?</p> <p>How will the AT build strong local ownership and ensure the perceived indispensability of the AT within the government and among beneficiaries?</p> <p>How will the AT strengthen and transfer capacity to local staff and ministry personnel to ensure long-term program continuity?</p>	<p>How will the AT define and measure its catalytic impact on agricultural transformation, regarding both policy reforms and project implementation outcomes?</p> <p>How will the AT effectively identify and address systemic bottlenecks in the agricultural sector and design solutions that can be widely adopted and scaled?</p> <p>What are the key programs or flagship initiatives the AT will prioritize to drive transformational change and demonstrate early successes ("quick wins")?</p>

9.2. TIPS & CONSIDERATIONS FOR DESIGNING AT MODELS



INSTITUTIONAL ANCHORING

What to Consider	Establishing a clear mandate, reporting lines, and decision-making pathways is critical. Consider how the AT fits with existing structures and who has final decision authority.
What Works Well	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• High-level anchoring (e.g., Head of State's office) accelerates decisions and coordination.• Structured roles improve operational clarity.• Decision-making autonomy allows AT teams to focus on delivery.
What to Watch Out For	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ambiguity in roles and escalation mechanisms could lead to confusion or political pushback.• Shifts in hosting (e.g., from Head of State's office to a line ministry) could reduce perceived independence.



GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES

What to Consider	Placement within government affects credibility, neutrality, and influence. The key is balancing autonomy with integration into national systems.
What Works Well	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Legal autonomy and high-level placement (e.g., under the Presidency) provide authority and agility.• Being outside line ministries can allow more flexible approaches, if coordination is strong.• Transparent reporting lines enhance coordination and reduce friction—especially when dual accountability structures exist. Joint governance frameworks or steering committees can help navigate complex reporting dynamics.
What to Watch Out For	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Poor integration may cause duplication or institutional resistance.• Dual reporting lines (e.g., to a donor and a ministry) could blur accountability.

9.2. TIPS & CONSIDERATIONS FOR DESIGNING AT MODELS



FINANCING

What to Consider	AT models need early catalytic funding—and a plan for long-term sustainability. Design funding models that allow flexibility, credibility, and local ownership.
What Works Well	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Flexible funding (e.g., Gates Foundation, WFP) supported rapid setup and experimentation.• Early results helped unlock larger donor or government support.
What to Watch Out For	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Funding gaps or overreliance on donors could limit innovation or adaptation.• Strategic planning may stall without predictable, sustained resources.



STAKEHOLDER COORDINATION

What to Consider	Effective AT models coordinate government, partners, and the private sector around shared goals.
What Works Well	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• National platforms (e.g., value chain alliances, steering committees) enable buy-in.• Contract farming or bundled service models create integrated value chains.• Alignment with national strategies promotes donor coordination.
What to Watch Out For	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lack of engagement with ministries may cause pushback.• Coordination demands consistent time and resources.

9.2. TIPS & CONSIDERATIONS FOR DESIGNING AT MODELS



ANALYTICS


What to Consider	Analytics should be embedded early and linked directly to planning, delivery, and course correction.
What Works Well	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-house analytics units provide evidence for decision-making. • Local staff development reduces reliance on external support. • Investments in data tools build credibility.
What to Watch Out For	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analytics may be sidelined if not clearly prioritized. • Lack of structured pipelines or feedback loops weakens data use.




POLITICAL-MANAGERIAL BALANCE

What to Consider	Strong political sponsorship is vital early on, but long-term impact requires institutional stability and professional leadership.
What Works Well	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Champions at high levels drive visibility and coordination. • Credibility through delivery helps survive political transitions. • Technocratic leaders who manage both politics and implementation effectively add value.
What to Watch Out For	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overreliance on one person's political access could hinder continuity. • Restructuring or leadership changes may disrupt momentum if not well managed

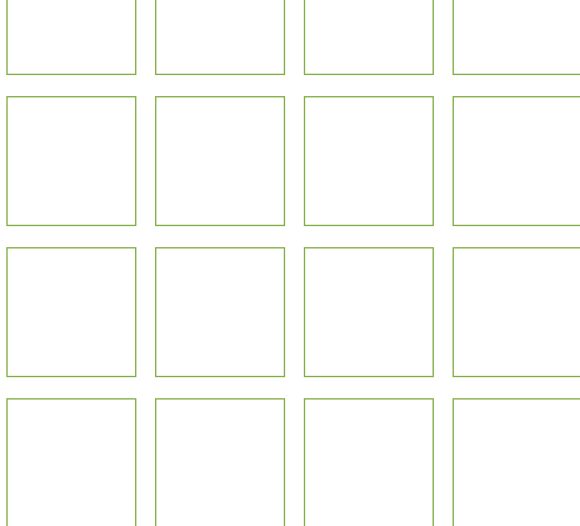
9.2. TIPS & CONSIDERATIONS FOR DESIGNING AT MODELS

 SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCE	
What to Consider	Resilience depends on embedding AT functions into government systems and developing internal capacities.
What Works Well	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on capacity building, especially of ministry staff. • Flexibility and learning mindsets help adapt to shocks. • Integrating functions (e.g., M&E, coordination) into ministries supports continuity.
What to Watch Out For	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff burnout or turnover could undermine programs. • Dependency on external expertise may delay ownership.

 CATALYTIC IMPACT	
What to Consider	AT models aim to unlock system-wide change—not just deliver projects. Focus on scale, handover, and integration into national strategies.
What Works Well	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High-impact pilots (e.g., farmer hotline, ACC) show value. • Innovative mechanisms (e.g., contract farming) shift delivery models. • Strong coordination enables scale and adoption.
What to Watch Out For	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weak institutional handover risks leaving efforts siloed. • Overly ambitious plans may outpace implementation capacity.



Best practices include securing high-level political sponsorship early, embedding robust analytics and coordination mechanisms, and planning for long-term institutional integration”



10

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