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MARKET SYSTEMS SYMPOSIUM|2021

LEARNING SYNTHESIS

MAY 10 - 20, 2021

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LETTER FROM THE CHAIRS

MARKET SYSTEMS SYMPOSIUM|2021

To the Market Systems Symposium & wider international development community,

We are delighted to share that the fourth annual global Market Systems Symposium was an enormous success!

In the face of continued uncertainty and countless challenges precipitated by the Covid-19 pandemic, we appreciated, perhaps more than ever, the opportunity to convene and focus on strengthening this community of dedicated market systems development professionals.

This year, the Symposium honed in on four thematic areas, that were each supported by a number of cross-cutting themes. Participants were particularly excited by the introduction of Climate Adaptation & Conservation in Market Systems as one of the central tracks, and are looking forward to continuing this pertinent focus in years to come.

We'd like to take a moment to recognize the journey that we, as Symposium participants, have been on since the first Symposium in 2018. Though we faced a huge challenge in 2020 when we were abruptly forced to adapt the Symposium from an in-person to a virtual event, what we once viewed as a setback has proven itself this year to be an immense opportunity. Although we remain incredibly excited to return to Cape Town and convene in person one day, we were deeply inspired by the opportunities for expansion and inclusion that the digital Symposium presented. Over the course of four years our community has grown immensely, quadrupling in size, in no small part due to the accessibility of a virtual event.

Looking ahead, we are eager to build on the momentum we were able to generate in 2021. We have a number of exciting plans and projects we are working on to both broaden and buttress the MSS community in the coming weeks, months, and years between our annual events.

We continue to support the hosting of safe spaces for members of the industry to come together for dialogue, debate, and deeper dives into the most pressing industry issues. Thank you for your part in this community, and for your commitment to learning and supporting our industry as it grows and moves forward.

Sincerely,

Margie Brand & Mike Field
Vikãra Institute - Systems Approaches for Social Change*
Symposium Co-Chairs
* Formerly known as EcoVentures International

2021 COLLABORATING PARTNERS

We'd like to thank the 2021 Collaborating Partners, without whom the Market Systems Symposium 2021 would not have been possible.

SYMPOSIUM IMPACT

I find that the value of attending the Market Systems Symposium compounds year by year. The Symposium has helped to foster a rich and open community of learning that elevates – and accelerates – our understanding of how to effectively implement impactful market systems programming. We all recognize that we don't have the answers individually – but by combining the experiences and expertise of fellow development practitioners across organizations and around the world, we can design and implement better programs that collectively achieve more resilient and inclusive economic growth.

Katie Niemeyer Senior Manager
Design & Technical Services
Land o' Lakes Venture 37

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At a Glance

62 Different Countries

450 Diverse Participants

43 Large Development Programs

76 International Development Consulting Firms, Nonprofits and Donor Organizations

2,695 Sessions loaded

1,144 Hours of technical content

Messages exchanged **1,253**

660 Interactions with virtual Exhibit Booths

Programs Represented

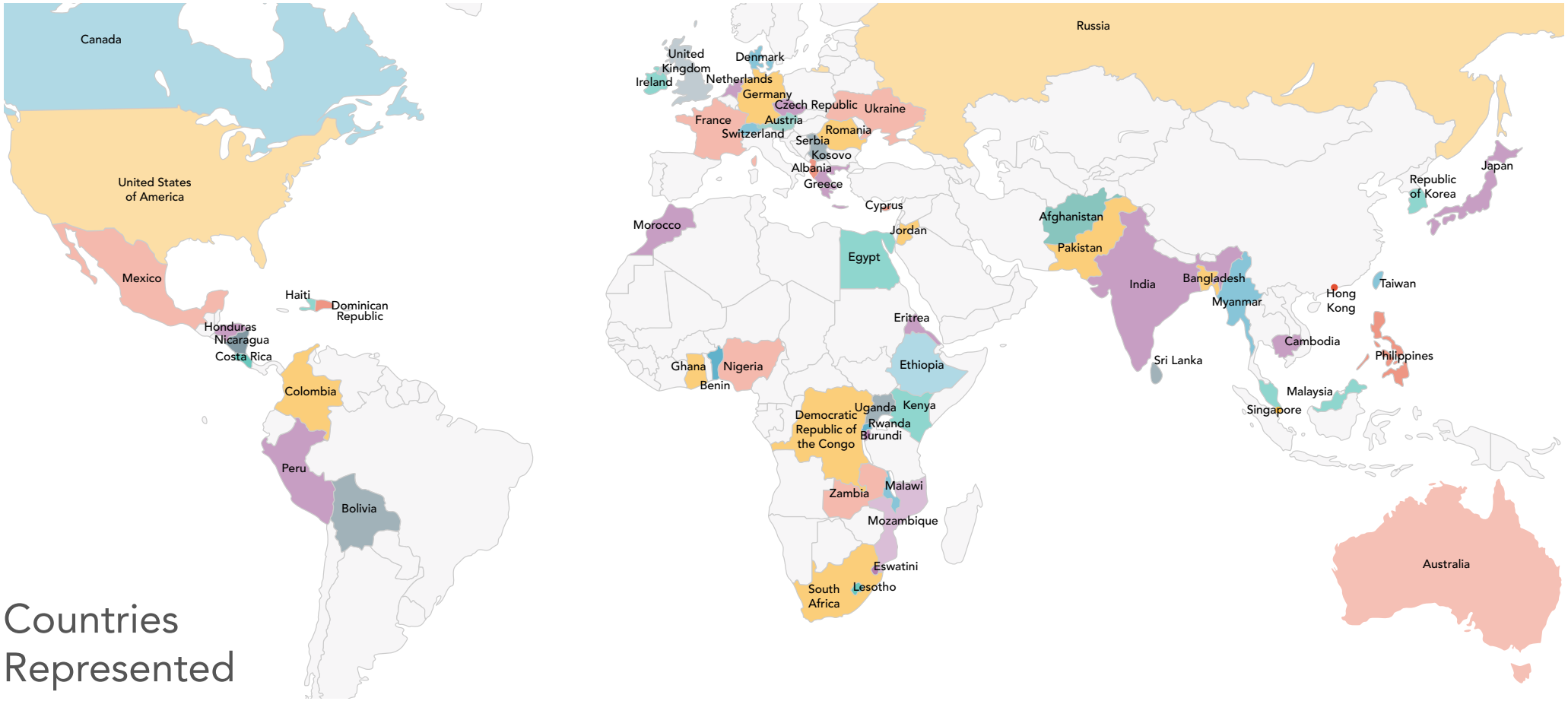
- Bill & Melinda Gates-funded Enabling Satellite-based Crop Analytics at Scale (ECAAS)
- Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands- funded Private Seed Sector Development (PSSD) Project
- FCDO-funded Powering Economic Growth in Northern Nigeria (LINKS)
- Mastercard Foundation-funded Young Africa Works in Uganda: Markets for Youth Program
- Multistakeholder-funded Promoting Sustainable Partnerships for Empowered Resilience (PROSPER Markets)
- Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs-funded 2SCALE
- Nordic Development Fund (NDF) and The Inter-American Development Bank (IDB Lab)-funded MiPesca
- SDC-funded Beninclusive
- Cashew Value Chain and Access to Land Project
- SDC & Sida-funded Inclusive Markets in Bolivia
- SDC-funded RisiAlbania Project
- Sida-funded WIN - Women IN Business (WIN)
- USAID Agricultural Development and Value Chain Enhancement II (ADVANCE II)
- USAID Board for International Food and Agricultural Development (BIFAD) Support Contract
- USAID Central Africa Regional Program for the Environment (CARPE)
- USAID Cooperatives Leadership, Engagement, Advocacy & Research (CLEAR)
- USAID Fish Right Program
- USAID Forest and Biodiversity Support (FABS) Activity
- USAID FTF Bangladesh Nutrition Activity (BNA)
- USAID FTF Cambodia Harvest II Activity
- USAID FTF DRC Strengthening Value Chains (SVC) Activity
- USAID FTF Market Systems and Partnerships (MSP) Activity
- USAID FTF Mozambique Resilient Agricultural Markets Activity - Beira Corridor (RAMA-BC)
- USAID FTF Nigeria Rural Resilience Activity (RRA)
- USAID FTF Rwanda Nguriza Nshore (RNN) Activity
- USAID FTF Partnering for Innovation
- USAID FTF Rice and Diversified Crops (RDC) Activity
- USAID FTF Rwanda Orora Wihaze Activity
- USAID FTF Strengthening Livelihoods and Resilience (SLR) Activity
- USAID Kenya Crops and Dairy Market Systems (KCDMS) Activity
- USAID Kenya Livestock Market Systems (LMS) Activity
- USAID Kosovo Compete Activity
- USAID Productive Landscapes (ProLand)
- USAID Promoting Excellence in Private-Sector Engagement (PEPSE)
- USAID Regional Resilience Challenge Fund (RRCF)
- USAID Southern Africa Trade and Investment Hub (TradeHub)
- USAID Transforming Market Systems (TMS) Activity
- USAID Agriculture Growing Rural Opportunities (AGRO) Activity
- USAID Feed the Future Agricultural Innovations (Inova) Project
- USAID Jordan Water Innovation Technologies (WIT) Activity
- USDA Commercialization of Aquaculture for Sustainable Trade (CAST)
- USDA Measuring Resilience of Market Systems in Kenya (RMS-Kenya)
- World Vision-funded Transforming Household Resilience in Vulnerable Environments (THRIVE)

Organizations Represented

- Abt Associates
- Accenture
- ACDI/VOCA
- BEAM Exchange
- BlueLemur
- Bopinc
- Busara Center for Behavioral Economics
- Cardno Emerging Markets
- Catholic Relief Services
- CBI (Centre for the Promotion of Imports from developing countries)
- Chemonics International, Inc.
- Conservation Mag / iFeedback
- Corus International
- CRDF Global
- Creative Associates International
- DAI
- Dalberg
- Denise Mainville Consulting, LLC
- DevWorks International
- Digital Frontiers Institute (DFI)
- Digital Solutions for Agriculture
- EconDev International LLC
- EcoVentures International (EVI)
- Evocation Media
- Extra Good
- Fair & Sustainable Consulting
- Fintrac Inc.
- Food Enterprise Solutions
- GAIN-Kenya
- Gatsby Africa
- Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition
- Global Communities
- GOAL
- Habitat for Humanity International
- Habitat for Humanity Terwilliger Center for Innovation in Shelter
- Heifer International
- HEKS-EPER
- Helen Keller International
- Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation
- IESC
- International Labor Organization (ILO)
- International Development Enterprises (iDE)
- International Fertilizer Development Center (IFDC)
- International Rescue Committee (IRC)
- J.E. Austin Associates, Inc.
- Land O'Lakes Venture37
- Marine Market Systems
- MarketShare Associates
- Mastercard Foundation
- Mercy Corps
- NCBA CLUSA
- Opportunities Unlimited B.V.
- Oxfam Great Britain
- Palladium International
- People in Need
- PROSPER Markets
- Pulte Institute for Global Development, University of Notre Dame
- Resonance
- RTI International
- SEEP
- SocioEcological Strategies, Inc.
- Spill Center
- Swiss Foundation for Technical Cooperation
- Swisscontact Foundation
- TechnoServe
- Tetra Tech
- The Canopy Lab
- The Nature Conservancy
- TruTerra
- Ultimate Business Strategies - UBS
- United States Agency for International Development (USAID)
- Vikāra Institute
- Winrock International
- World Bicycle Relief
- World University Service of Canada
- World Vision
- WorldFish

MSS is the go-to event for any organization active in market system programming, or organizations that want to learn more. Market system approaches are quickly evolving and building on our collective successes and failures. For me, one key way to keep up with the latest thinking and learning is to attend MSS. It helps me stay connected with a dynamic and growing community of practice.

Tracy Slaybaugh-Mitchell
Senior Resilience and Food Security Advisor at RTI International



Countries Represented

- Afghanistan
- Albania
- Australia
- Austria
- Bangladesh
- Benin
- Bolivia
- Burundi
- Cambodia
- Canada
- Colombia
- Costa Rica
- Cyprus
- Czech Republic
- Democratic Republic of the Congo
- Denmark
- Dominican Republic
- Egypt
- Eritrea
- Eswatini
- Ethiopia
- France
- Germany
- Ghana
- Greece
- Haiti
- Honduras
- Hong Kong
- India
- Ireland
- Japan
- Jordan
- Kenya
- Kosovo
- Lesotho
- Malawi
- Malaysia
- Mexico
- Morocco
- Mozambique
- Myanmar
- Netherlands
- Nicaragua
- Nigeria
- Pakistan
- Peru
- Philippines
- Republic of Korea
- Romania
- Russia
- Rwanda
- Serbia
- Singapore
- South Africa
- Sri Lanka
- Switzerland
- Taiwan
- Uganda
- Ukraine
- United Kingdom
- United States of America
- Zambia

AGENDA & KEY LEARNING

I look forward to the Market Systems Symposium every year as a chance to speak with experts across the industry, sharing experience and lessons learned from our projects. It's a truly unique event, where participants are able to leave their business cards at the door, and focus on the most pressing issues and challenges with other committed development experts. I was particularly pleased this year to see the new climate change and natural resource management track, which allowed us to examine as a community the unique opportunities for market systems approaches to contribute to advance climate change solutions.

Mary Beggs
Senior Associate Tetra Tech

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AGENDA & KEY LEARNING

Plenary Sessions | Toolbox & Clinic Sessions | Deep Dive Café Sessions

Plenary Sessions

Plenaries were 1½ hour sessions on cutting-edge MSD theory, practice, and big-picture ideas. These sessions focused on the event's key themes, and were tailored to provide new thinking & inspiration to the Symposium's diverse audience. Sessions were held via live-stream, and were recorded and available for viewing on the Symposium platform for the duration of the event.

Relevant resources and links were added to each session, and were accompanied by a virtual chat forum which remained live throughout the event, acting as a space for participants to ask questions, make comments, and discuss.

Private Sector Engagement Plenaries

Exploring Essential Strategies in Private Sector Engagement to Support Local Entrepreneurial Ecosystems

Summary

Of particular importance to the overall market system is private sector firms' start and growth during their early stages, as well as how they evolve new business strategies. The ability of a market system to adapt and continue to deliver value back to society over the long term is dependent on a continual flow of firms that enter the market with innovative products and services that respond to signals from various segments of society. It is through this framing that the session explored entrepreneurial ecosystems and the ways overlapping systems support inclusive growth of a market system.

Speakers

- Todd Flower, Director, Regional Economic Growth Office, USAID Southern Africa
- Michael Field, Systems Thinking Specialist, Vikãra Institute (formerly EcoVentures International)
- Bastiaan Huesken, Project Manager, IFDC Burundi
- Richard Karugarama Lebero, Component Lead - Policy Reform and Business Enabling Environment Specialist, DAI Rwanda
- Kristin Beyard, Director of Economic Growth, Resonance
- Golden Mahove, Chief of Party, USAID Southern Africa Trade and Investment Hub
- Lizan Kuster, Associate Director Entrepreneurship and Innovation, Habitat for Humanity International

Key Takeaways

- Market systems thinking is grounded in the understanding that the private sector is a central component to any country's journey toward greater self-reliance.
- At the same time, market systems thinking recognizes that individual firms are part of systems that overlap and influence behavior in different ways.
- Entrepreneurship, or the processes in which private sector firms start and grow during their early stages, is of particular importance.
- The ability of a market system to adapt and continue to deliver value back to a society over the long term is dependent on a continual flow of firms that enter the market with innovative products and services that respond to signals from various segments of society.
- At the same time, in many developing countries, the primary driver of people starting a business is not in response to a signal/signals from potential customers, but from an immediate need to capture cash for necessities.
- 'Entrepreneurs by necessity' is an emerging way of describing such patterns that highlight systemic realities that are limiting inclusive growth.
- The overlapping systems related to entrepreneurship (i.e., core market, financial, supporting, etc.) could change in concert to better filter, identify, nurture, and invest in entrepreneurs that focus on adding value. This is central to whether a society can sustain inclusive growth over time.
- When engaging the private sector, especially entrepreneurial firms, attention should be placed on knock-on effects or the response to signals coming from other firms. It is important to support firms to response-patterns where firms invest internally to improve their value proposition to their customers. The aim of a market systems project should be to shift the competitive landscape in order for firms to compete on the value they deliver.
- Rather than direct investment, the focus should be placed on how best to catalyze positive change within the system. For example, to catalyze the emergence of support services for entrepreneurs, a project should focus on amplifying internal signals that reinforce the benefits of such services. In this context, creating prestige around service providers is often an important element to raising the value proposition, as well as encouraging more service providers to enter the market.

Full panel of speakers & live chat

The Market Systems Symposium is a great opportunity to connect with market systems development practitioners around the world, share experiences and learn about innovations on the field. The 2021 edition fostered an effective exchange of knowledge and experiences through different spaces, from informal discussions to more focused expositions on certain themes. I'm already looking forward to the 2022 Symposium.

Paulo Rodrigues
Advisor - Market Systems Fragile Contexts
Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation

Leveraging Social Inclusion Strategies through Private Sector Engagement

Summary

Traditionally, development efforts have focused on providing goods and services directly to vulnerable populations. From a market systems perspective, why the market system has not seen the value of engaging such populations in the first place (as either customers, suppliers, and/or staff) is an essential question. This session explored the complexities around traditional and more current systems thinking perspectives related to inclusiveness (with particular focus on women and youth), while also discussing tools and lessons that are being applied to gain more insights into how change can emerge within market systems that lower barriers between market actors, regardless of any perceived differences.

Speakers

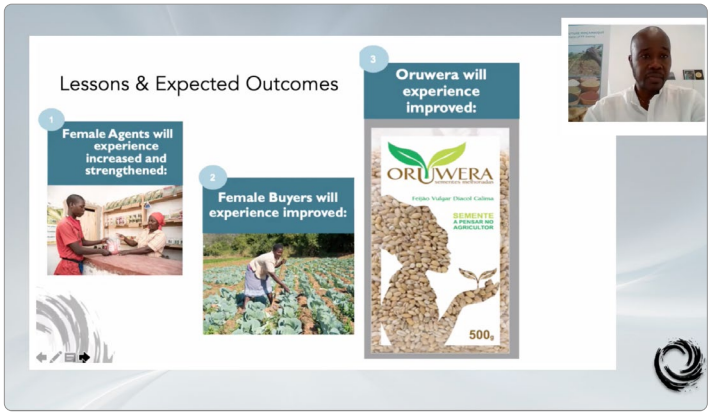
- Morgan Mercer, Technical Director, Gender and Youth, ACDI/VOCA
- Holly Krueger, Managing Partner, The Canopy Lab
- Gema Stratico, Country Director, Habitat for Humanity Peru
- Lotte-Marie Brouwer, Women's Entrepreneurship Lead, Bopinc
- Raul Pitoro, Chief of Party, DAI Mozambique
- Tatiana Pulido, MEL Specialist, USAID Washington

Key Takeaways

- More traditional perspectives of inclusion focused more on donor efforts to provide services directly to underserved populations.
- From a market systems perspective, a key question is why hasn't a market system seen the value of engaging such populations as either customers, suppliers, or staff.

- For a market system to evolve as an effective social mechanism that can solve challenges, take advantage of opportunities, and adapt to changing contexts/risk landscapes, market systems need to focus on signals coming from the majority of the society (not just the elite), prioritize signals that reflect the most value to the most people, and allocate resources to turn signals in the products and services.
- Market systems are a lot more effective at adding value back to society when they engage as many people as possible and allow them to interact around defined challenges/opportunities, regardless of their group identity.
- Social movements bring needed change/disruptors/shocks, but, more often than not, markets are not leading/driving such changes even when such changes would benefit a market system.
- For market actors to support and reinforce social change, the commercial incentives need to be aligned in support of the social change. For example, when female customers demonstrate real value as a customer segment, firms are very likely to invest via special marketing campaigns and customer services programs to support women. Similarly, on the supply chain side, when women demonstrate their value as suppliers, traders, etc., supply chain managers/lead firms are more likely to craft management tactics designed to encourage women to participate and flourish.
- It's important to recognize changes in competitive landscapes. When other firms see a change in a particular segment, they usually follow suit, i.e., when promoting certification and clear cases of gaining competitive advantage through certification become apparent, other firms will invest in certification as well.
- When it comes to segmentation, firms tend to follow the path of least resistance -- i.e., they are unlikely to take on the hardest challenge first. As a result, it's advisable to start where a market system is in terms of clear incentives to engage new segments/ previously underserved populations. The key is that change is an ongoing, complex process that most often starts with the easiest opportunity first, which then opens up additional opportunities. What is central is that the wider market system shifts to favor firms/reinforce business strategies that grow by constantly adding new segments.

The full panel of speakers



Raul Pitoro speaking

Morgan Mercer speaking

Climate Adaptation & Conservation in Market Systems **Plenaries**

Positioning Yourself for Integrating Natural Resource Management, Climate Change, & Market Systems Development

Summary

There is an increasingly urgent need to apply systems lenses as a way to gain insights into how to better catalyze alignment between political, social, and market forces in support of evidence-based strategies and tactics to counter the human effects of climate change and natural resource management. This session explored how market forces emerge and change, and how practitioners are trying to catalyze changes in market forces that, in turn, drive behavior change. This session also featured an interview with practitioners who are utilizing climate financing to catalyze change.

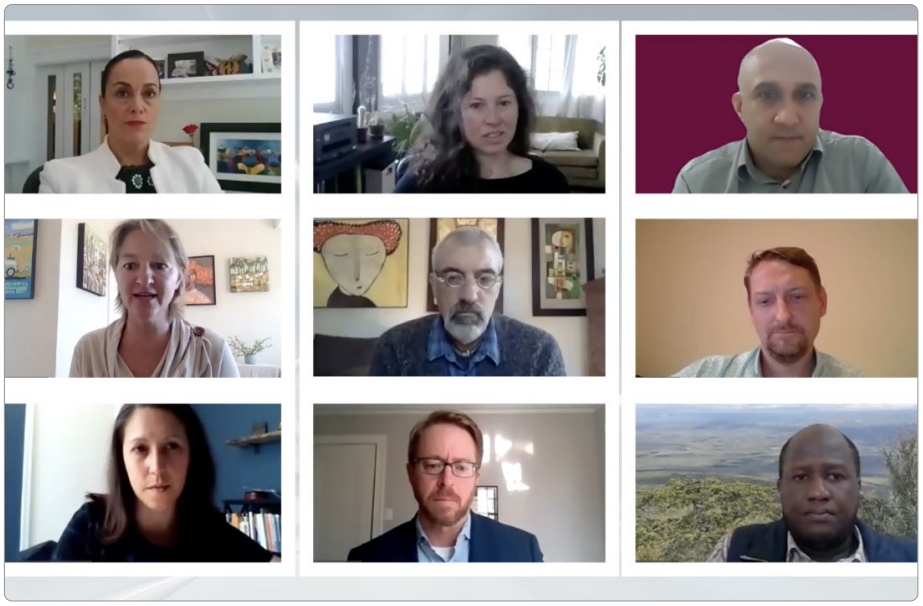
Speakers

- Nathan Hulley, Private Sector Advisor, USAID Democratic Republic of Congo
- Lauren Williams, Associate, Tetra Tech
- Lorine Giangola, Associate, Abt Associates
- Kevin Juma, Lead Forestry Specialist, The Nature Conservancy Kenya
- Devang Vussonji, Partner, Dalberg Tanzania
- Amanda Fernandez, Director, Palladium
- Jason Weller, President, TruTerra

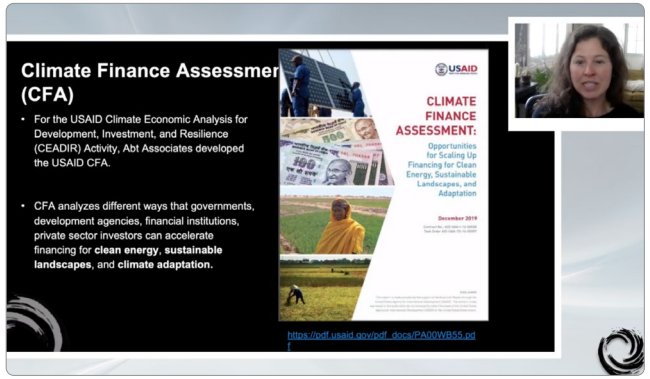
Key Takeaways

- While there have been some efforts to diminish attention paid to the effects of climate change over the last few years, including more specific concerns around conservation, it is increasingly clear that without a better alignment of political, market, and social forces, the effects are only going to get more severe.
- Most importantly, the effects of inaction are going to be disproportionately felt by the populations that are often less able to manage the related stresses and shocks. It is in this context that applying systems lenses are critical as a way to gain insights into how to better catalyze alignment between political, social, and market forces in support of evidence-based strategies and tactics to counter the human effects of climate change.
- It is important for projects to integrate market systems thinking into their conservation efforts. For conservation to take hold, good practice in conservation needs to align with market forces so conservation is not seen as a cost but rather a benefit. In this case, alignment may not be a perfect fit, but it is a step that can cause the needed disruption. An example is the case of conservation agriculture (CA) farming. Even though the benefits were not as substantial to drive a consequential shift, it has catalyzed a slow but consistent change process.

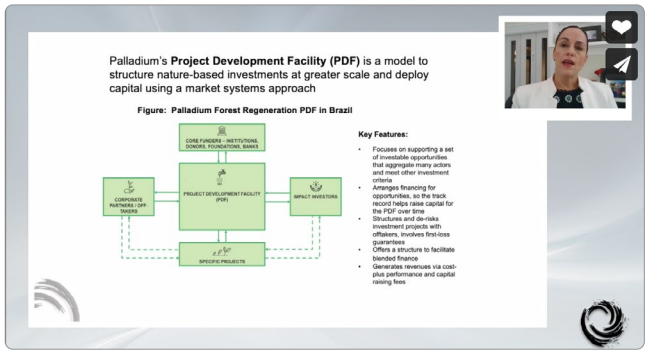
- In the end, social systems, including market systems, change because it is more attractive to change. In this context, it is critical to consider the overall attractiveness of a product, service, and/or practice, as opposed to just the climate or conservation benefits. For example, a stove that is more efficient, easier to use, and reduces emissions is going to be easier to sell, gain a larger loyal customer base, and attract more firms/investment into the market. It is the same for farmers, consumers, etc. They will change if it benefits them in their context.
- It is also critical to realize that an initial change is only the start and change at scale requires the overall system to align in favor of the change such that it becomes the new normal.



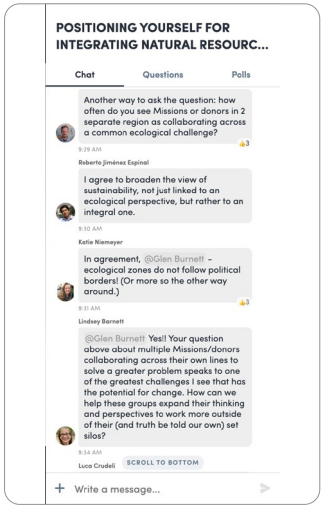
Full panel of speakers



Lorine Giangola presenting



Amanda Fernandez presenting



Session chat

What We All Need to Know about Climate Change Adaptations & Conservation using Market Systems Lenses

Summary

The human effects of climate change are limiting many countries' abilities to progress along their path to greater self-reliance. It is also concerning that market forces in more specific contexts, such as coastal fisheries, urban housing for the poor, financial services, and agricultural inputs, are often not aligned in ways that protect, manage, and ensure near, medium, and longer-term ecological resources. This session dove into the ways in which practitioners are trying to catalyze change in market forces such that they value, and even drive, improved conservation, while also delivering economic benefits to the communities that live in and around specific ecological zones.

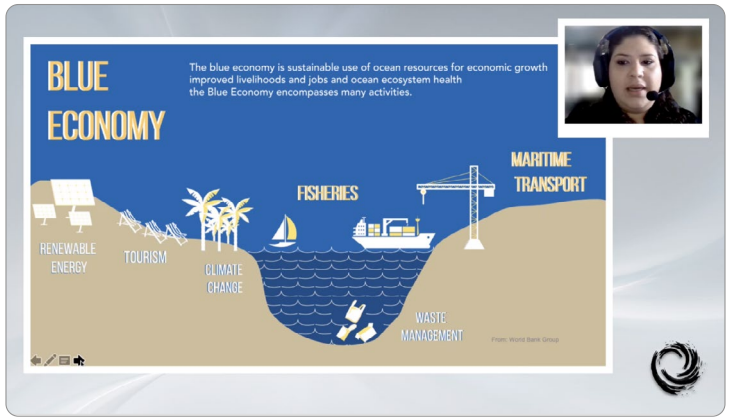
Speakers

- Mary Beggs, Senior Associate, Tetra Tech
- Ian Deshmukh, ProLand Advisor, Tetra Tech
- Gabriela Padilla, Programs Director, GOAL Honduras
- Patrick Co, Partnership Specialist, Resonance
- Nic Dexter, Chief of Party, Land O'Lakes Venture37

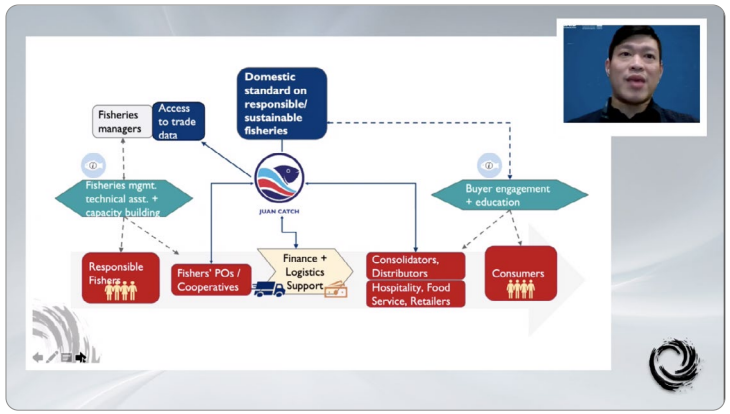
Key Takeaways

- Climate change is having an effect on various countries' ability to proceed along their path to greater self-reliance.
- It is also concerning that market forces in more specific contexts like coastal fisheries, urban housing for the poor, financial services, and agricultural inputs are often not aligned in ways that protect/manage and ensure near, medium, and longer-term ecological resources.
- It is central to address this misalignment. Market forces are essential to drive value around improved conservation and economic benefits to the communities that live in and around specific ecological zones.
- Without better alignment between market forces and conservation/climate change realities, market system incentives may continue to encourage behaviors that provide near-term economic benefits while also damaging those communities' longer-term path toward greater inclusive growth.
- In many developing country contexts, informal markets are not the end goal, but often have to be used as a starting point for shifting market system incentives to better align commercial with longer-term conservation/climate change considerations.
- A major challenge is that, in many developing country contexts, the way political, social, and market systems are aligned to push communities and market actors to capture immediate returns, often at the expense of the longer-term considerations, especially related to climate/conservation degradation. Projects need to consider the systemic orientation/interdependence of social/political/market forces if they are going to shift the incentives in favor of climate smart products, services, and practices.

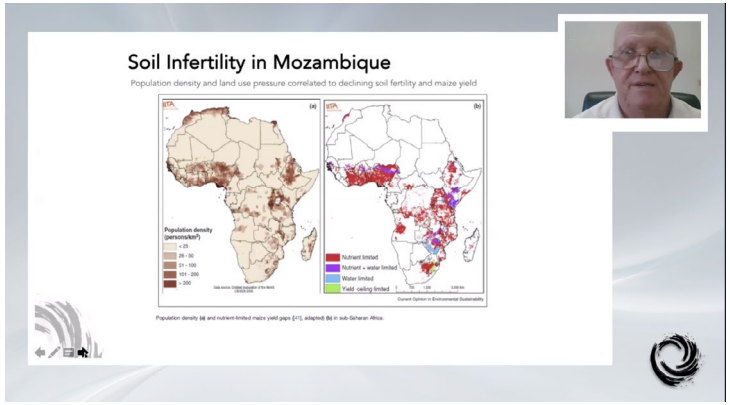
Full group panel & session chat



Gabriela Padilla presenting



Patrick Co presenting



Nic Dexter presenting

Urban Non-Ag Market Systems **Plenaries**

Gaining Essential Insights into Urban & Peri-Urban Programming - with Impacts Across all Development Outcomes

Summary

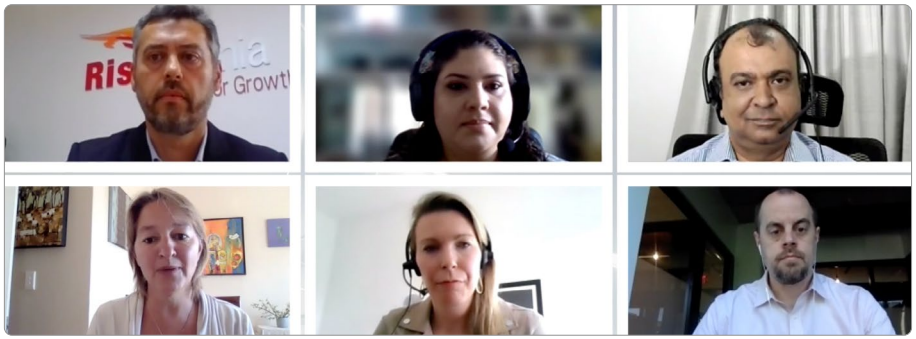
Urban populations, and especially the urban poor, face substantial challenges, which in many ways are more central in the path to an inclusive middle-income status than the challenges in rural communities. Many challenges related to rural communities depend on how market systems change emerges in urban and peri-urban regions, such as the rise of manufacturing, ICT, & financial services. This session included a range of practitioner experiences working with urban poor. Specifically, cases from housing, health, and improving the resilience of urban communities were highlighted.

Speakers

- Ram Ganesan, Regional Manager, Abt Associates
- Tim Sparkman, Managing Partner, The Canopy Lab
- Jennifer Oomen, Director - Applied Innovation, Habitat for Humanity International
- Gabriela Padilla, Programs Director, GOAL Honduras
- Andi Stefanllari, Senior Intervention Manager, Helvetas Albania

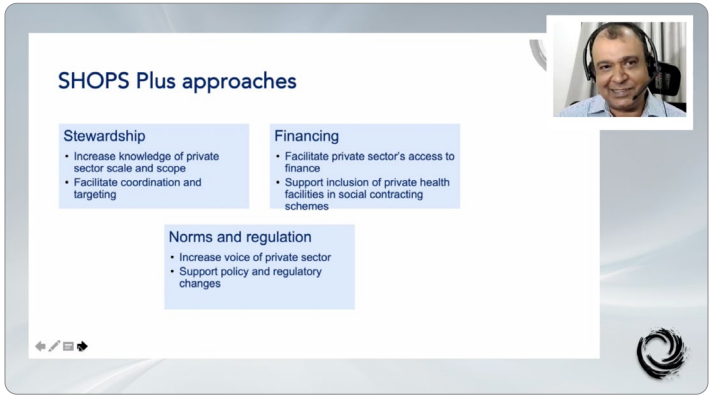
Key Points:

- While rural communities do face serious concerns that deserve the attention of international development, many of those challenges require market systems change that is most likely going to emerge from urban and peri-urban regions.
- For example, the emergence of manufacturing, light manufacturing, information-based industries, financial services industries, services, etc. primarily forms in and around urban locations and are central to providing a robust pathway out of poverty for rural communities.
- In contrast, smallholder agriculture is unlikely to be a robust pathway out of poverty for most people in rural communities.
- Using system lenses is critical to better clarify and understand the trade-offs between important, but short-term, rural population challenges, versus longer-term systemic change requirements for inclusive growth that emerge through urban and peri-urban regions.



Full group panel

Jennifer Oomen presenting



Ram Ganesan presenting

Gabriela Padilla presenting

Gaining Insights into the Evolution of Market Systems Resilience Lenses to Development

Summary

Adding resilience lenses to market systems approaches has provided important insights around the need to consider diversity within and across businesses and market systems. Additionally, market systems lenses are being applied in resilience approaches that are also providing important insights related to the ways in which communities manage risks, especially as they manifest via shocks and stresses. This session explored the methods that donors and practitioners are using as an emergent framework that is intended to provide insights into the complexities of how societies manage shocks and stresses over the long-term at community, market system, and society levels.

Speakers

- Kristin O'Planick, Market Systems Specialist, USAID Washington
- Irene Mue, Senior Partnership Advisor, RTI International
- Wairimu Muthike, Engagement Director, Busara Center for Behavioral Economics Kenya
- Caroline Allen, International Program Manager, Vikãra Institute (formerly EcoVentures International)
- Sue Chavez, Tourism, Arts & Entertainment Coordinator, ACDI/VOCA Honduras
- Ricardo Pineda, Value-Added Agriculture Coordinator/ Director of the Finance Transaction Unit, ACDI/VOCA
- Andrea Chartock, Principal Development Specialist, DAI
- John Tokolish, Consultant, DAI Ukraine

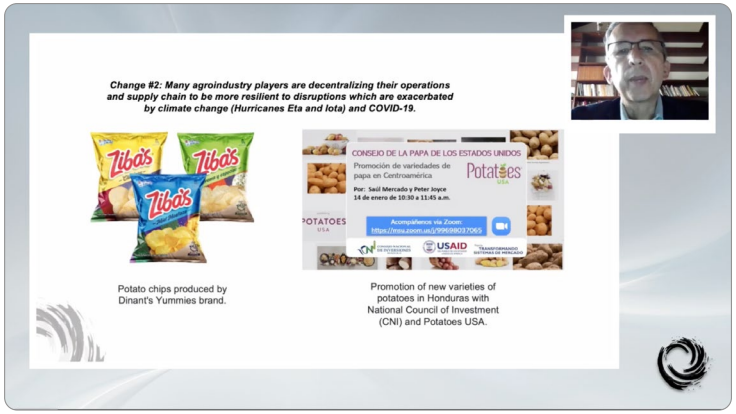
Full group panel

Key Takeaways

- Project metrics related to sales and income may encourage short-term opportunities at the expense of longer-term growth that is contingent on increased market systems resilience. In this context, it is critical to add resilience lenses to market systems approaches in order to understand potential trade-offs between short-term growth opportunities and longer-term diversity via alternative channels, new markets, etc.

- Practitioners can misinterpret the idea of optimization, leading to efforts to find and push a perfect business model or organizational structure. Resilience lenses are essential to interpreting the risks of such optimization efforts for the long-term health of market systems. For example, many projects focus on cooperatives as the only organizational structure promoted, which can decrease market system resilience.
- Market systems resilience lenses are providing important insights related to how communities manage risks, especially as they manifest via shocks and stresses. Often communities have effective strategies for managing risks, but those strategies integrate livelihood activities in ways that do not align with commercial practices.
- Using systems and resilience lenses to better understand the trade-offs and time frames and considerations of systemic change is critical to catalyzing systemic change in ways to minimize potential harm to poor communities.

John Tokolish & Andrea Chartock presenting



Ricardo Pineda presenting

Irene Mue presenting

Sue Chavez presenting

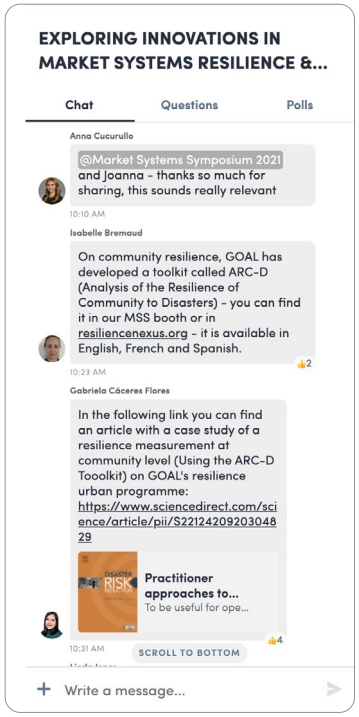
Exploring Innovations in Market Systems Resilience & Impact at Community Level

Summary

How a community manages risks related to shocks and stresses can have a substantial effect on the community's ability to participate in and benefit from a market system. At the same time, a community shifting their tools, tactics, and norms for managing shocks and stresses will likely result in serious trade-offs that have to be considered. This session explored how practitioners are dealing with and what they are learning when engaging the complexities of communities, how they manage risks as they manifest via shocks and stresses, and how their tools and tactics align with economic growth.

Speakers

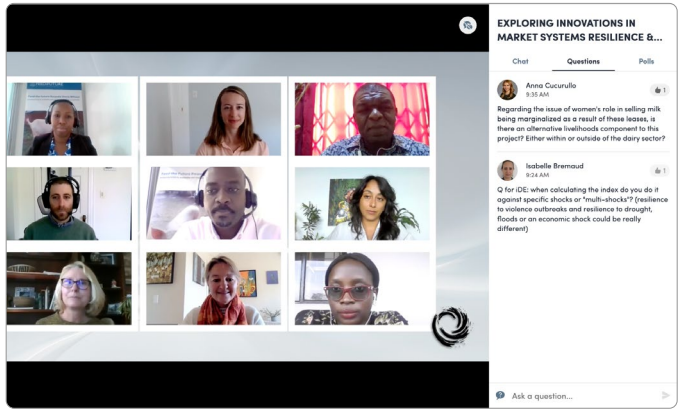
- Maureen Kamusiime, Animal Health Manager, Mercy Corps Uganda
- Dennis Karamuzi, Chief of Party, Land O'Lakes Venture37
- Lucia Zigiriza, Deputy Chief of Party, Land O'Lakes Venture37
- Tracy Mitchell, Senior Resilience and Food Security Advisor, RTI
- Daniel Hudner, Market Systems Resilience Measurement Specialist, Mercy Corps
- Lina Henao, Monitoring and Evaluation Director, iDE Mozambique
- Cecil Osei, Acting Chief of Party, ACDI/VOCA Ghana
- Joanna Springer, Resilience & Market Systems Research Specialist, RTI



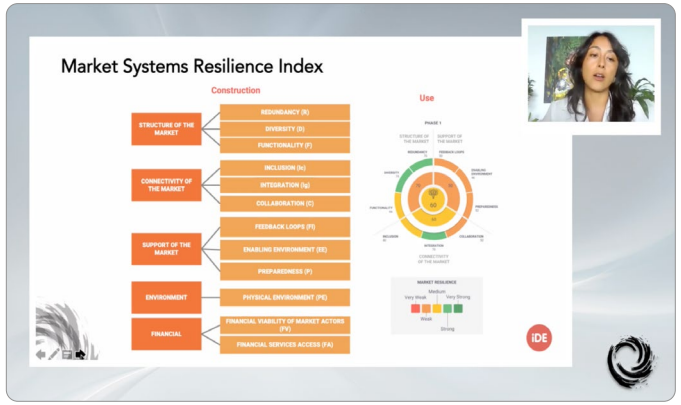
Session chat

Key Takeaways

- It is important to embrace the complexity of communities, especially in how they manage risks.
- In particular, it is critical to gain insights into how communities manage risks, the tools/tactics they apply, the trade-offs they make, and how their strategies manifest via different shocks and stresses.
- Market systems often become more resilient as they increase the value they provide to communities, especially in helping them manage shocks and stresses. This dual benefit only happens when market systems become more inclusive and competitive.
- How a community manages risks related to shocks and stresses can have a substantial effect on their ability to participate in and benefit from market systems.
- At the same time, when a community shifts their tools, tactics, norms, etc. for managing shocks and stresses, it will likely result in serious trade-offs that have to be considered.
- In many developing country contexts, poor communities prioritize growing for personal consumption rather than commercial purposes, which is central to the way they manage risks. To catalyze change, it is essential to understand the implications around a community's risk management strategy.
- An additional consideration with rural communities that have a strong connection to livestock, is how animal ownership can be central to how communities manage risks, that goes well beyond animals as a bank or a source of protein.
- When catalyzing new ways and capacities in a community that should lead to better resilience and well-being outcomes, it is essential to explore tradeoffs, especially related to commercial requirements, downside risk management, and informal/formal social safety net services. For example, pastoral communities keep healthy animals and sell animals as their health deteriorates, which is a bad way to manage a commercial herd. Understanding the range of risk management benefits related to current practices is central to understanding exactly why a suggested change would be perceived as attractive by the community.

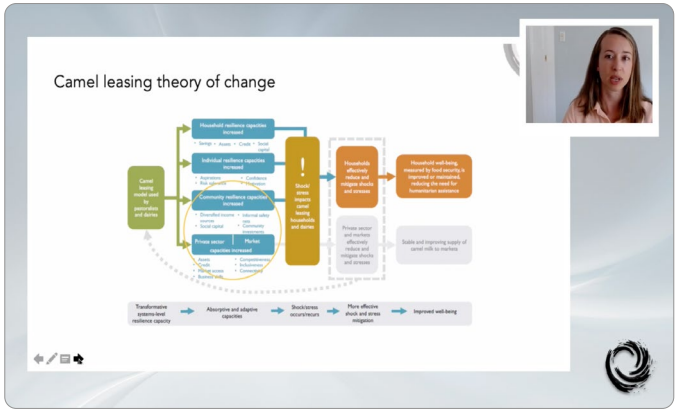


Full group panel



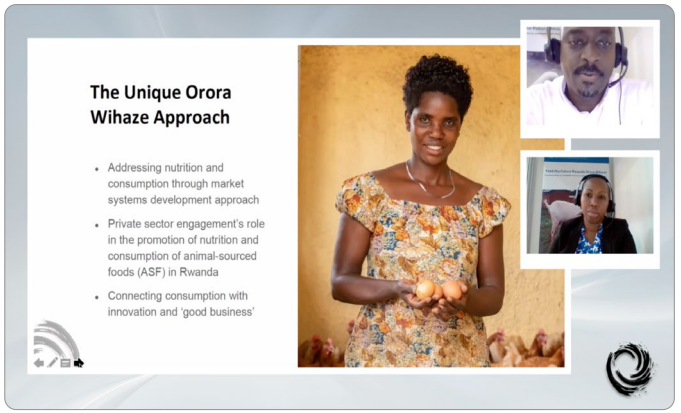
Lina Henao presenting

Daniel Hudner & Maureen Kamusiime presenting



Joanna Springer presenting

Cecil Osei presenting



Dennis Karamuzi & Lucia Zigiriza presenting

AGENDA & KEY LEARNING

Toolbox & Clinic Sessions

Toolbox Sessions were 1 hour sessions, providing a brief introduction to several leading market systems tools and frameworks, organized by thematic areas. Most of the tools presented were further explored in a paired Clinic session (see below). Toolbox sessions were hosted in real-time via live stream, and were recorded and available for viewing on the Symposium platform for the duration of the event. A virtual chat forum accompanied the session.

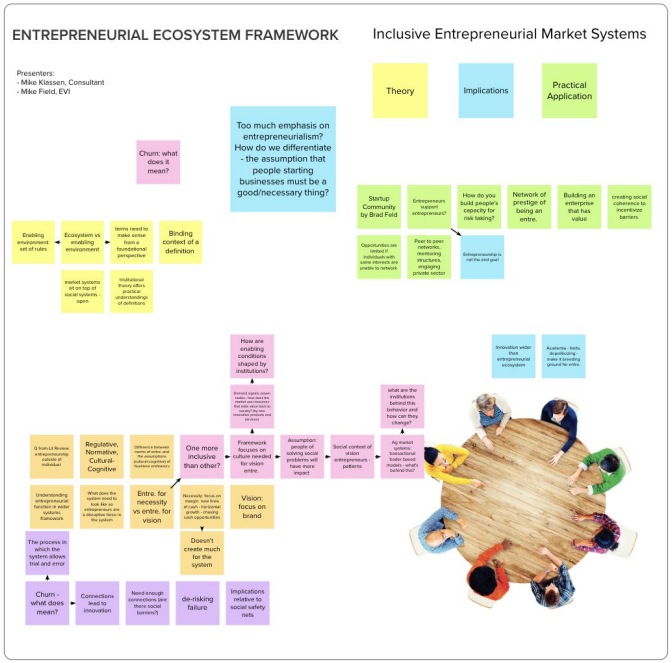
Clinic Sessions were 40 minute live breakout sessions that each explored a particular tool or framework introduced during the Toolbox sessions. Participants gained experiential knowledge that they can adapt and implement for use in their own contexts. Clinics included time for discussion/Q&A and the opportunity for participants to engage around a specific practical tool or framework more deeply. Clinics also made use of a collaborative whiteboarding tool where participants were able to take notes and/or share thoughts/ideas. Several live Clinic sessions ran simultaneously on different topics and participants chose which sessions to attend - Clinics were not recorded in an effort to foster deeper and more open dialogue.

Entrepreneurial EcoSystem Framework

This session explored the theoretical underpinnings and practical implications of a recent framework on inclusive entrepreneurship. While the original framework had a policy orientation, this overview focused more on elements of the framework that are starting to be applied to market systems development projects which are focusing on entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial ecosystems.

Speakers

- Michael Field, Senior Systems Thinking Specialist, Vikāra Institute (formerly EcoVentures International)
- Mike Klaasen, Consultant, Vikāra Institute (formerly EcoVentures International)



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Partnership Health Catalyzes Inclusion Outcomes

This session explored the importance of monitoring partnership health based on ACDI/VOCA's recently developed partnership health tool and how it's being applied in the Transforming Market Systems project in Honduras (TMS). This overview also highlighted strategies and tactics for integrating inclusion metrics within private sector partnerships as a catalyst to achieving inclusive Market Systems change.

Speakers

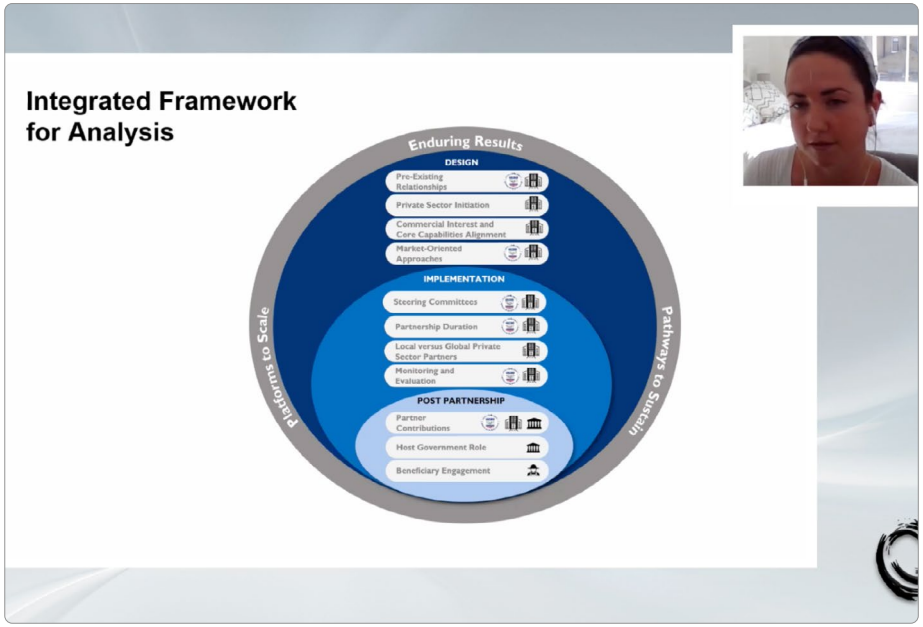
- Mark Sevier, Technical Director, Market Systems, ACDI/VOCA
- Melissa Matlock, Associate Director, Gender and Social Inclusion, ACDI/VOCA

What Makes Effective PSE? Exploring the Enduring Results 3.0 Study

Evidence on the drivers of sustainability and scale in USAID's partnerships with the private sector was shared in this session, drawing upon results of a study, which explored what activities and/or outcomes from private sector partnerships endured two or more years after the projects closed.

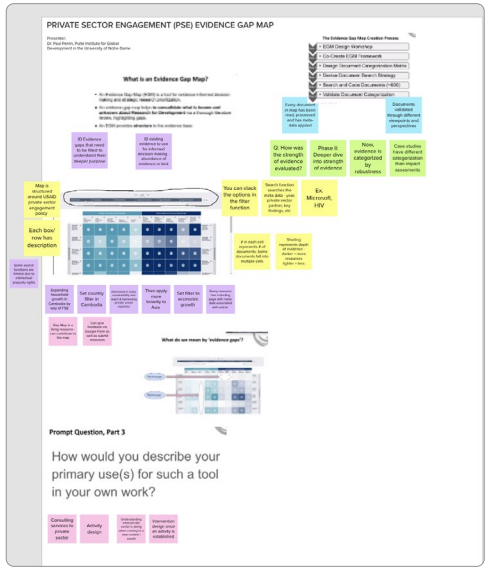
Speaker

Charlotte Phillips, Business Strategy Consultant, Accenture



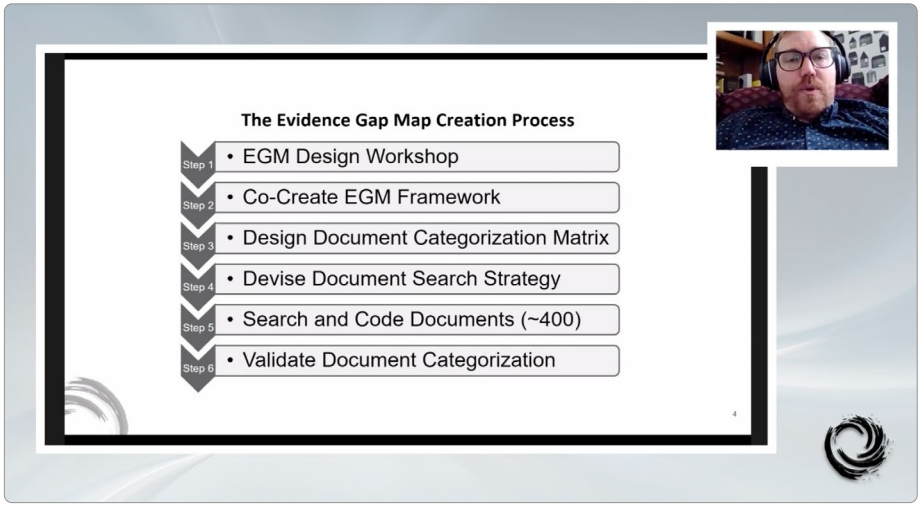
Private Sector Engagement: Evidence Gap Map

Designed primarily for an audience of USAID technical staff, program designers, implementing partners, and private sector employees seeking to engage in development work, the Evidence Gap Map compiles evidence in one interactive matrix. The "gap" in the title refers to understanding where there is good evidence in the matrix and where there are holes in our knowledge base and understanding regarding private sector engagement.



Speaker

Dr. Paul Perrin, Pulte Institute for Global Development, University of Notre Dame

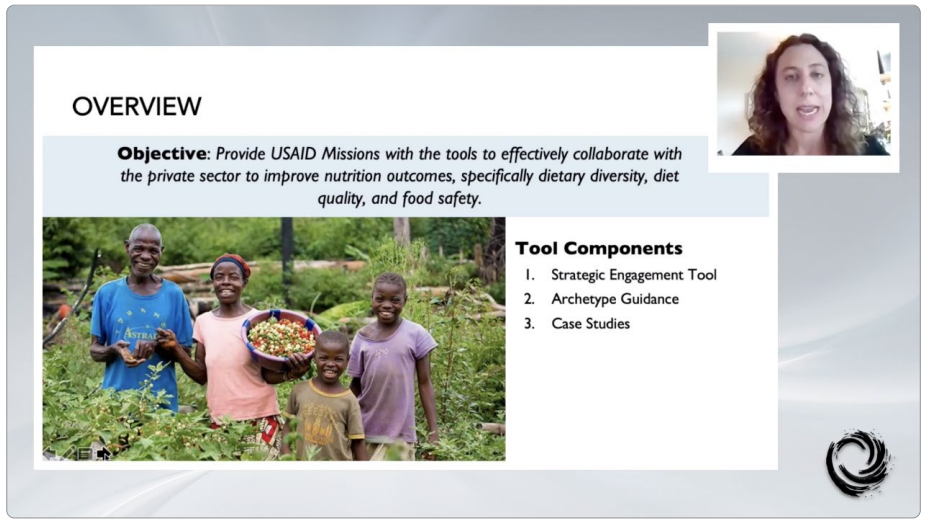


Private Sector Engagement Guidance For Nutrition

This session dove into a new tool to guide strategic engagement of the private sector in nutrition to: 1) define a prioritized set of nutritional problem(s); 2) identify strategic corporate partners in the market system to address the problem, as defined; 3) determine the appropriate partnership design model; and 4) guide the partnership co-creation process.

Speaker

Daniella Maor, Senior Private Sector Engagement Advisor, DAI



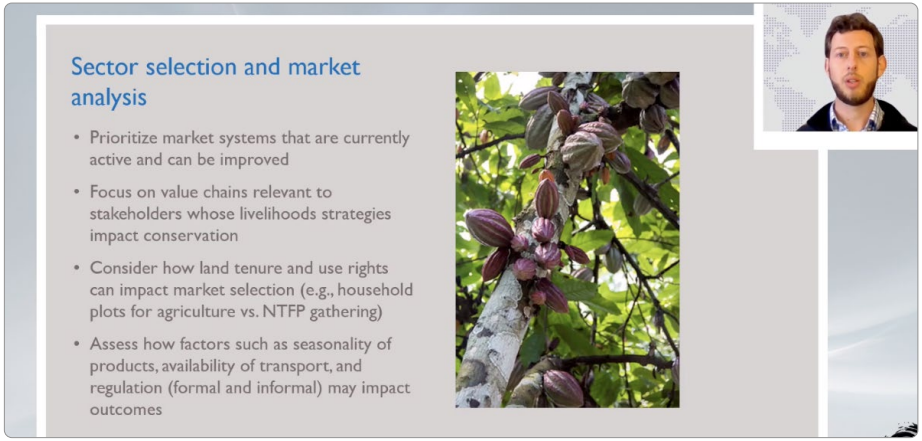
Climate Adaptation, Conservation & Market Systems Toolbox & Clinics

Market Systems Approaches For Conservation

USAID's Forest and Biodiversity Support (FABS) Activity in DRC presented an overview of concepts, strategies, and case studies exploring the linkages between market systems tools and their application for supporting improved conservation of natural resource management outcomes.

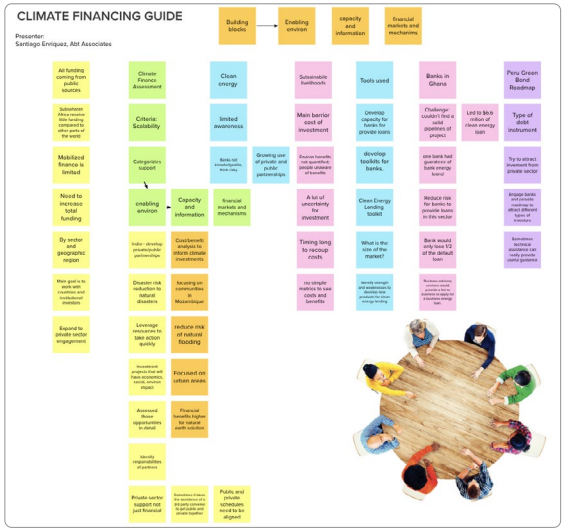
Speakers

- Nick McClure, Project Manager, Resonance
- Bocar Thiam, Chief of Party, Tetra Tech DRC



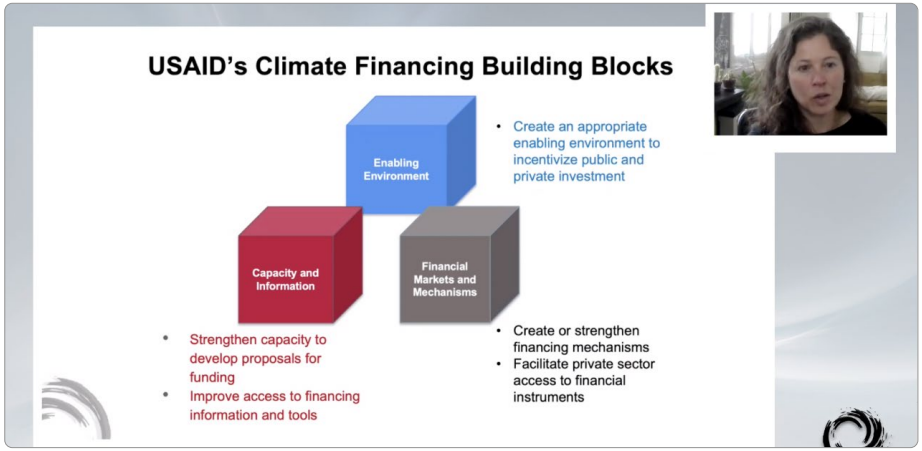
Climate Financing Guide

Drawing upon USAID's Climate Finance Assessment, this session expanded upon the "climate finance building blocks," which provide a simple framework to help decision makers assess the strengths and limitations of their institutions' readiness to access climate finance. Examples of this building blocks analysis will be shared from Abt Associates' work with government partners under USAID Climate Economic Analysis for Development, Investment, and Resilience (CEADIR).



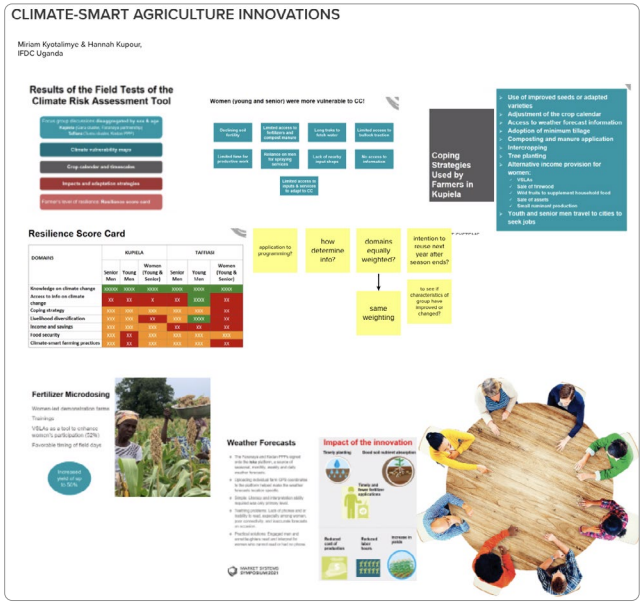
Speakers

- Lorine Giangola, Associate, Abt Associates
- Santiago Enriquez, Senior Climate Change Specialist, Abt Associates



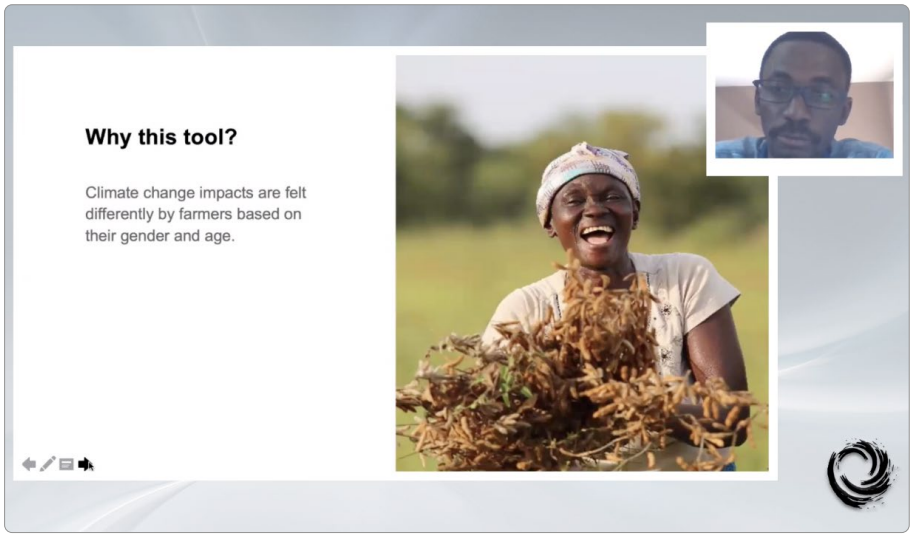
Climate-Smart Agriculture Innovations

This session shared how 2SCALE has been working on supporting women's access to climate-smart agriculture innovations such as weather forecast services, climate-resilient seed varieties, land preparation, and soil nutrition improvement practices by linking them to relevant entrepreneurs and building the local networks needed to foster adoption.



Speaker

Alhassan Issahaku, Climate-Smart Agriculture Specialist, IFDC Ghana



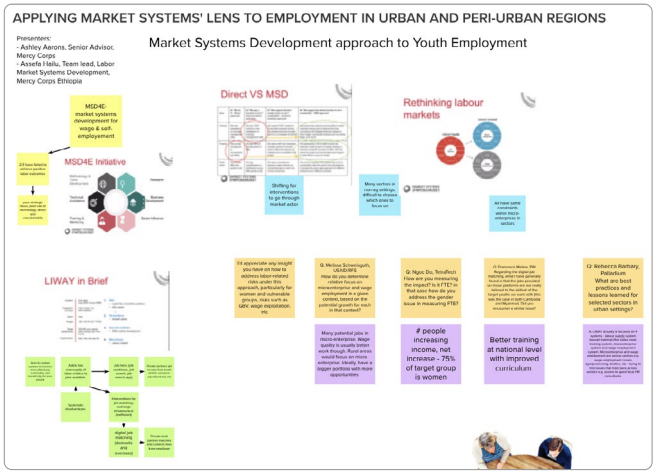
Urban Non-Ag Market Systems
Toolbox & Clinics

Applying Market Systems' Lens to Employment in Urban & Peri-Urban Regions

The evidence shows that most traditional employment programs have small impacts. This session highlighted how a development organization is working to change that through the application of a Market Systems Development for Employment (MSD4E) approach – and the tools and examples that go with it.

Speakers

- Ashley Aarons, Senior Advisor, Mercy Corps
- Assefa Hailu, Team Lead, Labor Market Systems Development, Mercy Corps



Shifting Social Norms Through Market Systems Development Partnerships

This session shared tools including a Gender Review Checklist for market actor partnership and a Partner Motivation Assessment Tool for advancing inclusive business models and co-creation processes.

Speakers

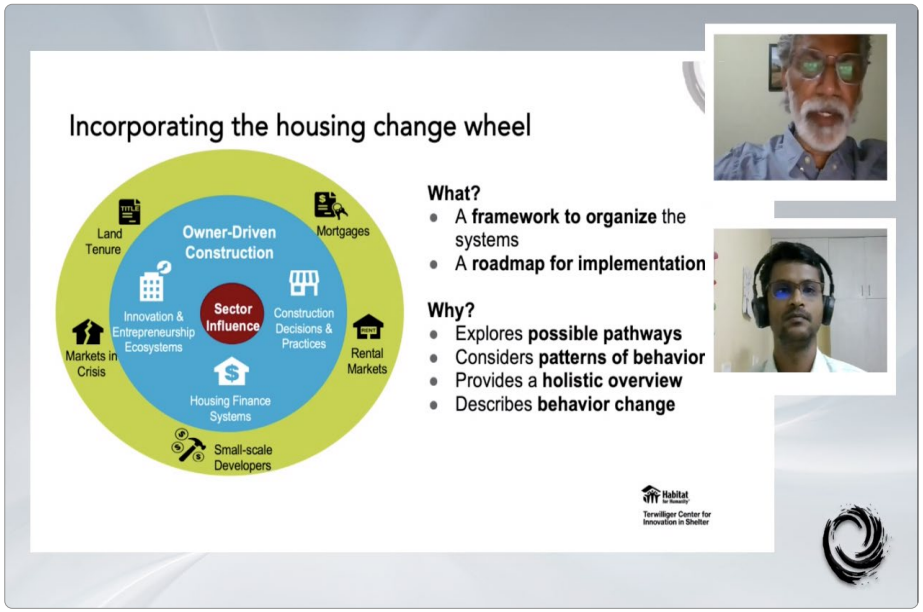
- Bidowra Kahn, Team Lead, ACDI/VOCA Bangladesh
- Nathalie Me-Nsope, Director of Gender and Agriculture, ACDI/VOCA
- Tanmya Tajbin Jahan, Support Market System and Social Inclusion Specialist, ACDI/VOCA Bangladesh

Operationalizing The Housing Change Wheel In Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Systems

This session explored how a tool, the Housing Change Wheel, has been operationalized into internal Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning systems within Habitat for Humanity's Terwilliger Center for Innovation in Shelter, specifically within its India team.

Speakers

- Anoop Nambiar, Country Director, Habitat for Humanity Terwilliger Center for Innovation in Shelter India
- Prasanna Sriraman, Senior Specialist, Habitat for Humanity Terwilliger Center for Innovation in Shelter India

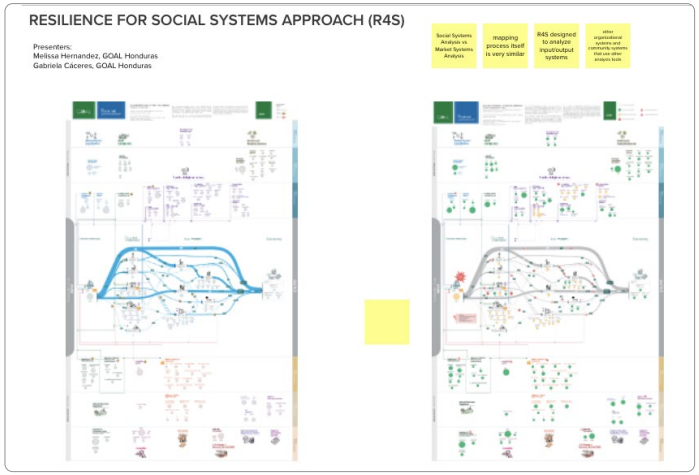


Resilience For Social Systems Approach (R4S)

This session offered the opportunity to learn about a step-by-step guide structured into five key components to identify, map, and synthesize socioeconomic systems against risk scenarios.

Speakers

- Gabriela Cáceres, Resilience Innovation & Learning Hub Coordinator, GOAL Honduras
- Melissa Hernandez, Resilience Advisor, GOAL Honduras

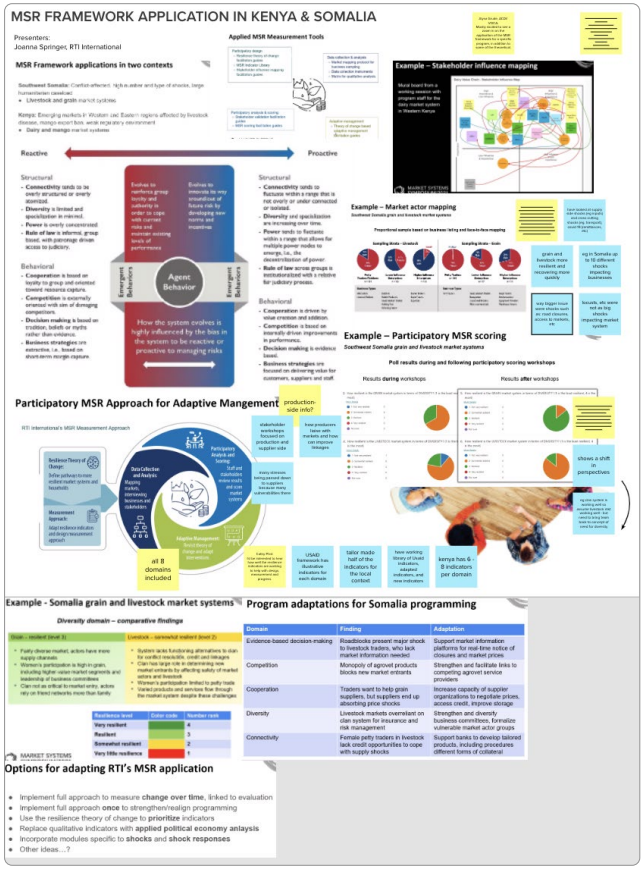


Market Systems Resilience (MSR) Framework Application In Somalia & Kenya

RTI International developed a participatory, mixed methods approach to applying USAID's MSR framework in thin markets, with a primary goal of contributing to adaptive management. This session shared the steps, tools, and approaches of the design, measurement, and learning processes applied in two different contexts.

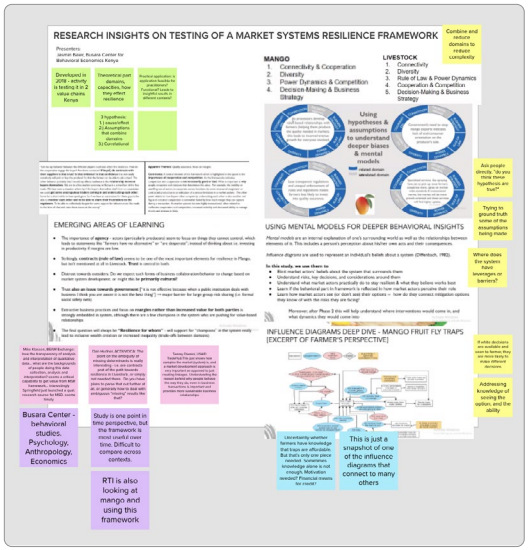
Speaker

Joanna Springer, Resilience & Market Systems Research Specialist, RTI International



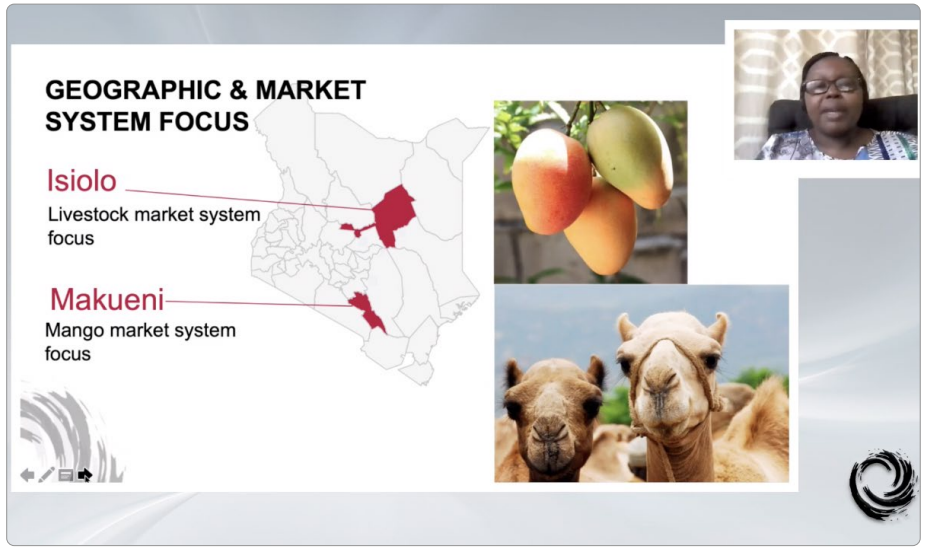
Insights On Resilience In Several Market Systems Applying A Market Systems Resilience (MSR) Framework

This session shared insights learned thus far in the testing of USAID's MSR framework in two different geographies and two different value chains.



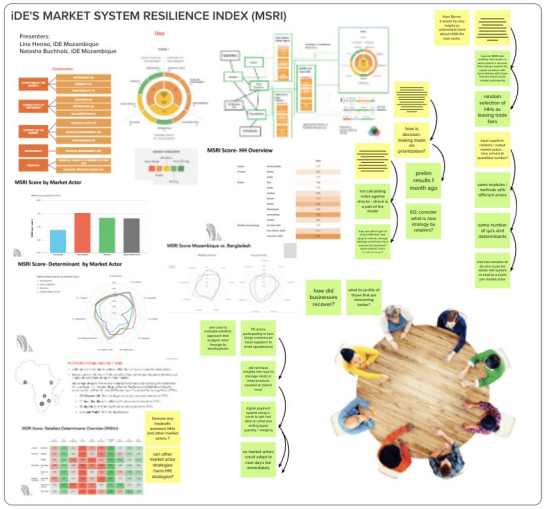
Speakers

- Wairimu Muthike, Engagement Director, Busara Center for Behavioral Economics, Kenya
- Jasmin Baier, Associate, Busara Center for Behavioral Economics, Kenya



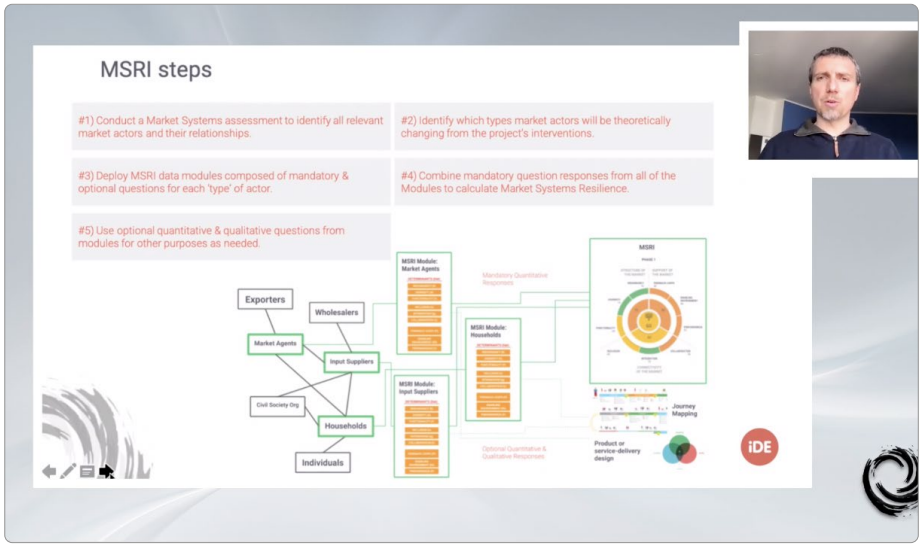
iDE's Market System Resilience Index (MSRI)

This session provided a short introduction into market systems resilience and iDE's approach at harmonising household and market actor level assessments. Initial findings from work in Bangladesh were shared.



Speakers

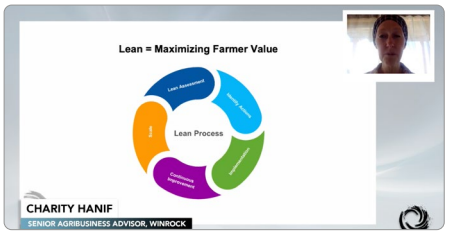
- John Choptiany, Director of Climate, Resilience & Agriculture, iDE
- Lina Lenao, Monitoring and Evaluation Director, iDE Mozambique
- Natasha Buchholz, Business Development and Operations Manager, iDE Mozambique

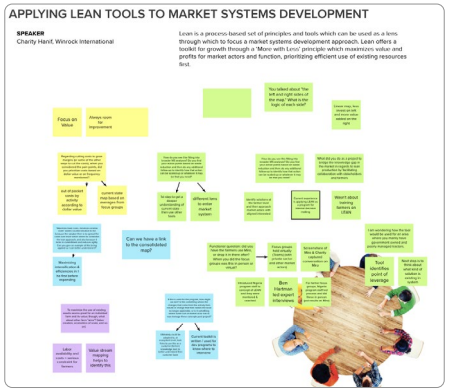


Cross-Cutting Themes

Applying Lean Tools To Market Systems Development

Lean is a process-based set of principles and tools which can be used as a lens through which to focus a market systems development approach. Lean offers a toolkit for growth through a 'More with Less' principle which maximizes value and profits for market actors and function, prioritizing efficient use of existing resources first.





Speaker

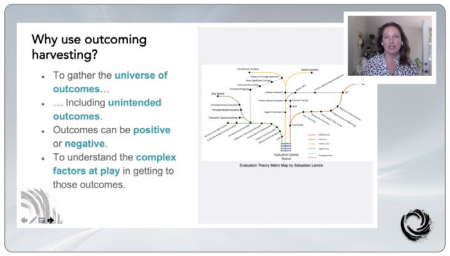
Charity Hanif, Senior Agribusiness Advisor, Winrock

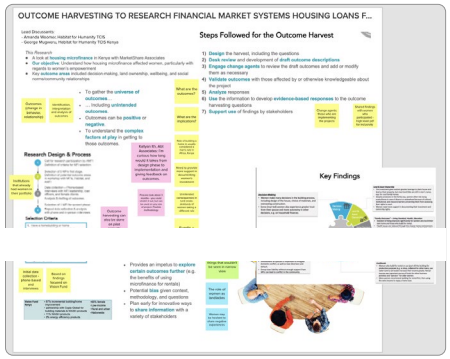
Outcome Harvesting To Research Financial Market Systems Housing Loans For Women

Habitat for Humanity's Terwilliger Center for Innovation in Shelter recently conducted an outcome mapping and harvest to better understand the outcomes from women's increased access to housing finance. The study looked at women's roles in household decision making, land and asset ownerships, outcomes related to living standards and health, social capital and status, and livelihoods.

Speaker

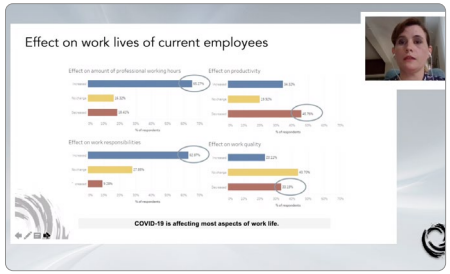
Amanda Woomer, Global MEAL Director, Habitat for Humanity Terwilliger Center for Innovation in Shelter

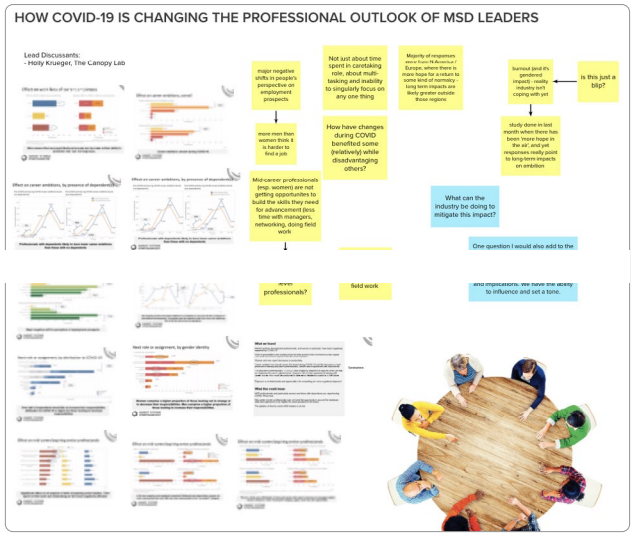




How Covid-19 Is Changing The Professional Outlook Of Market Systems Development

Preliminary research findings were shared on the gendered impact of COVID-19 on MSD professionals and explored practical actions that donors and implementing partners can take to ensure the future recruitment, promotion, and retention of diverse program leaders.





Speaker

Holly Krueger, Managing Partner, The Canopy Lab

AGENDA & KEY LEARNING

Deep Dive Café Sessions

Deep Dive Cafés were 1½ hour live discussion sessions where participants exchanged ideas, experiences, and learning in a relaxed and conversational group setting. Several lead discussants briefly presented their work and thoughts in a subject area, and then opened up the discussion for participants. Several live Deep Dive Cafes ran simultaneously on different topics and participants chose which to attend. Like Clinic Sessions, Deep Dive Cafes were not recorded and only took place live as per the agenda.

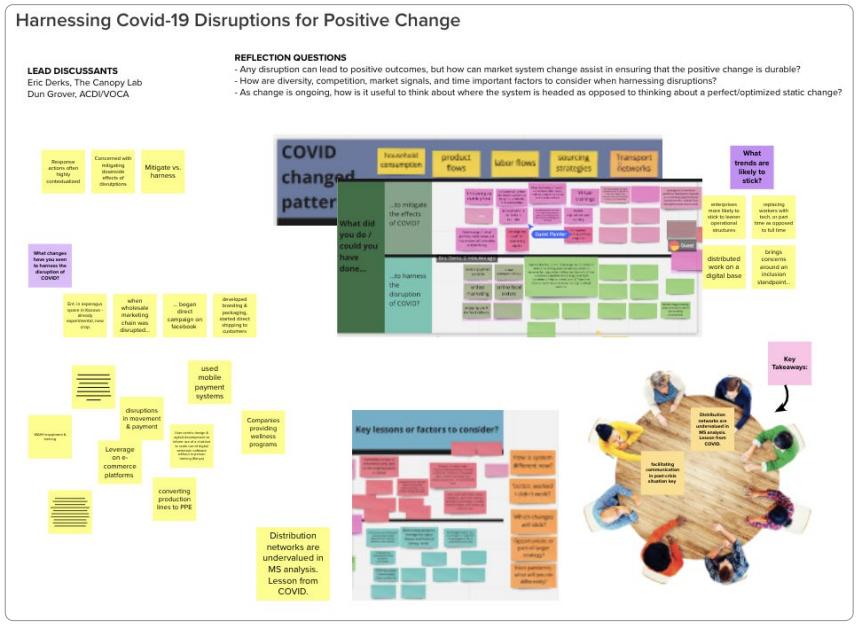
Harnessing Covid-19 Disruptions for Positive Private Sector Change

Lead Discussants:

- Eric Derks, Managing Partner, Canopy Lab
- Dun Grover, Director of Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning, ACDI/VOCA

Reflection Questions:

- Any disruption can lead to positive outcomes, but how can market system change assist in ensuring that the positive change is durable?
- How are diversity, competition, market signals, and time important factors to consider when harnessing disruptions?
- As change is ongoing, how is it useful to think about where the system is headed as opposed to thinking about a perfect/optimized static change?



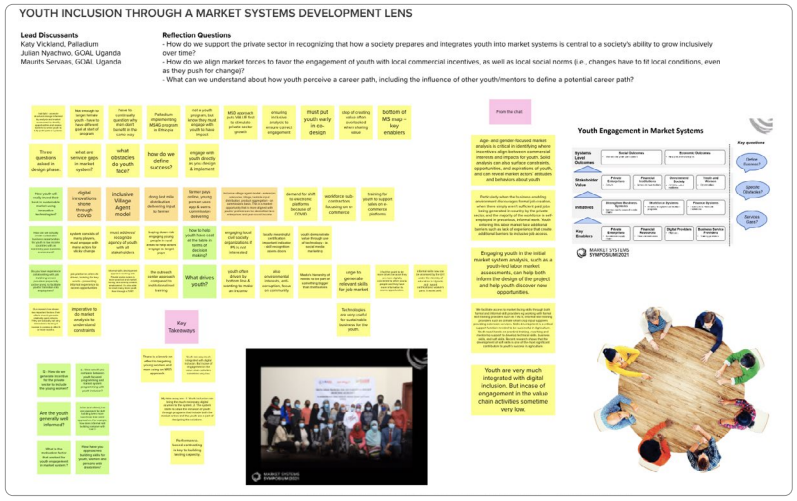
Youth Inclusion through a Market Systems Development Lens

Lead discussants:

- Katy Vickland, Director, Youth and Workforce, Palladium
- Maurits Servaas, Deputy Program Director, GOAL Uganda
- Nyachwo Julian, Deputy Programme Director Business Partnerships, GOAL Uganda

Reflective questions:

- How do we support the private sector in recognizing that how a society prepares and integrates youth into market systems is central to a society's ability to grow inclusively over time?
- How do we align market forces to favor the engagement of youth with local commercial incentives, as well as local social norms (i.e., changes have to fit local conditions, even as they push for change)?
- What can we understand about how youth perceive a career path, including the influence of other youth/mentors to define a potential career path?



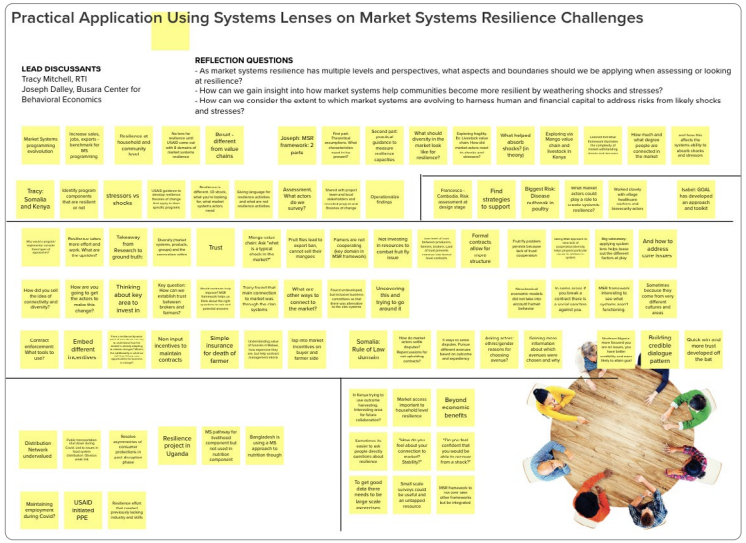
Practical Application Using Systems Lenses on Market Systems Resilience Challenges

Lead Discussants:

- Joseph Dalley, Associate, Busara Center for Behavioral Economics Nigeria
- Tracy Mitchell, Senior Resilience and Food Security Advisor, RTI
- Judy Odongo, Director M&E Collaboration Learning & Adaptation, RTI Kenya

Reflective questions:

- As market systems resilience has multiple levels and perspectives, what aspects and boundaries should we be applying when assessing or looking at resilience?
- How can we gain insight into how market systems help communities become more resilient by weathering shocks and stresses?
- How can we consider the extent to which market systems are evolving to harness human and financial capital to address risks from likely shocks and stresses?



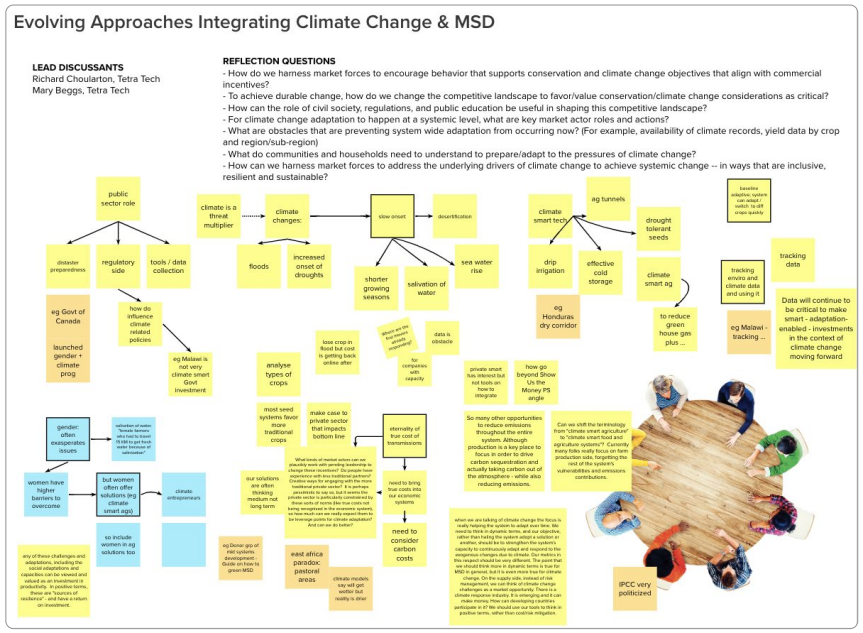
Evolving Approaches Integrating Climate Change & Market Systems Development

Lead Discussants:

- Mary Beggs, Senior Associate, Tetra Tech
- Richard Choularton, Director of Agriculture and Economic Growth, Tetra Tech

Reflective questions:

- How do we harness market forces to encourage behavior that supports conservation and climate change objectives that align with commercial incentives?
- To achieve durable change, how do we change the competitive landscape to favor/value conservation/climate change considerations as critical?
- How can the role of civil society, regulations, and public education be useful in shaping this competitive landscape?



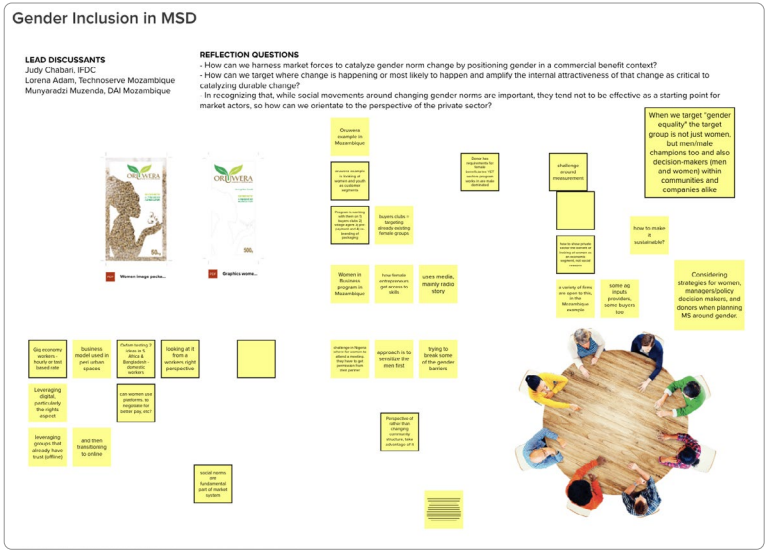
Gender Inclusion in Market Systems Development

Lead Discussants:

- Judith Chabari, Country Team Lead, Kenya, IFDC
- Lorena Adam, Portfolio Manager, Technoserve Mozambique
- Munyaradzi Muzenda, Portfolio Manager, Technoserve Mozambique

Reflective questions:

- How can we harness market forces to catalyze gender norm change by positioning gender in a commercial benefit context?
- How can we target where change is happening, or most likely to happen, and amplify the internal attractiveness of that change as critical to catalyzing durable change?
- In recognizing that while social movements around changing gender norms are important, they tend to not be effective as a starting point for market actors. How can we orientate to the perspective of the private sector?



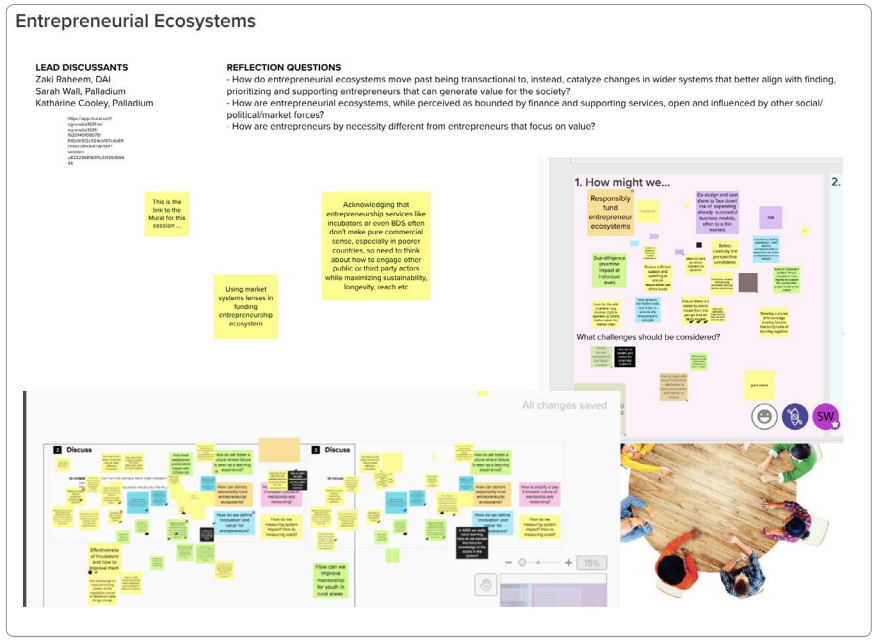
Entrepreneurial Ecosystems

Lead Discussants:

- Zaki Raheem, Senior Manager, DAI
- Sarah Wall, Manager - Economic Growth, Palladium
- Katharine Cooley, Senior Technical Advisor, Palladium

Reflective questions:

- How do entrepreneurial ecosystems move past being transactional to, instead, catalyze changes in wider systems that better align with finding, prioritizing, and supporting entrepreneurs that can generate value for the society?
- How are entrepreneurial ecosystems, while perceived as bounded by finance and supporting services, open and influenced by other social/political/market forces?
- How are entrepreneurs by necessity different from entrepreneurs that focus on value?



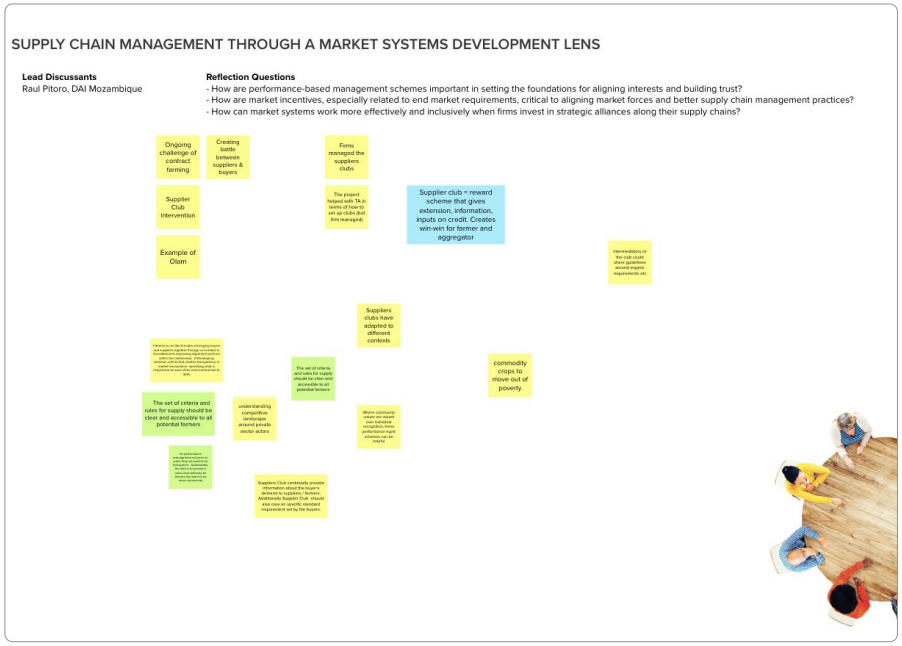
Supply Chain Management Through a Market Systems Development Lens

Lead Discussant:

Raul Pitoro, Chief of Party, DAI Mozambique

Reflective questions:

- How are performance-based management schemes important in setting the foundations for aligning interests and building trust?
- How are market incentives, especially related to end market requirements, critical to aligning market forces and better supply chain management practices?
- How can market systems work more effectively and inclusively when firms invest in strategic alliances along their supply chains?



Food Systems, Nutrition, & Market Systems Development

Lead Discussant:

Alysa Grude, Associate Director, Nutrition and Food Systems, ACDI/VOCA

Reflective questions:

- How are consumer decisions around eating complex, including local cultural/social norms?
- How can consumer behavior change be integrated into marketing/branding strategies that have proven effective in many market systems around the world to modify eating habits?
- How are competition and diversity important considerations to bend social norms and market systems toward improving eating habits?
- What are the trade-offs, if any, of integrating nutrition and food systems considerations into market systems development (MSD) programming? What are some examples from your programming?
- How can incentives for integrating nutrition considerations into the food system for the private sector be realized? (e.g., a food processor to consider processing a new, nutritious food). What role do MSD implementers have in supporting the private sector to act on these incentives?
- How can the distribution and trade of commodities (marketing) affect the local food system and what consumers are able to purchase and consume?
- In your experience, what needs to change in the enabling environment to support local food systems that increase food availability, accessibility, and desirability of nutritious foods?
- How can consumer behavior be considered in consumer marketing/branding strategies, that have proven effective in many market systems around the world, to modify eating habits?

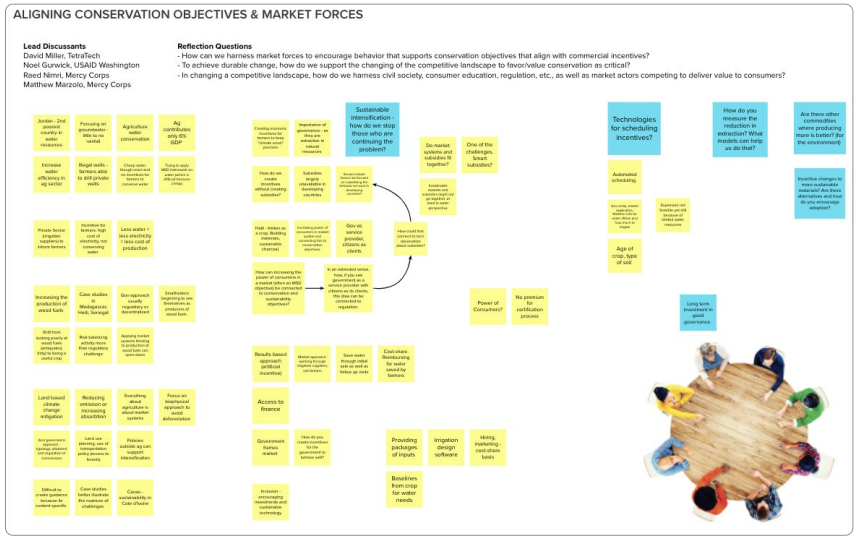
Aligning Market Forces & Conservation Objectives

Lead Discussants:

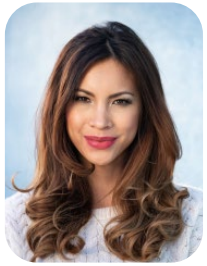
- David Miller, Environment Specialist, Tetra Tech
- Noel Gurwick, Senior Climate & Land Advisor, USAID Washington
- Raed Nimri, Chief of Party, Mercy Corps Jordan
- Matthew Marzolo, Deputy Chief of Party, Mercy Corps Jordan
- Manuel Bueno, Director Innovative Finance, Resonance

Reflective questions:

- How can we harness market forces to encourage behavior that supports conservation objectives that align with commercial incentives?
- To achieve durable change, how do we support the changing of the competitive landscape to favor/value conservation as critical?
- In changing a competitive landscape, how do we harness civil society, consumer education, regulation, etc., as well as market actors competing to deliver value to consumers?



The Market Systems Symposium provided a great experience to learn, exchange and share knowledge about how to engage the private sector, especially the entrepreneurial ecosystem, including startups, investors and corporations.



Lizan Kuster
Associate Director
Entrepreneurship & Innovation
Habitat for Humanity, Terwilliger Center for Innovation in Shelter

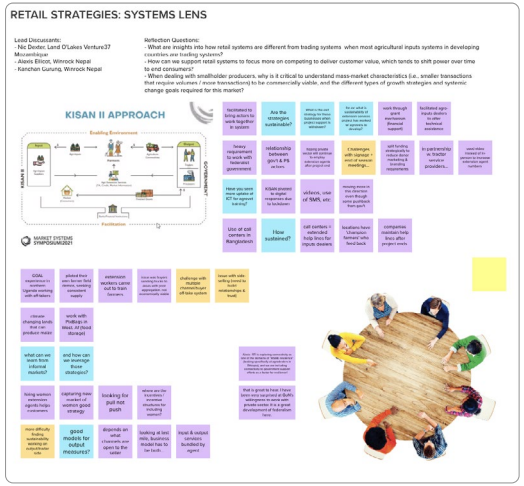
Retail Strategies: Systems Lens

Lead Discussants:

- Nic Dexter, Chief of Party, Land O'Lakes Venture37
- Lorena Adam, Portfolio Manager, Technoserve Mozambique
- Alexis Ellicott, Chief of Party, Winrock Nepal
- Kanchan Gurung, Business and Market Systems Director, Winrock Nepal

Reflective questions:

- What are insights into how retail systems are different from trading systems when most agricultural inputs systems in developing countries are trading systems?
- How can we support retail systems to focus more on competing to deliver customer value, which tends to shift power over time to end consumers?
- When dealing with smallholder producers, why is it critical to understand mass-market characteristics (i.e., smaller transactions that require volumes/more transactions) to be commercially viable, and the different types of growth strategies and systemic change goals required for this market?



Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning

Lead Discussants:

- George Mugweru, Specialist, Housing Finance Systems, Habitat for Humanity International Kenya
- Amanda Woomer, Global MEAL Director, Habitat for Humanity International
- Judy Geyer, Senior Associate, Abt Associates
- Liz Venable, Economics and Evaluation Adviser, Palladium Malawi
- Nate Peterson, Vice President of Partnerships, Busara Center for Behavioral Economics Kenya

Reflective questions:

- How can we distinguish between improving/learning and proving/accountability aspects of monitoring, evaluation, and learning?
- What are insights into the political economy around accountability to ensure practitioners can effectively balance requirements?
- As practitioners embrace complexity, how can we incorporate new and different methods that can gain insights from the dynamics, but might not provide certainty?
- On measuring systems impact:
  - How do we measure the resilience of market systems? How do we value risk reduction?
  - How do we capture the full range of impact that market systems development can have, particularly in areas such as household welfare, environment, and gender and social inclusion?
- On designing monitoring and evaluation systems that meet multiple needs:
  - How do we design monitoring, evaluation, and reporting systems to support learning and reflect adaptive management, while also supporting accountability?
  - How do we ensure that monitoring and evaluation approaches meet the needs of the full range of stakeholders in market systems projects, including private sector partners?

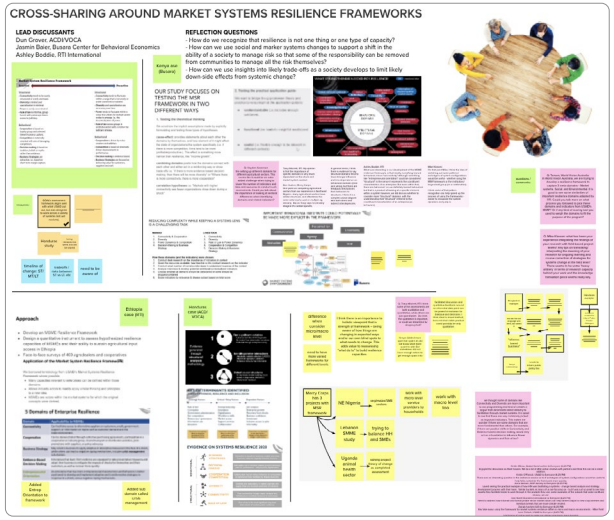
Cross-Sharing around Market Systems Resilience Frameworks

Lead Discussants:

- Dun Grover, Director of Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning, ACDI/VOCA
- Jasmin Baier, Associate, Busara Center for Behavioral Economics, Kenya
- Ashley Boddie, Agricultural Development Specialist, RTI International

Reflective questions:

- How do we recognize that resilience is not one thing or one type of capacity?
- How can we use social and market systems changes to support a shift in the ability of a society to manage risk so that some of the responsibility can be removed from communities to manage all the risk themselves?
- How can we use insights into likely trade-offs as a society develops to limit likely down-side effects from systemic change?



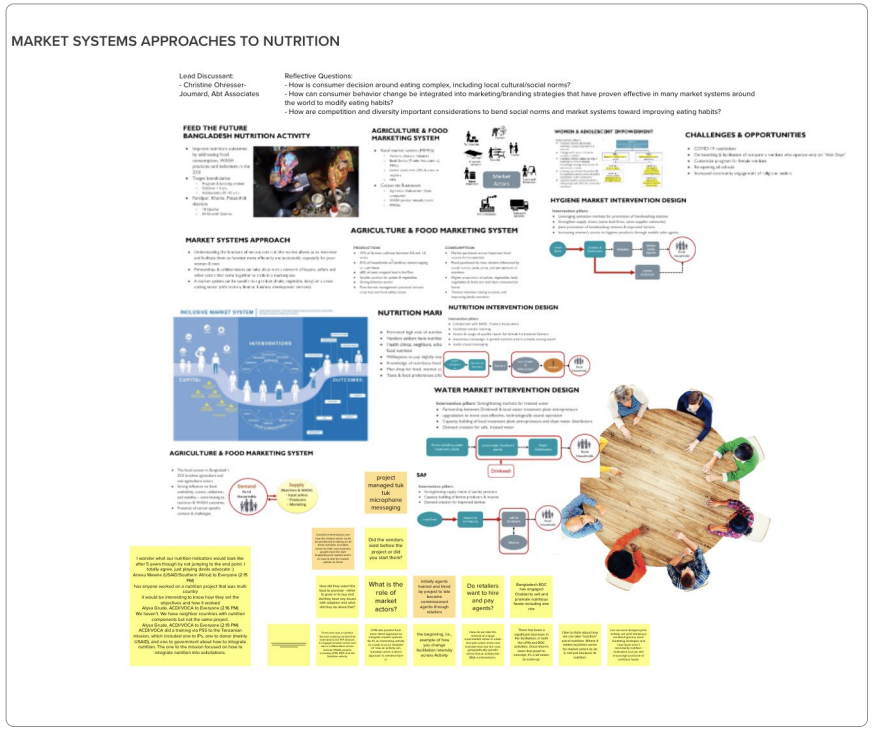
Market Systems Approaches to Nutrition

Lead Discussant:

Christine Ohresser-Joumard, Principal Associate, Abt Associates

Reflective questions:

- How is consumer decision around eating complex, including local cultural/social norms?
- How can consumer behavior change be integrated into marketing/branding strategies that have proven effective in many market systems around the world to modify eating habits?
- How are competition and diversity important considerations to bend social norms and market systems toward improving eating habits?



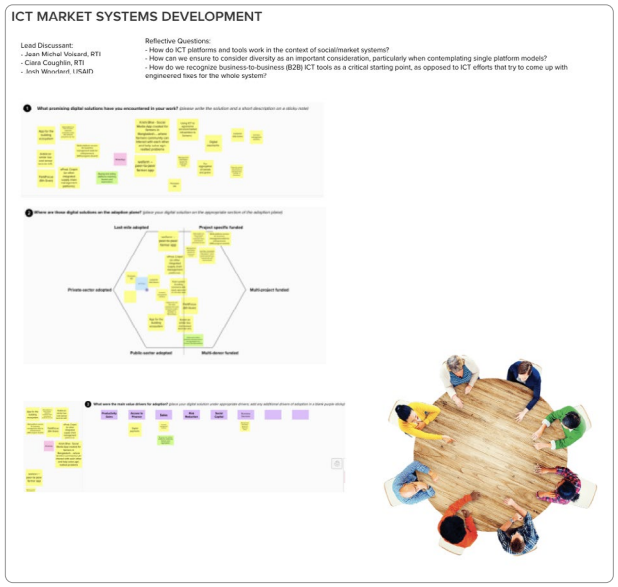
Information Communication Technologies (ICT) Market Systems Development

Lead Discussants:

- Ciara Caughlin, Food Security and Agriculture Specialist, RTI International
- Jean-Michel Voisard, Senior Technical Advisor, RTI International
- Josh Woodard, Regional ICT & Digital Finance Advisor, Asia-Pacific, USAID

Reflective questions:

- How do ICT platforms and tools work in the context of social/market systems?
- How can we ensure to consider diversity as an important consideration, particularly when contemplating single platform models?
- How do we recognize business-to-business (B2B) ICT tools as a critical starting point, as opposed to ICT efforts that try to come up with engineered fixes for the whole system?



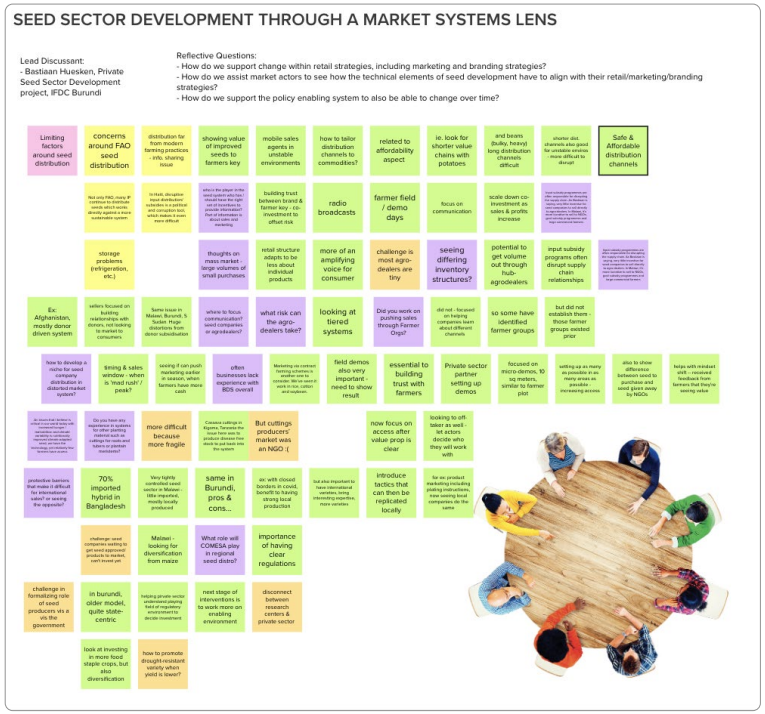
Seed Sector Development Through a Market Systems Lens

Lead Discussant:

Bastiaan Huesken, Project Manager, IFDC Burundi

Reflective questions:

- How do we support change within retail strategies, including marketing and branding strategies?
- How do we assist market actors to see how the technical elements of seed development have to align with their retail/marketing/ branding strategies?
- How do we support the policy enabling system to also be able to change over time?



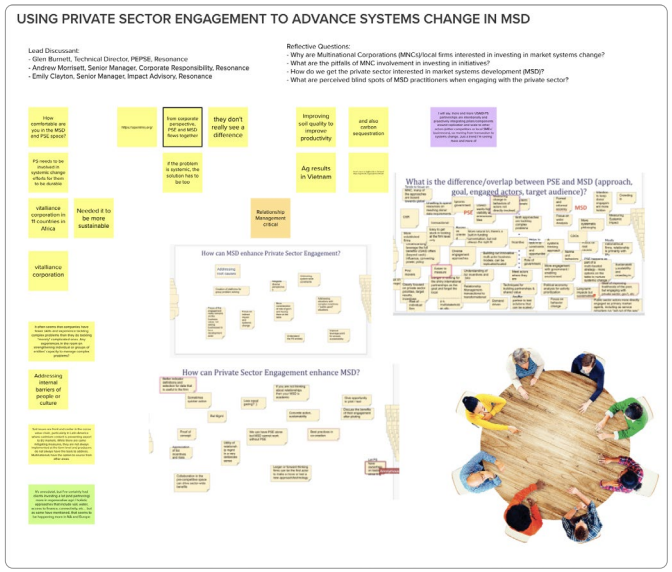
Using Private Sector Engagement to Advance Systems Change in Market Systems Development

Lead Discussants:

- Andrew Morrisett, Senior Manager, Corporate Responsibility, Resonance
- Glen Burnett, Technical Director, Resonance
- Emily Clayton, Senior Manager, Impact Advisory, Resonance

Reflective questions:

- Why are multinational corporations (MNCs)/local firms interested in investing in market systems change?
- What are the pitfalls of MNC involvement in investing in initiatives?
- How do we get the private sector interested in market systems development (MSD)?
- What are perceived blind spots of MSD practitioners when engaging with the private sector?



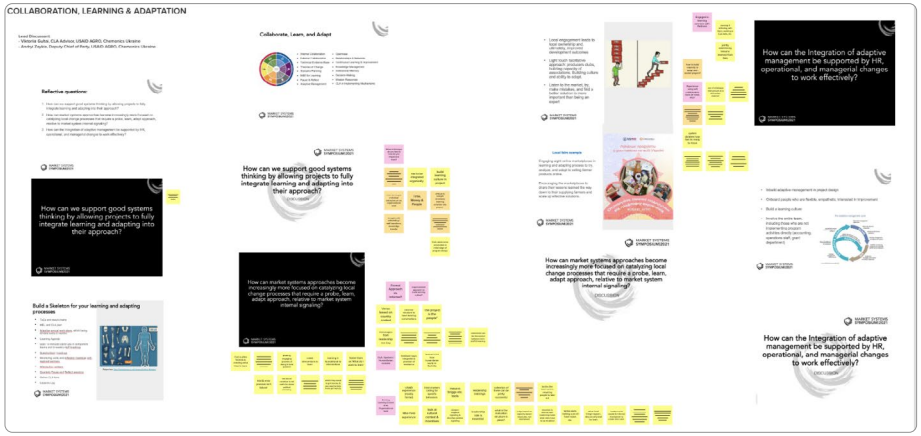
Collaboration, Learning & Adaptation

Lead Discussants:

- Viktoriia Gultai, CLA Adviser, Chemonics Ukraine
- Andriy Zayika, Deputy Chief of Party, Chemonics Ukraine

Reflective questions:

- How can we support good systems thinking by allowing projects to fully integrate learning and adapting into their approach?
- How can market systems approaches become increasingly more focused on catalyzing local change processes that require a probe, learn, and adapt approach, relative to market system internal signaling?
- How can the integration of adaptive management be supported by HR, operational, and managerial changes to work effectively?



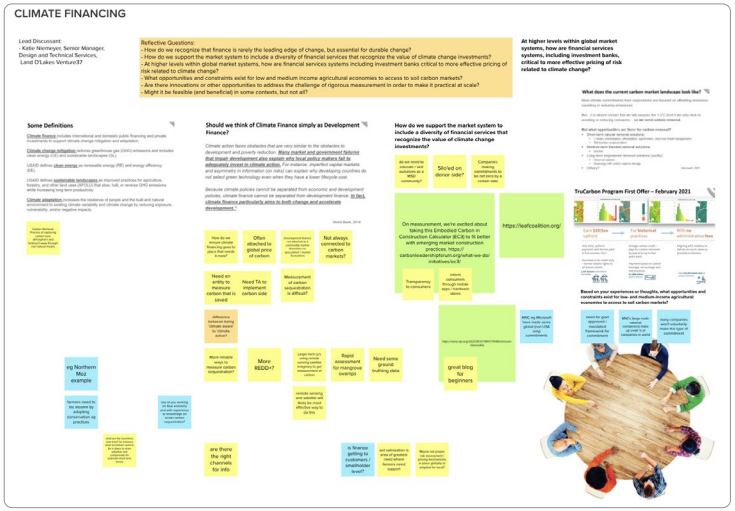
Climate Financing

Lead Discussant:

Katie Niemeyer, Senior Manager, Design and Technical Services, Land O'Lakes Venture37

Reflective questions:

- How do we recognize that finance is rarely the leading edge of change, but essential for durable change?
- How do we support the market system to include a diversity of financial services that recognize the value of climate change investments?
- At higher levels within global market systems, how are financial services systems including investment banks critical to more effective pricing of risk related to climate change?
- What opportunities and constraints exist for low and medium income agricultural economies to access soil carbon markets?
- Are there innovations or other opportunities to address the challenge of rigorous measurement to make it practical at scale?
- Might it be feasible (and beneficial) in some contexts, but not all?



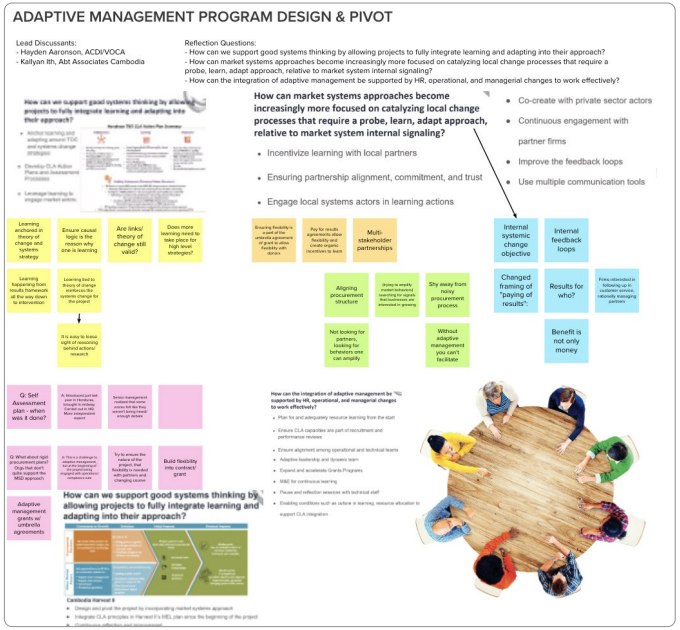
Adaptive Management Program Design & Pivot

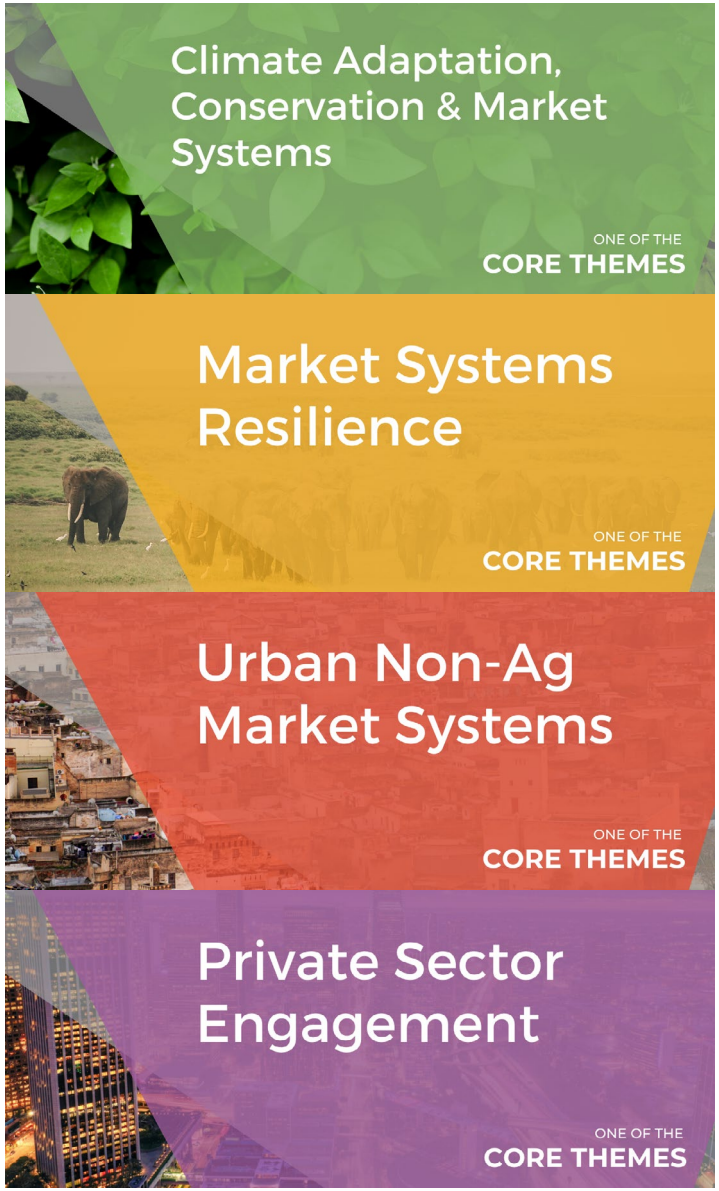
Lead Discussants:

- Hayden Aaronson, Managing Director, Market and Food Systems, ACDI/VOCA
- Kallyan Ith, Deputy Chief of Party, Abt Associates Cambodia

Reflective questions:

- How can we support good systems thinking by allowing projects to fully integrate learning and adapting into their approach?
- How can market systems approaches become increasingly more focused on catalyzing local change processes that require a probe, learn, and adapt approach, relative to market system internal signaling?
- How can the integration of adaptive management be supported by HR, operational, and managerial changes to work effectively?





PARTICIPANT EXPERIENCE

I greatly enjoyed the sessions I attended, the topics were well developed and with a right balance of theory and practicality. The facilitators and moderators were very good in creating an atmosphere that was conducive to sharing good and bad experiences without fear of being criticized and where we could really learn from each other's experience.

Isabelle Bremaud
GOAL's Global Resilience Advisor

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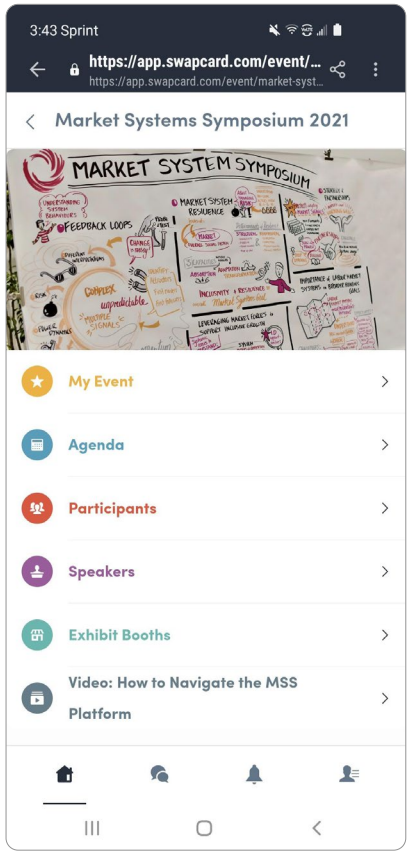
PARTICIPANT EXPERIENCE

MSS2021 provided a rich online experience, allowing knowledgeable market systems practitioners to engage in dialogues and debates, dive into industry issues, and identify collaborative actions.

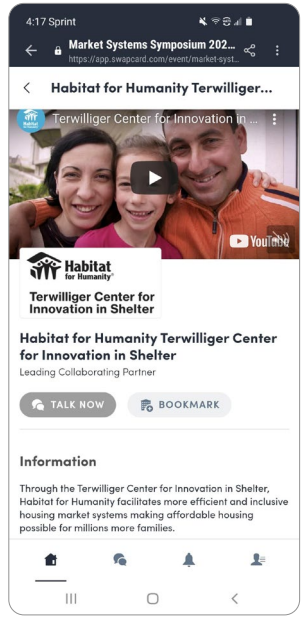
In addition to a jam-packed agenda, the virtual Symposium fostered an environment for interpersonal and interagency communication and coordination through a central online hub, easily accessible via web browser or mobile/tablet app.



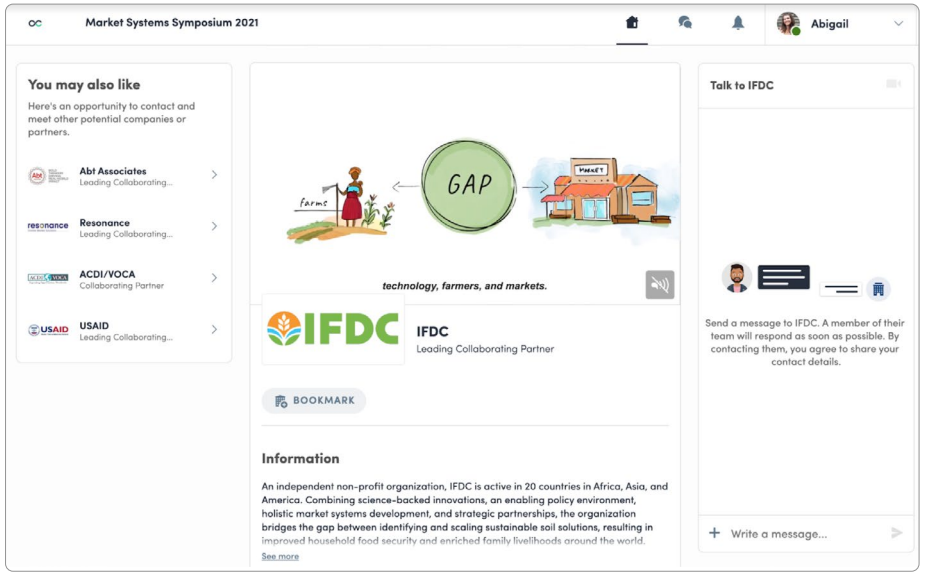
Mobile view of the MSS2021 virtual event platform.

Exhibit Booths

To mirror the Exhibit Booth areas present at our in-person events, leading market systems development (MSD) organizations set up virtual exhibit booths, complete with informational clips, resources, live chats with representatives, summaries of those that were present at the event, and links to documents, projects, websites, and social media accounts. Organizations' staff members operated the virtual booths, answering questions and reaching out to interested participants through the platform.



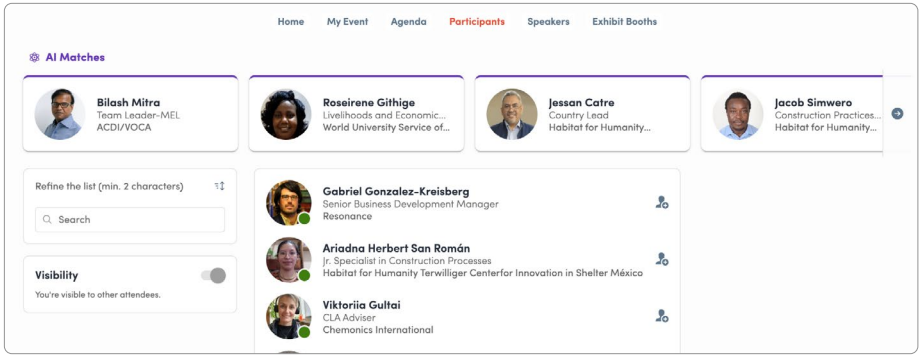
Mobile view of the Exhibit Booths



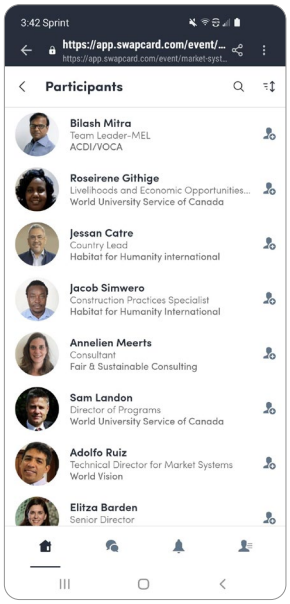
IFDC's Exhibit Booth

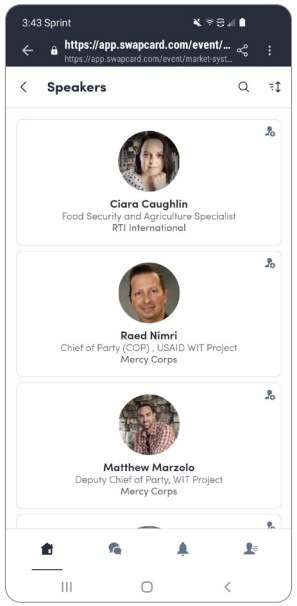
Networking

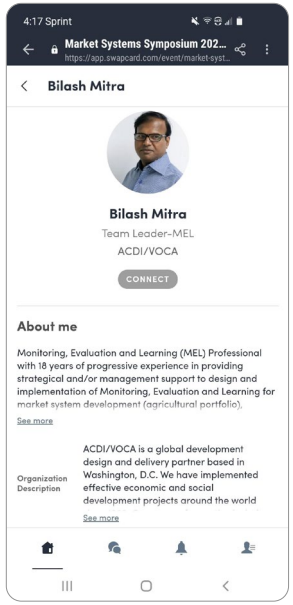
Participants managed their own unique profiles on the event platform, resulting in seamless opportunities for networking. With a quick click, one could learn all about an individual's company, position, projects, and social media accounts. After gathering information for an impactful introduction, participants began conversations by sending a quick connection request.



Participants could search for specific individuals or criteria, or use the suggested personnel matches to begin networking.

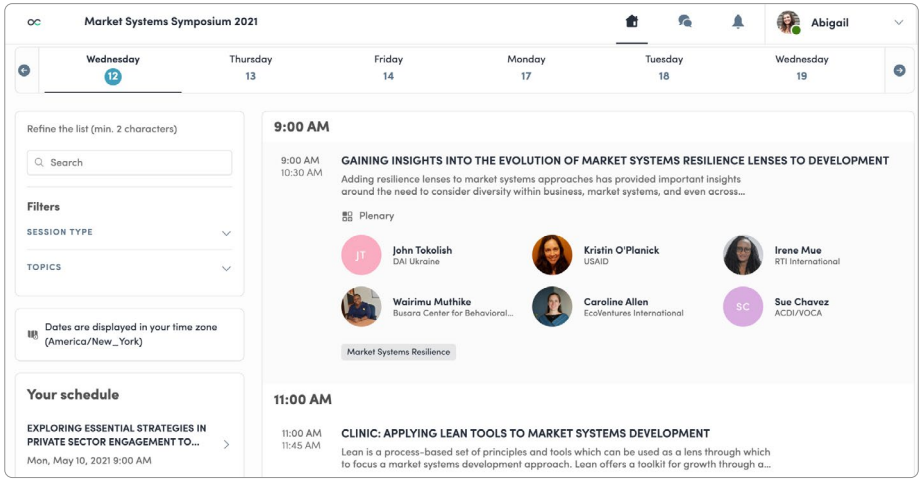


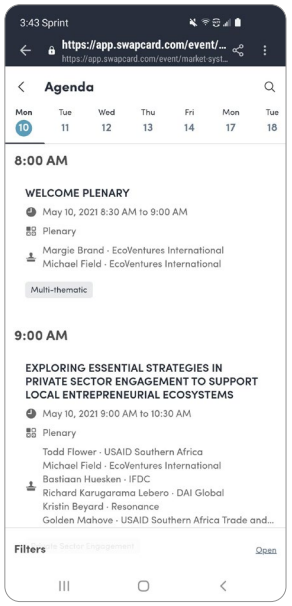




Personalized Agenda

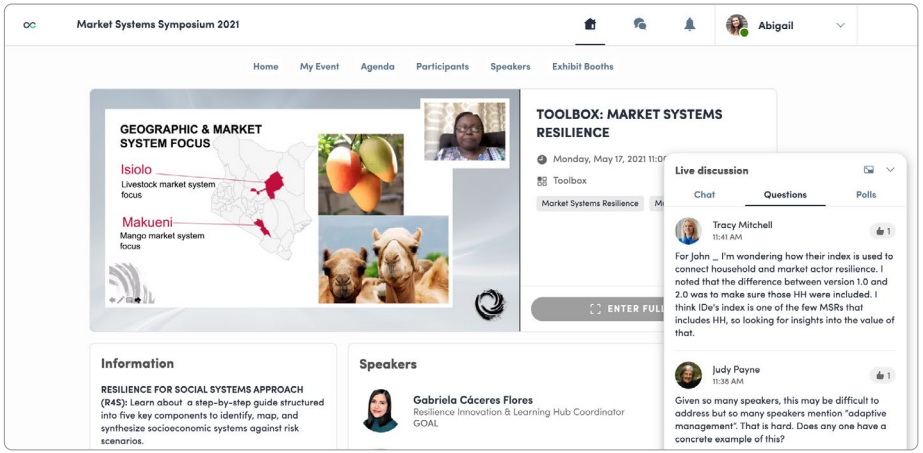
Participants reviewed daily session schedules, automatically translated to their personal time zone. Participants registered for sessions that most interested them, curating a personalized agenda of their own.

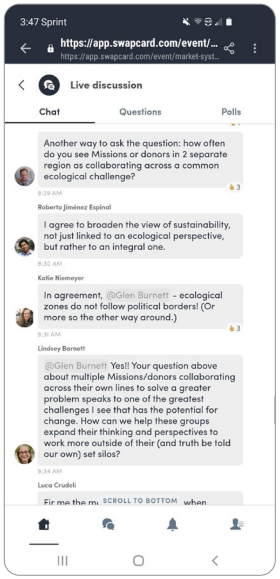


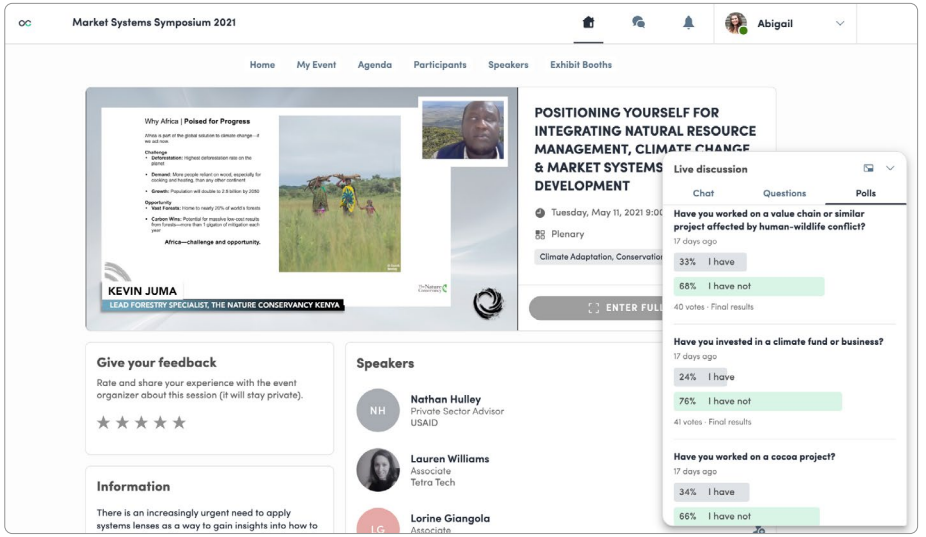


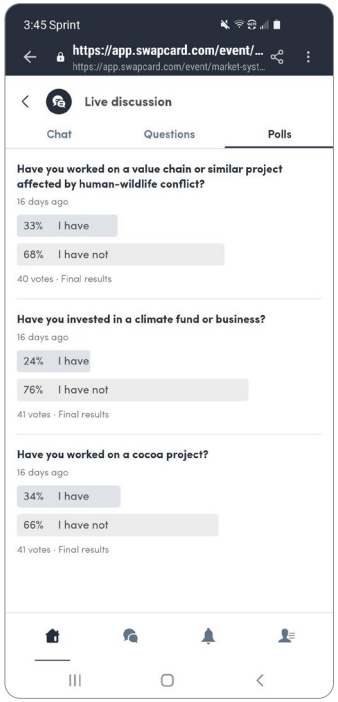
Live Plenary Chat Session

Sessions at MSS2021 would not have been complete without robust interaction! Paired with each live-streamed session was a live chat function that participants took full advantage of, as questions were collected and directed back to panelists in real time. Further, participants used the chat to challenge preconceived ideas and share other relevant information among one another.









Live chats also included a 'Poll' functionality, where audience members were able to share their opinions & perspectives on specific prompts/questions.

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