

Building frontline market facilitators' capacity: the case of the 'Integrating Very Poor Producers into Value Chains Field Guide'

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Utilizing the case of the Integrating Very Poor Producers into Value Chains Field Guide, the article provides its strengths (extensive tools and worksheets, case studies from recovery and development settings) and limitations (very brief overview of market systems, only focuses on the implementation phase of market development, only focuses on integrating the very poor into markets). The knowledge assessment results of two workshops lead the author to question how much is learned in workshop settings. The online survey showed that the most used section of the Field Guide was 'Linking Very Poor Producers with Buyers & Suppliers'. The 70 per cent experiential, 20 per cent from others, and 10 per cent formal ratios regarding learning led the author to recommend more on-the-job learning. Extensive feedback from the users provided lessons on improved tool design and capacity building for tool users. The article concludes with a number of recommendations: frontline workers need written guides; translate guides; include a monitoring and evaluation system; get organizational commitment to build frontline market facilitators' capacity; more research into the different methods of building capacity (workshops; written guides; a monitoring and evaluation system; and online and in person training events are likely the most effective combination).

Keywords: value chain development, public-private partnerships, market development, market systems development, enterprise development

DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS OFTEN PRODUCE materials such as operational guides and training manuals, yet it is unclear if these products are being utilized by their intended audience, especially frontline field staff. The *Integrating Very Poor Producers into Value Chains Field Guide* (Field Guide) developed by World Vision under the FHI 360 FIELD Leader with Associates with USAID funding, is one such operational guide. This Field Guide, accompanying Pocket Guide and introductory video were created as resources for frontline market facilitation staff to better implement market development programmes (Norell and Brand, 2013; www.microlinks.org/library/integrating-very-poor-producers-value-chains-field-guide).

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Often guides are not written for the frontline staff of development organizations. Rather 'Guides are written for researchers and experienced NGO and government staff' (Donovan et al., 2013: 14).

Documented dissemination and training is often included with the development of a document, but how the document is utilized by staff is not as easy to ascertain. Once documents such as this Field Guide are distributed and field staff trained, how can organizations increase the usage of manuals by frontline market facilitation staff to achieve more effective and higher quality programme outcomes? More importantly, how have individuals altered their projects or behaviours as a result of using the Field Guide?

To address these questions, we will examine the case of utilizing the *Integrating Very Poor Producers into Value Chains Field Guide* and examine to what extent practitioner usage is increased as a result of reading the Field Guide and attending a workshop. Through an exploration of several approaches including the consideration of this case, we plan to present lessons learned that will aid the economic development sector in the creation and dissemination of guides and manuals.

Behaviour change is a subject that is well researched within the development field as it relates to global health initiatives. However, there is limited information regarding behaviour change as it relates to work undertaken by market development frontline field staff. This article seeks to examine this broader area of research of market facilitator usage within the specific context of the case example of dissemination of the *Integrating Very Poor Producers into Value Chains Field Guide*.

Several approaches to building frontline market facilitators' capacity

A number of organizations have developed different approaches to building the capacity of market facilitators:

The Growing Organizational Value Chain Excellence (GROOVE) Network. CARE, CHF International (now called Global Communities), Conservation International, and Practical Action established the GROOVE Market Facilitation Mentoring Program (GROOVE network, 2014). This programme seeks to increase staff capacity as market facilitators and value chain programme managers to design, implement, and monitor market-based approaches through a nine-month training programme. The core work of the programme is done through the utilization of a mentor/mentee relationship. Learnings from the GROOVE Market Facilitation Mentoring Program suggest significant benefits to mentees in terms of being able to share their challenges with facilitating market linkages and obtain advice and support as they attempt new approaches. The challenges with the Market Facilitation Mentoring Program included the potential tension between the mentor and the supervisor of the mentee, and the competition between mentoring activities and tasks required to do their jobs.

Engineers without Borders (EWB) Canada developed the *Practitioner's Guide to Market Facilitation: Facilitation as Behavior Change* tool (Engineers without Borders, 2012). This tool was developed to broaden the thinking of field staff and managers

in market facilitation projects. The four-quadrant framework is meant to expand thinking around these barriers and challenge the assumption that capacity building is the right intervention in all cases. It was discovered that much of EWB field work was heavily concentrated on capacity building. The staff adopted a mind-set that the gap they were addressing had to do with a lack of relevant knowledge and skills. The Practitioner's Guide intends to assist project staff to think about systemic change differently from the way they would encourage one particular actor. In an example in the Practitioner's Guide, the systemic change desired is to strengthen the market for quality maize. At the trader level, this could mean adopting quality differentiated pricing. It is important that project staff keep the desired systemic change in mind as a compass to direct these actor-level changes. Through continuous exposure to the model, EWB found that frontline workers were better able to think holistically about business problems and identify issues related to conviction, role modelling, and reinforcing mechanisms, allowing them to be more adaptable facilitators.

Practical Action's *Participatory Market Systems Development* programme (Practical Action, 2014) seeks to incorporate the very poor into value chains. This programme oversees the facilitation of marginalized farmers in low-income countries to gain access to more functional markets, so they are able to sell their products and increase their income. To achieve these ends, this programme includes a number of tools and processes, including:

- *Preliminary market mapping.*
- *Hooks.* Issues that will attract and engage market actors.
- *Market opportunity groups.* Groups that represent and empower target producers.
- *Interest forums.* To convene and engage stakeholders to work together to improve the market system.
- *Participatory market mapping workshops.* To bring together market system actors around joint analysis, relationship, trust-building, and negotiation.
- *Moving from analysis to action.* Concrete actions are agreed upon by market stakeholders to improve the market system.

The Participatory Market Chain Approach (PMCA) is an approach to market development that was developed by the International Potato Center.

The PMCA engages smallholder farmers, market agents and agricultural service providers in a facilitated process that builds trust among these diverse groups and promotes collective action, which in turn leads to innovations that benefit smallholders as well as other chain actors (Horton et al., 2013).

Based on the work of the organizations described above and others, it is clear that success in market development is based on a number of good practice steps to building the capacity of field staff. First, field staff can benefit from formal or informal mentoring experiences where the staff person can share their challenges in facilitating market linkages and attain advice and support as they attempt new approaches. Second, continuous exposure to the way of working helps field workers to think about systemic solutions to business problems and identify issues related to reinforcing mechanisms. Third, to change market systems, market facilitators need

to bring market system actors together to analyse the market system and negotiate actions to improve it. Fourth, adherence to guides often leads to better programme results (Horton et al., 2013: 30).

A case example from the *Integrating Very Poor Producers into Value Chains Field Guide*

World Vision has implemented a number of guides and field-based training initiatives, including the one examined in this case study, the *Integrating Very Poor Producers into Value Chains Field Guide* (Field Guide) (Norell and Brand, 2013) and the accompanying condensed Pocket Guide. The Field Guide has several sections:

- I. Understanding Very Poor Producers
- II. The Market Systems Approach
- III. Linking Very Poor Producers to Buyers & Sellers
- IV. Linking Very Poor Producers to Other Producers

The annexes include six case studies

1. Livelihoods for Very Poor Girls and Young Women: Kenya Value Girls Program – The ‘Girl Effect’ – Cardno Emerging Markets
2. Agricultural Productivity Context: Promoting Agriculture, Governance and the Environment (PAGE) project – World Vision Sierra Leone
3. Food Security Context: Market Linkages with Export Firms – Haiti Multi-Year Assistance Program – World Vision Haiti
4. Food Security Context: Graduation from Food Aid – Productive Safety Net Program Plus – CARE Ethiopia
5. Post-Conflict Context: Working with Producer Groups – ProRENDA Project – World Vision Angola
6. Recovery Context: Working with Producer Groups – Cyclone Livelihoods Recovery project – World Vision Bangladesh

The Field Guide provides accessible information for field staff to use to implement market development programmes. World Vision has held field-based trainings on Field Guide utilization in Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Haiti, Tanzania, Malawi, and Ghana. Training sessions have also been held in the Washington, DC area both within World Vision and with the broader development community, including a one-day training at two of the annual SEEP conferences. The SEEP Network also hosted three webinars on the Field Guide: 1) overview; 2) supplier–producer–buyer market linkages (<http://vimeo.com/60278784>); and 3) producer–producer linkages (<http://vimeo.com/66860108>). Alongside the content presented, webinar participants were encouraged to engage in a chat format through which they had the opportunity to ask questions of other participants and of presenters regarding their experiences and thoughts.

The Field Guide fills a gap in the literature by providing very practical tools for frontline community-level market facilitators. Its strengths include the following:

- The 24 tools and worksheets provide the frontline market facilitator with two-page, fill-in-the-blank worksheets that guide their facilitation of improved commercial relationships between producers and input suppliers and output market buyers.
- The six case studies provide practical field examples of how to integrate very poor producers into markets in recovery and development settings.

The limitations of the Field Guide include:

- only a very brief section on market systems;
- a focus only on the implementation phase of market development;
- a focus on integrating very poor producers into markets rather than trying to work with the entire market system.

Methodology

In 2013, the Economic Development Senior Technical Advisor at World Vision Inc. in Washington, DC, Dan Norell, co-facilitated economic development workshops in Ghana for West Africa and Malawi for Southern Africa. These workshops, similar to previous workshops conducted in Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Tanzania, and Haiti, were positioned to provide field workers with an overview of value chain approaches and tools by training in the *Integrating Very Poor Producers into Value Chains Field Guide*. The workshop sessions included understanding the context of very poor producers; linking very poor producers to buyers and suppliers by building trust and facilitating win-win relationships; factors impacting producer-to-producer linkages including the lack of participation in value chains by women, the lack of confidence and trust between producers and buyers/suppliers, and the limited ability of the very poor to take on risk.

Both regional workshops lasted three days and were attended by 110 field practitioners, including government officials, representatives of national and international NGOs, and representatives of the private sector involved in public-private partnerships.

Workshop facilitators gave pre- and post-tests to workshop participants to assess their market development knowledge on the first and last days of the workshop. The first knowledge assessment consisted of 20 questions distributed to NGO, government, and private sector workshop participants at the first day of the West Africa Regional Workshop held in Accra, Ghana. The same assessment was distributed at the end of the three-day workshop, and the results were compiled, with each participant's responses analysed. If a participant responded to one assessment, but not the other, their responses were not included in the final analysis. The length of time it took workshop participants to complete the assessment (40 minutes) was deemed too long for the workshop context. The assessment was reduced to 11 questions (20 minutes) for the Southern Africa Regional Workshop held in Malawi.

Table 1 Knowledge assessment results

West Africa Regional Workshop in Ghana	
Average pre-test scores	11.4 correct /20 questions
Average post-test scores	12.3 correct /20 questions
Total average score improvement after workshop	7.9%
Southern Africa Regional Workshop in Malawi	
Average pre-test scores	7.37 correct /11 questions
Average post-test scores	8.12 correct /11 questions
Total average score improvement after workshop	10.2%

Discussion of the results

The results suggest that both West Africa and Southern Africa workshop participants saw an increase in average test scores after the workshop. Southern Africa Regional workshop participants experienced higher improvement scores of 10.2 per cent compared with 7.9 per cent in West Africa (see Table 1). Although both workshop scores improved, the percentage increment is relatively low. This may have been a result of methodological challenges. First, although there was a total of 110 participants at the West and Southern Africa Regional workshops, only 62 participants (56 per cent) engaged in both the pre- and post-knowledge assessment. Some participants only participated in one or the other test because of coming in late to the workshop or leaving the workshop early. Also, there were some tests that were incomplete and could not be accurately scored. The results may have been different if more participants took both assessments.

Second, the pre-test results may have been influenced, as World Vision staff received two days of training on value chain development prior to taking the pre-test. This may have given World Vision practitioners a higher pre-test score, explaining the relatively low improvement scores between the pre-test and the post-test.

Third, West Africa Regional workshop participants had a longer knowledge assessment test, possibly adversely affecting participants' performance. There may also have been professional cultural barriers in both workshops that come into play with test-taking. Most workshops do not administer pre- and post-tests to adult NGO, government, private sector, and farmer workshop participants. Although verbal translations of the pre- and post-tests were given to workshop participants, the questionnaire was in English. Therefore, non-English speakers, particularly the French speakers in the West Africa workshop, may have struggled with the language barrier.

In a careful analysis of the test results of each workshop participant who had a worse score from the pre-test to post-test, several patterns emerged. For persons with prior knowledge in value chain development, it seemed that they scored better with the morning pre-test than the late Friday afternoon post-test. Since this was the last

activity at the workshop on Friday afternoon, many workshop participants may have hurried through the written test to be able to begin their travel home, get to their emails, or to see their families.

It is important to consider whether or not the workshops were effective, although the workshop evaluations from the participants indicated a high level of appreciation. The West Africa Regional Workshop evaluations had an average score of 4 out of 5. The Southern Africa Regional Workshop participants gave the workshop for content a score of 4.67, for presenters 4.6, and relevance 4.74 out of 5. The follow-up survey described below indicates a lot of usage of the Field Guide. Given the relatively minor increases in the pre- and post-test scores, there are questions about the effectiveness of workshops in general to impart new knowledge, build the capacity of frontline field staff, and improve the performance of market development programmes.

Knowledge assessment analysis

Through the pre-test and post-test knowledge assessment, gaps in the current knowledge of workshop participants may be detected. It is important to address such gaps in order to maximize the utilization of operational guides. Table 2 gives an example of one such gap in knowledge.

The results of the knowledge assessment imply that there is a common gap among frontline staff. Having identified the gap through the assessment, it is essential to go back and correct any aspects of misinformation, as these field staff will be the ones passing on this information to their colleagues.

The *Integrating Very Poor Producers into Value Chains Field Guide* dedicates a section (page 76) to the importance of increasing a family's ability to take on risk; one such way is through the diversification of income. The importance of the diversification of income sources was also discussed at the USAID Microenterprise and Private Enterprise Promotion (MPEP) Seminar *What Will It Take to Transform African Agriculture?* (USAID, 2013), where it was emphasized by Professor Thom Jayne of Michigan State University that, 'Small farmers need to increase their sources of income to increase income and reduce risks'. Market facilitators need to encourage profitable on- and off-farm economic activities. It is important that market development programme managers reinforce with the frontline market facilitators the need for targeted households to diversify sources of income.

Table 2 Gap in knowledge

<i>Knowledge assessment question</i>	<i>Number of participants answered incorrectly</i>	<i>Is this addressed in the Field Guide?</i>
True/False: Taking on multiple sources of low-income activities increases a producer's or household's risk compared to seeking higher income activity Answer: False	65%	Section IV: Linking very poor producers to other producers: <i>What can I do to assist very poor producers to be comfortable taking on more risk?</i> (p. 73)

Online user survey analysis

Approximately two months after each workshop, an online follow-up survey was sent to workshop participants on their usage and understanding of the Field Guide. The survey questions asked whether or not workshop participants had used the Field Guide, had shared it with other colleagues, and what parts of the Field Guide they used the most. Out of 110 workshop participants, 66 participants, or 60 per cent, completed the online user survey sent after the workshop. Farmers who attended the workshop but did not have access to the internet were contacted via phone. This feedback is important to understand the effectiveness of an organization's operational guides. As previously mentioned, formal training workshops do not necessarily lead to behaviour changes, thus it is vital to understand whether participants change their behaviour after a workshop. Through the survey responses, it became clear that most participants felt they gained positively from the workshops. The utilization survey response was that 63 per cent of participants referred back to the content of the Field Guide after the workshop, while 81 per cent of participants shared the Field Guide with their colleagues. Participants mentioned that they used the worksheets and case studies in the Field Guide to facilitate workshops for frontline market facilitators. Twenty-four per cent of participants stated that they use the Field Guide at least once a month, while other participants who had not yet used the Field Guide mentioned that they were intending to incorporate it into the following quarter.

Table 3 shows the percentage of workshop participants who had used the Field Guide.

Table 3 Field Guide usage frequency

<i>I use the Field Guide</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Once a month	24
I have not used it yet	18
Once a week	12
Every day	8
Other	37

Some of the quotations from those who listed 'other' stated:

It will be used in the next workshop.

I have been using the Field Guide when we have needed any information related to value chain approach.

I have not directly used it in the field, but knowledge of it is essential for project coordination.

Although 69 per cent of participants were representatives of international NGOs, farmers who were leaders in their producer groups were invited to the workshops as

Subject Matter Experts. The farmers also had positive feedback on the Field Guide and the workshop. A Malawian farmer who attended the workshop said:

After the workshop, I revised the key areas of interest, especially value [chain] approach. It gave me an understanding on how the different actors are coordinated in the chain and how farmers can benefit; I also learned the importance of being in groups. I went back to brief my committee members. This gave us the urge to re-organize our team according to the different value chains. We have also taken steps to encourage the very poor to join savings groups to access loans to finance the value chains. As a group we have endorsed decisions that do not discriminate [against] the very poor. For example, we buy inputs in bulk as a group.

Another Malawian farmer who attended the workshop also discussed his most important learnings: '[I learnt] about the value chain approach and the importance of understanding different situations of producers in order to find tailor-made solutions for their challenges'.

Table 4 concerns those who had not used the Field Guide and lists some of the reasons workshop respondents gave for not using the Field Guide.

Table 4 Reasons for not using the Field Guide

<i>If you have not used the Field Guide, what are the reasons for not using it?</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
It would take some planning to use and integrate. I have not had the time to do so	20
My role would be to show or encourage others to use it which I have not yet had the time or opportunity to do	21
It is not directly relevant to my job activities and so I have not had the opportunity to use it	7
I have not had time to read it, look at it, or use it	3
The English is too difficult	3
Other	38

Some of the quotations from the 38 per cent who stated 'other' included:

Would like a translation to Market Facilitator languages

I am developing my functional area strategy within which this will be used

I have integrated it into next year's budget when we will start implementing it

A Ghana workshop participant stated, '... knowledge of value chains is essential for my role'. This concept was also apparent through another participant in Ghana as she stated, 'Parts were used to enrich my presentations on value chain workshops'.

The respondents were also asked what the most used section of the Field Guide was (see Figure 1).

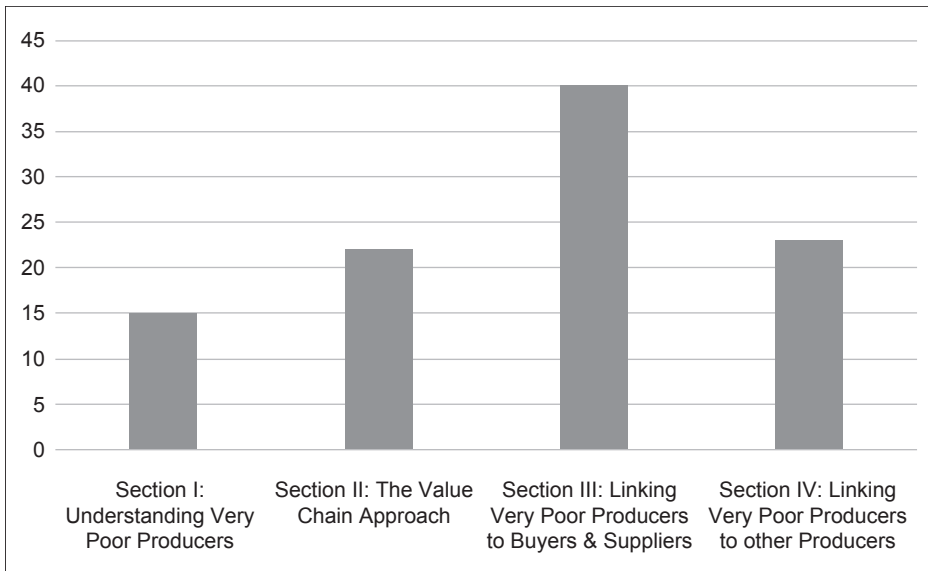


Figure 1 Most used sections of the Field Guide

Discussion of results

Although there was a great deal of positive feedback from the online user survey, there were also some recommendations that organizations should take into account when developing and rolling out operational guides such as the *Integrating Very Poor Producers into Value Chains Field Guide*. Twenty-seven per cent of participants stated that they would not require any further support to use the Field Guide, and 53 per cent of participants suggested that further assistance in terms of extra support from a mentor, support meetings, webinars, or ongoing workshops would help them use the Field Guide more effectively. Thus, organizations may need to include mentoring, additional webinars, and ongoing workshops so that field staff may better understand operational guides such as the Field Guide.

There has also been additional dissemination of the Field Guide. Since the Field Guide was posted on the USAID Microlinks website in October 2012, it has been:

- accessed 2,600 times ...
- by 2,106 unique users ...
- in more than 50 countries (top 10: US, India, Ethiopia, Kenya, Bangladesh, Canada, UK, Philippines, Vietnam, Pakistan);
- accessed by users spending an average of more than 5 minutes on the landing page, which means it is likely they watched the video and downloaded the PDF of the Field Guide (the site average is only 2 minutes).

According to a knowledge management specialist, the Field Guide is the most accessed library resource on Microlinks. Also, over 800 physical copies of the Field Guide have been distributed at workshops and other venues.

The challenge of workshop learning is that there is a limited amount of knowledge that is retained for on-the-job usage. The 70:20:10 model asserts that employees acquire their knowledge in three ways (see Figure 2):

- 70 per cent acquired informally: on the job including stimulation such as stretch projects, delegation, and job rotation
- 20 per cent acquired from others: through mentoring, coaching, daily contact with managers and colleagues, and communities of practice
- 10 per cent acquired through formal learning: courses, training, and workshops

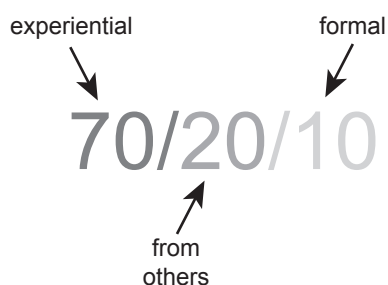


Figure 2 How people acquire learning

Source: Cross, 2012

While the Field Guide provides 22 tools and worksheets for market facilitators from the Women's Participation Improvement Tool to the Supplier–Producer–Buyer Trust Building Tool, organizations utilizing written operational guides need to foster the 70 per cent experiential learning.

Organizations can benefit from operational guides such as the Field Guide through on-the-job learning by:

- (a) emphasizing the high-value learning activities **within employees' existing work**,
- (b) **Boosting the relevance of what employees learn** from their activities;
- (c) Equipping employees with **simple, scalable tools and support** that enable them to **move from action to reflection to application** (Corporate Executive Board, 2008).

Respondents reported that Section III: Linking Very Poor Producers to Buyers & Suppliers was the most used section (40 per cent). This likely reflects the need for market facilitators to use the tools in this section to work to build win–win relationships between producers and the input suppliers and the output market buyers.

Regarding sharing the Field Guide with others, survey respondents stated that they had used the Field Guide for:

1. Capacity building (training staff, savers in savings groups, government staff)
2. Project design (concept papers, multiyear planning)
 - project planning (revise detailed implementation plans)
3. Project implementation
 - building stronger supplier–producer and producer–buyer market linkages
 - presented the Field Guide ideas on supplier–producer–buyer linkages to companies
 - arranged for a buyer for female Shea butter producers
 - linked farmer group to a seed company
 - used concepts to guide ‘project staff who thought the best way to support poor producers was to eliminate the “middle men” in all scenarios’
 - building stronger producer-to-producer relationships
 - meetings with fish producers and cassava producers, training lead farmers on how best to manage producer-to-producer relationships

In terms of feedback from the respondents on portions of the Field Guide and Pocket Guide that were too difficult to understand, they stated: ‘the concept of value chain development should be more clearly defined in the Field Guide rather than being referred to another source’.

Regarding recommended changes to the Field Guide that would make it more useful or easier to use, the respondents suggested:

- *Case examples.* ‘More success stories and practical examples [from] around the globe’; ‘The examples should include other products other than agriculture, e.g. handicraft, domestic products’
- *Project design.* Logframes and budgets
- *Financial services.* ‘Need a clear link between value chain and savings’
- *Value chain analysis.* ‘Issues of Value Chain Selection and Mapping do not come out clearly in the Guide. If this could be incorporated in the guide [it] could be rich in content’
- *Conceptual model(s).* ‘Add more flesh to the concept of value chain (in depth on value chain) so that it can be especially easier for the village agents to articulate and facilitate’
- *Translations.* ‘Translated into our local languages so that it can be easily used by the local marketing facilitators who mostly use the local language’
- *More visual.* ‘DVD should be attached to the Field Guide’.

Lessons on improved tool design and capacity building for tool users

1. *In terms of capacity building, tools need to be easy to use and easy to teach others.* It was positive that trainees of a three-day course were able, in turn, to train NGO staff, government staff, and beneficiaries. This shows that the training was effective enough to be able to be shared with others.
2. *With project design tools need to be able to contribute to a clear description at the activity level of a logframe.* While the Field Guide was clearly designed for the implementation phase of the project cycle, workshop participants were able to

use it in the planning and design phase as well. To further build the capacity of tool users with project design, development organizations need to have feedback from the monitoring and evaluation components of a project to continually improve project design.

3. *Regarding building stronger supplier–producer and producer–buyer market linkages, tool users need clear guidance on how to build trust in commercial relationships where there has often been mistrust in the past.* It was quite gratifying to learn that the Supplier–Producer–Buyer section of the Field Guide was the most used section (40 per cent). The Field Guide and training on the Field Guide empowered users to present the possibilities of improved market linkages with farmers to companies, facilitate market linkages, arrange for buyers, help producers to have a point person for marketing, and provide training on marketing.

Producer–buyer relationships have been fraught with mistrust. The farmers often believe that the buyers use different size cans to take advantage of the farmer (Norell and Brand, 2013: 38). Any market development set of tools needs to ensure improved checks and balances between farmers and buyers.

4. *Regarding technical terminology, any suite of tools needs to use plain language that is understandable to NGO workers, government extension agents, buyers, suppliers, and, most of all, producers.* The co-authors wrote the Field Guide with frontline, community-based NGO workers as the primary users. Still there were users who wanted clearer language and simpler terminology.
5. *Tools need to be translated into local languages for frontline staff to use.* While the entire Field Guide is in English, the shorter Pocket Guide has also been translated into Spanish, French, and Portuguese.
6. *Tools need to use a lot of case studies to illustrate the point the author is trying to make.* The Field Guide has six case studies in the annexes. Based on the feedback, it seems that it would have been helpful to have more sections of the case studies inserted throughout the main body of the Field Guide to better illustrate the programme guidance in each section.
7. *Any comprehensive market development suite of tools should have financial services included.* The content of the Field Guide was focused on the implementation phase and did not include linkage to financial services. In earlier drafts of the Field Guide there were sections on financial services, but the authors felt that they could not do justice to linkage to financial services and still keep the Field Guide to a manageable length.
8. *Any comprehensive market development guide should include value chain selection and mapping.* In order to focus on the implementation phase of the project cycle, the authors of the Field Guide did not include value chain selection and mapping. However, some of the survey respondents clearly wanted value chain selection and mapping to be part of the Field Guide.
9. *Any comprehensive market development guide needs to include a section on conceptual models.* Since the primary audience was to be frontline workers, the authors of the Field Guide decided to have only a very brief section on the market system approach.

The authors felt that Field Guide users could get a much more thorough grounding in the conceptual approach from either their own organization or from market development guides that included more of a conceptual framework and the entire project cycle. The importance of a conceptual model and development approach is outlined in 'Lapses, infidelities and creative adaptations: Lessons from evaluation of a participatory market development approach in the Andes' (Horton et al., 2013). The authors stress the importance of following a market development model.

10. In the more visual world of today, any suite of tools should be accompanied with visual resources.
11. A suite of tools should also have visuals that illustrate the concepts. The Field Guide could have included one-page posters that could be photocopied and used for training or posters on a wall. *Tool designers need to develop feedback loops to get feedback from frontline staff.*

In the development of the Field Guide, the developers were careful to get feedback from staff on the concepts, tools, and worksheets that would be most relevant. Tool designers may also want to consider online platforms for feedback, but realizing that frontline market facilitators do have limitations of connectivity.

Recommendations on the dissemination of guides

Based on the experience of the dissemination of the Field Guide, the following recommendations are made:

1. *Provide written operational guides that can be shared with frontline workers.* With the utilization surveys, the workshop participants report a fairly high utilization rate of 63 per cent and sharing rate of 81 per cent. This is a positive development in the dissemination of the Field Guide. With 2,106 unique users from more than 50 countries, the Field Guide has been made available throughout the global development community.
Operational guides need to be user friendly for frontline staff who have limited time, internet connectivity, and sometimes only a few hours of electricity in a work day. They need to be able to photocopy one or two pages to take to a meeting with an input supplier, output market buyer, or producer group leadership.
2. *Provide written translated operational guides in major languages and, where feasible, local languages.* While the accompanying Pocket Guide is available in English, Spanish, French, and Portuguese, the full Field Guide is currently only available in English. The lack of translations for the Field Guide limits the effectiveness of knowledge transfer to frontline market facilitators. In the utilization survey, respondents pointed out the limitation of a document only in English.
3. *Any capacity-building effort such as the development of manuals and implementing workshops needs to be accompanied by measurement of individual and programme performance through a monitoring and evaluation system.* Another limitation of the capacity-building efforts associated with the dissemination of the Field Guide

is that there was no measure of the individual or programme performance levels. A well-designed and implemented monitoring and evaluation system holds staff accountable for improving their individual capacity and also programmatic results.

Any learning system (written manual, workshop, online learning) needs to be accompanied by the organizational commitment to understand and measure improved capacity and performance of frontline market facilitators.

As one experienced manager of a development organization stated, 'The only time I changed my behaviour and adapted new techniques was because the donor or my manager required it' (Practitioner interview, May 2013).

4. *Given the importance of on-the-job learning, any operational guide will optimally be included as part of an online learning programme that also includes face-to-face meetings.* Online learning programmes provide a new way for operational guides, such as the Field Guide, to be utilized by frontline staff. World Vision is implementing an online learning programme for frontline market facilitators that includes the Field Guide as part of the resource materials. The online course allows participants to learn about market development principles and apply them to their frontline market facilitation job with the support of their peers and mentors from other market facilitation projects around the world.
5. *More research is needed on how to better build the skills of market facilitators, comparing the relative effectiveness of webinars, regional workshops, technical training events, distribution of hard copies of operational guides, and incorporating the operational guide within the market development model of the development organization.* With this case example of the Field Guide, the promoters used a combination of internet downloads, SEEP Network webinars, regional workshops, technical training events at the SEEP Annual Conference, physical distribution, and incorporation of the operational guide within a market development project model. As mentioned above, World Vision intends to roll out an online certification series of modules for frontline market facilitators.
6. *Workshops combined with a written operational guide, a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation system, and online and/or in-person training series are likely to be most effective for building organizational commitment to and skills in a market development approach.* Workshops can build enthusiasm within and across organizations for effective market development. A written operational guide, such as the Field Guide, provides just-in-time information for frontline market facilitators to successfully conduct a meeting with suppliers and producers or buyers and producers. The written guide should also be complemented with DVDs, posters, and videos. Online and/or in-person training series are likely to be most effective for building the capacity of frontline market facilitators.

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