



MARKETLINKS

# WHY DO SOCIAL CONNECTIONS MATTER FOR RESILIENCE AND RECOVERY? WEBINAR

CHAT TRANSCRIPT

SEPTEMBER 5, 2019

## PRESENTERS

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## MODERATOR

Laura Meissner, Economic Recovery and Markets Advisor, USAID's Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA)

Charlin Caster (Marketlinks): Hi and welcome to the webinar!

serkalem: Hi thank you

Charlin Caster (Marketlinks): Thanks for completing the polls! Where are you joining from?

serkalem: I am from Ethiopia, working for CARE Ethiopia

Charlin Caster (Marketlinks): Great to have you

Serkalem: I am cash and livelihood advisor

serkalem: thank you

Charlin Caster (Marketlinks): That sounds like interesting work!

serkalem: yes it is

serkalem: How long the webinar will take

Charlin Caster (Marketlinks): We'll get started in about 30 minutes, and it will run for 90 minutes!

serkalem: okay

Vaidehi Krishnan: Hi Serkalem - thanks for joining us today!

serkalem: Thank you Vaidehi.

Laura Meissner: yes we can

Brian: Hi. I am headed to South Sudan soon to support the resiliency work there. Unfortunately, I have to leave this webinar early. Will supporting docs and recording of webinar be available?

Vaidehi Krishnan: Hi Brian - good luck on your travel to SS. Yes the recording and the PPT will be available.

Vaidehi Krishnan: Charlin can confirm on details

Vaidehi Krishnan: Where in SS are you headed?

Charlin Caster (Marketlinks): Hi Brian, we understand! Yes, we'll make the recording, transcripts and presentation slides available at a later date. We'll send them in an e-mail and also post them on Marketlinks.

Brian: Juba. To work with the Economic Growth team for a year.

Brian: Thank you

Charlin Caster (Marketlinks): Welcome everyone! Thanks for joining today! Please complete the webinar poll questions!

Charlin Caster (Marketlinks): As you join, please introduce yourself in the chat and say where you're joining from

Alex Humphrey: Hi everyone, this is Alex from Mercy Corps. I am one of the presenters today, currently based in NYC, but until recently was based in South Sudan. Thanks everyone for being here today!

Dick Tinsley: dick Tinsley from Colorado

Gwynne Foster: Hello All. I am joining from McGregor in South Africa.

Dick Tinsley: sound check please

Alison Hemberger: Hi everyone! Alison Hemberger from Mercy Corps here.

Charlin Caster (Marketlinks): Hi Dick! Welcome back! You can actually test your sound clicking Play Music

Elon Gilbert: Elon Gilbert in Montana

Dick Tinsley: ok background chat good

Douglas: Greetings from NCBA CLUSA in Washington D.C.

Charlin Caster (Marketlinks): Welcome Gwynne, Alison, Elon and Douglas -- great to have you all!

Mamadou Dabo: Greetings from USAID/FBL Sénégal

Charlin Caster (Marketlinks): Welcome Mamadou

Kristyn Wilcox Feldman: Kristin Wilcox from Global Communities and USAID/CLEAR.

Mamadou Dabo: Thanks Charlin

Vaidehi Krishnan: Hi Kristyn - I've done a previous webinar with one of your colleagues from Global Communities

Vaidehi Krishnan: And really enjoyed the work she talked about

Charlin Caster (Marketlinks): Hi Kristyn, welcome!

Karine: Hi Charlin,

Kristi Rice: Greetings all. Kristi Rice, working with the Presbyterian Church in South Sudan, based in Juba, but currently visiting the U.S.

Charlin Caster (Marketlinks): We'll get started in just a few minutes!

Charlin Caster (Marketlinks): Please continue to answer the polls!

Charlin Caster (Marketlinks): Thanks!

Dick Tinsley: have u started

Douglas: yes

Elon Gilbert: yes

Kristin O'Planick: background music still on

Calais: There isn't audio I don't think

Charlin Caster (Marketlinks): Please pause your music if you're still hearing it

Douglas: Yes

Jennifer Denomy: yes

Charlin Caster (Marketlinks): you sound great!

Jeeyon Kim: Yup!

Jessica Fullwood-Thomas: Is it possible to share docs/publications related to the other research you are referring to? Thanks

Charlin Caster (Marketlinks): Hi Jessica -- the Currency of Connections report is available in the Web Links section to the left!

Jeeyon Kim: Hi Jessica, here is the PRIME Ethiopia example Alex referenced:

[https://www.mercycorps.org/sites/default/files/Mercy%20Corps\\_PRIMEandDroughtResilience\\_2017\\_FullReport.pdf](https://www.mercycorps.org/sites/default/files/Mercy%20Corps_PRIMEandDroughtResilience_2017_FullReport.pdf)

Jeeyon Kim: And the Somalia paper from FIC: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5176329/>

Charlin Caster (Marketlinks): As you think of other questions for the presenters, please type them here!

Charlin Caster (Marketlinks): And feel free to also share how this resonates with your work!

Janice Proud: HI, Janice Proud, Anglican Alliance

Jeeyon Kim: Hi Janice, thanks for joining us.

william CRS: very, very good point about dark side of social connectedness. a couple anthropologists questioned this for a while. its question the solidarity of community that is too often not verified assumption of community based approach

william CRS:(apologies for typo. on phone)

Charlin Caster (Marketlinks): thanks, William!

Vaidehi Krishnan: Hi William - great to see you here

Vaidehi Krishnan: Thanks for that comment on the dark side of SC

Laura Meissner: Hi all, just a reminder that you can post your questions here in the chatbox now or at any time. I will facilitate the Q&A at the end of the presentations.

JJ Ivaska: Is religious affiliation a relevant variable of social connectedness in this context?

Tracy Kroner: Are there lessons to draw from the divergence in results, e.g. that Rubkona Payam did not see as large of a decline in social connectedness during the crisis, or that Benitu had a higher proportion of POC within their livelihood groups than the other two sites?

Charlin Caster (Marketlinks): Thanks for the questions JJ and Tracy

Dick Tinsley: can you relate food security to calorie balance between what is available vs what they need to exert to meet economic opportunity

John Hoven: Did you consider using qualitative methods (e.g., process tracing) to articulate and test causal hypotheses (since these methods don't need a statistical sample or control group)?

Charlin Caster (Marketlinks): Great questions - thank you Dick and John

Dick Tinsley: do program have the flexibility to adjust to local concern or forced to impose the solution the donor considers correct

naiomi: Dick's question - I'd appreciate an answer too

Jennifer Denomy: The targeting question is very interesting. How do you take into account the fact that people essentially redistribute assets on their own, but it's still important to attempt to target vulnerable people. What considerations work?

Laura Meissner: thank you Dick and Jennifer

Diane Russell: Why not hire a rural sociologist or anthropologist and listen to him or her during implementation. These findings are interesting but nothing new to any social scientist who has lived and worked in rural Africa.

Jeeyon Kim: Hi Diane, absolutely - the fact that social connections matter, and that they're important are not new. Extensive literature exists on this. However, they're infrequently (if at all) taken into account in programming and our push now is to advocate a careful accounting for these complex relationships in a programmatic context, to complement and not undermine these dynamics.

Diane Russell: I am just saying that take these considerations into account it may be more efficient to have that expertise, and listen to it. on the team.

Kristin O'Planick: Yes, the targeting question is interesting. I also wonder if the most vulnerable passing along those resources to maintain/build connections is ultimately still a positive outcome with a much longer-term lens with a view to their ability to use those connections to navigate future issues.

Diane Russell: Cash aid is risky because cash is fungible and it is very difficult for people to hold on to cash, as relatives will demand it as soon as they know it is delivered. That is why concrete assets such as animals are more valued.

Janina Mera BFS: The potential negative effects of social capital, particularly bonding social capital has been acknowledged from the advent of the concept of social capital (Coleman etc). I am unclear as to the nuance that using the term social connectiveness adds to the conversation.

Dick Tinsley: sticky fingers in the cookie jar bigger risk than post harvest losses

Carla Handley: Is it necessary to first define resilience for whom and at what level of social organization? For instance, on-demand sharing may have negative impacts on resilience at the individual level but may be beneficial at the household, ethnolinguistic group, community level.

Diane Russell: Local sociologists are not expensive!

Dick Tinsley: most project take 2 years and cost over 1,000,000 dollars before the implementing team is fielded and can have detailed discussion with beneficiaries but now very little flexibility

Jeeyon Kim: @Janina - social connectedness lens shifts us away from the pre-categorized 'bonding', 'bridging' and 'linking' capital that may preemptively set boundaries on social connections that 'matter' - it also allows us to cast a wider net to look beyond resource-sharing, and be more explicitly take into account the potential negative ramification of SC

Charlin Caster (Marketlinks): Thanks for the great questions and engaging participation today. We'll wrap up soon and move into poll questions as we come to the home stretch with Q&A!

Jeeyon Kim: @Diane - have you used sociologists previously in programs? Would be delighted to hear if donors are up to funding them in formative design stages!

Jeeyon Kim: @Carla - absolutely. We didn't dig into our conceptualization of resilience in details, but will do so in our reporting.

Gordon: Thanks all, very helpful

Charlin Caster (Marketlinks): Poll Questions are up!

Diane Russell: Sure! I am an anthropologist who worked on many projects for USAID over the years including rural projects in DRC.

Kristyn Wilcox Feldman: thanks, everyone

Charlin Caster (Marketlinks): Thanks everyone!

Laura Meissner: Thank you everyone! Please fill in the poll questions, make use of the Web Links on the left. We will have the recording and transcript available at [marketlinks.org](http://marketlinks.org) later on.