MPEP SEMINAR SERIES
Exploring Frontiers in Inclusive Market Development

A New Effort to Embed Systems Thinking in USAID

Webinar Chat Transcript

November 21, 2013

PRESENTERS

Dr. Tjip Walker, USAID/Policy, Planning, and Learning Bureau

USAID Microlinks: Good morning to those online!

USAID Microlinks: We are getting everything set up now and will be getting started in about 30 minutes!

USAID Microlinks: We are currently testing the microphones...thank you for your patience!

Alanna Salpeter: Hi...I can hear you! I am just running out though.

USAID Microlinks: Great, thank you Alanna!

USAID Microlinks: Welcome to everyone who just joined us! Please introduce yourselves to the others online.

Vicki Getz: I can hear you. I'm Vicki Getz...USAID

Lauren Caskey: Hi, I'm Lauren Caskey, with DAI

Jami Montgomery: i can as well. Jami Montgomery, USAID

Marcus Jenal: Hi, I can hear you. I'm Marcus Jenal, consultant, UK

USAID Microlinks: Great, thank you!

Alanna Salpeter: Ok...I am back. Alanna Salpeter from The MasterCard Foundation

USAID Microlinks: Great to see you all online.

USAID Microlinks: If you would like, take the live polls! We'll get started in about 5 minutes.

Chris Kagy: hear you fine

Buck Bradshaw: I can hear.

Lauren Caskey: I can hear you perfectly

Vicki Getz: Audio is fine

USAID Microlinks: Great, thank you! And thanks again Lauren and Vicki :)

Ruth Dueck-Mbeba: Audio comes through well

Kristen Hassmiller Lich: I hear well!

USAID Microlinks: Wonderful! Thank you!

Kristin O'Planick: Can hear just fine. I'm from USAID/Washington

USAID Microlinks: Great! And hello Kristin!

Joe Le Clair: I can hear well too, Joe Le Clair from Tetra Tech (ARD)

USAID Microlinks: Hello Joe!

Ruth Dueck-Mbeba: We cannot hear this person

Marcus Jenal: can hardly hear

Buck Bradshaw: Buck Bradshaw with World Vision

Matthew Kennis: Matthew Kennis with Local First

USAID Microlinks: Thank you for letting us know, Marcus. One moment.

Mary McVay: Hi. I am Mary McVay, pinciple consultant,Enterprise Development Kiosk

Marcus Jenal: better

Loretta Ishida: Loretta Ishida and Kate Braband with Lutheran World Relief

Ruth Dueck-Mbeba: audio is not great with the panelists

Eden Ahmed Mdluli: Hello All, Eden Ahmed Mdluli (Health Tech Specialist at Africare)

Kristen Hassmiller Lich: I am Kristen Hassmiller Lich, with the Univ of North Carolina

John Canellakis: John Canellakis, Value Chain Group, consultant on strategy and operations

USAID Microlinks: We are adjusting the levels, please let us know if you are able to hear Jeanne Downing speaking.

Aaron Littlefield: Aaron Littlefield, World Vision intern

Larissa Gross: Larissa Gross with Engineers Without Borders Canada

Wilm van Bekkum: Hi all wilm from Self Help Africa UK

Kristin O'Planick: Jeanne soundsgood

Ruth Dueck-Mbeba: Good morning, Ruth Dueck-Mbeba of The MasterCard Foundation

Jody Uyanik: Jody Uyanik, working with the Global Partnerships Division.

Robin DePietro-Jurand: Robin DePietro-Jurand with EDC

USAID Microlinks: Thank you Kristin!

USAID Microlinks: If you haven't already, please introduce yourself to everyone online.

A. Ryan: Ariane Ryan from MEDA

Chris Kagy: Chris Kagy from Devis

nidal karim: Nidal Karim from CARE

David Hunsicker: David Hunsicker, USAID's Office of Conflict Management and Mitigation

Deborah Martierrez: Deborah Martierrez from the Department of Labor's Bureau of International Labor Affairs

USAID Microlinks: Welcome to those who have just joined us! Tjip Walker is now speaking.

Cybill Sigler: Cybill Sigler, USAID/Malawi

Samantha Novick: Samantha Novick, USAID Office of Civilian-Military Cooperation

Estera Barbarasa: Estera Barbarasa from RTI International

Elizabeth Dunn: Elizabeth Dunn, Impact LLC (Gainesville FL)

Guy Sharrock: Guy Sharrock, Catholic Relief Services

USAID Microlinks: We have a full room here at QED's offices in DC. So glad that you were all able to join us online!

Rand Robinson: Hello all...i've been a disciple of such work for long time but it's been very to incorporate w/in USAID DM&E practices...

Clara Hagens: Clara Hagens, Catholic Relief Services

USAID Microlinks: Tjip Walker is speaking now. Please let us know if you are not able to hear.

Malina Dumas: Malina Dumas, Volunteers for Economic Growth Alliance (VEGA)

USAID Microlinks: Welcome Malina!

USAID Microlinks: The bullets in the arrow are: (1) Sustainability; (2) Co-production, and (3) Adaptation

USAID Microlinks: Dr. Tjip Walker from USAID is now speaking.

Grace Kenney: Grace Kenney, ADM Institute for the Prevention of Postharvest Loss, now attending

USAID Microlinks: If you would like to make the slide larger, click on "Full Screen". Click on "Full Screen" again to return to the default view.

Brian Cheung: dear lord that's a gnarly map

Rand Robinson: i have one of those in my loo...

Marcus Jenal: LOL

USAID Microlinks: Apologies for some of the formatting issues in the PowerPoint presentation...sometimes during the conversion into the webinar platform, some things move around.

USAID Microlinks: ALL: if you have questions, please type them into the chat box and I will do my best to raise them during the Q&A part of the session.

Robin DePietro-Jurand: do we have access to the powerpoint on line?

USAID Microlinks: Please remember to state your name and org when you ask your question.

indra klein: Is it possible to download slides during presentations?

Katherine Woods: Kate Woods with Chemonics

USAID Microlinks: Robin, the PPT will be available for download. We'll pull it up during the Q&A.

indra klein: indra klein, development consultant, dc

Rand Robinson: Tjip, a common IR for USAID is "Strengthening Health Systesm"...but Global Health and most Mission staff are entirely challenged when asked to define What They Mean by that....comment please?

USAID Microlinks: Rand, what is your organizational affiliation?

Rand Robinson: USAID/Uganda, Program Officer

USAID Microlinks: Thank you!

Joe Le Clair: what are the differences between contexual and programmatic risk?

indra klein: In determining/assessing risks, especially with regard to fiduciary risks, how is USAID and potential funders changing the dialogue?

Jody Uyanik: Question: How would you connect these notions of Systemic Thinking to cross-cutting approaches and the issues related to how USAID is organized (regionally and sectorally) to get work done? (Jody Uyanik, Sr. Tech Advisor, USAID/IDEA/GP)

USAID Microlinks: Please remember to state your org affiliation when asking questions. Keep them coming!

Joe Le Clair: Tetra Tech ARD

flacia wanjiru: Hi there a bench mark of the local system to be used in and expand further what are the charactreristics of the system you are addressing

Marcus Jenal: How do you attribute results three to five years later to the particular project?

Marcus Jenal: Marcus Jenal, consultant

flacia wanjiru: Hi is there a bench mark of the local system to be used in and expand further what are the charactreristics of the system you are addressing

Guy Sharrock: This is very interesting - sort of touches on the content of a couple of chapters in Ben Ramalingam's new book, Aid on the Edge of Chaos. I would suggest Tjip takes a look at Rick Davies MandE News site - he has some very good resources on network model and analysis at: http://mande.co.uk/special-issues/network-models/

USAID Microlinks: Thanks for the questions! Indra and Flacia, what are your organizational affiliations?

indra klein: indra klein, development consultant,dc: With regard to regulatory compliance (particularly for funders and US-based NG/PO's), what conversations are taking place to facilitate both awareness/education and compliance?

flacia wanjiru: Consultant and trainer

USAID Microlinks: Thank you!

Vicki Getz: How do we sign up for listserv??

Mary McVay: Jeanne, do you feel we have a "template" in value chain development? IIF so, perhaps different sectors could come up with templates that fit into the overall framework?

USAID Microlinks: Hi Vicki, I'm not entirely sure how to sign up for the listserv Tjip mentioned but I can find out later and let you know.

Brian Cheung: Brian Cheung, Engineers Without Borders Canada, Uganda team. In the draft paper linked to this presentation invite (Local Systems: A Framework for Supporting Sustained Development), one of the recommendations was making funding available for post-project (2-4 yrs after) impact assessment. Is this something that USAID will actively pursue?

USAID Microlinks: Tjip will be taking questions and comments. Please type them here and remember to state your name and organization.

Scott LeFevre: don't hear the speaker

Mary McVay: Earlier comment/question on templates was form Mary McVay, Enterprise Development Kiosk

Marcus Jenal: don't hear

Jody Uyanik: Can't hear these speakers.

Elizabeth Dunn: can"t hear question

Jami Montgomery: can't hear the questions

indra klein: Cannot hear the female voice -- sounds like she is underwater in a tunnel

Robin DePietro-Jurand: Can't hear

nidal karim: Cannot hear

Chris Kagy: It seems a required change in perspective is that lack of IMMEDIATE results <> lack, of results. This is especially relevant in the context of Tjip's remarks about taking a long term view and opening up to unanticipated results. Chris Kagy, Devis

Matthew Kennis: Possible to write question - couldn't hear

Marcus Jenal: coudl you repeat the question

USAID Microlinks: Apologies everyone...microphone went out. Let me type in the question.

Chris Kagy: Immediate is perhaps better phrased as "short-term", i.e. 1 - 3 years

USAID Microlinks: : With regard to regulatory compliance (particularly for funders and US-based NG/PO's), what conversations are taking place to facilitate both awareness/education and compliance?

USAID Microlinks: We are taking a question from the in-room audience now. Please let us know if you are not able to hear.

flacia wanjiru: Idependent consultant and trainer

Marcus Jenal: the quality is not great

flacia wanjiru: creative arts and enterprise development

nancy hayden: For making the most of the opportunity between sustainability and systems thinking can draw on very compelling, solid evidence from business cases that show how imperative it is to consider longer term systems cycles as necessary to see interactive effects that drive sustainability. The definiton of long term varies according to the processes involved in the cycles - has US AID tried to anchor expected cycle for results to conventional wisdom from business cases?

Chris Kagy: lol - physician, heal thyself

Lauren Caskey: Understanding the local system is key. If I understand correctly, this involes examining resources, roles, relationships, results, etc. How do we ensure during this mapping exercise that the voices of the most marginalized are heard? Lauren, DAI

indra klein: If leadership changes impact focus/direction of agency projects, how is USAID faciltating its grantees ability to build their funding base, esp. for projects with multiple phases?

nidal karim: How do you anticipate a "broadened" definition of results that includes "systems" changes will be articulated through M&E guidance from USAID and RFPs and resourcing for said M&E approaches within funded projects? Nidal Karim from CARE

Clara Hagens: Could Tjip share some examples of good susintability indicators, qualitative or quantitative? How much should the indicators themselves reflect what's identified in the risk assessment? Or are these generally unrelated (Clara Hagens, Catholic Relief Services)

USAID Microlinks: Thanks to everyone for your great questions and comments! If we are not able to get to all of them during the seminar today, we will share them with Dr. Walker and he will do his best to respond.

Guy Sharrock: How do we make the most of this opportunity: Could USAID build-in more space for us to experiment with network analysis over time so we can explore how networked relationships are impacted by project interventions?

nidal karim: we cannot hear the question

indra klein: Cannot hear

Ruth Dueck-Mbeba: cant hear

USAID Microlinks: Are you able to hear now?

Kristin O'Planick: yes

Ruth Dueck-Mbeba: yes

USAID Microlinks: great!

indra klein: yes, thank you

Ruth Dueck-Mbeba: can't hear

Ruth Dueck-Mbeba: thank you

Marcus Jenal: loosing her

Vicki Getz: Have people hold the mike closer while speaking??

Matthew Kennis: On a practical point, if results include not only shorter term development outcomes but also systems strengthening, will USAID set aside money within projects/portfolios for this?

indra klein: Does USAID or its grantees survey businesses (particularly established or corps) that have relationships with supply chain providers? If so, how is data being used? IF not, why not?

Jami Montgomery: cant hear very well again

indra klein: Cannot hear, muffled

Marcus Jenal: bad sound

Marcus Jenal: better

indra klein: what will help things catch on?

Mary McVay: MAry McVay, enterprise development kiosk: We have learned in value chain development that engagement on all fronts - from businesses in the market system to policy makers and funders - is that we have to have strong short, medium and long-term results. Without strong short-term, obvious results, the approach won't work on the ground or with supporters. So, showing that a systems approach brings stronger short-term results is key, and it usually does.

USAID Microlinks: Apologies everyone...we are having some issues with our microphones.

USAID Microlinks: We are working to address the issue asap.

John Canellakis: What practical tools is USAID considering, to implement systems approach thinking at a program level, for ex, M&E or other levels? -John Canellakis, The Value Chain Group.

Scott LeFevre: Would Dr Walker have insights into how this thinking has influenced private sector development (products, services, etc.)? (Scott LeFevre, CRS/Sahel West Africa)

Scott LeFevre: (sorry if this was covered earlier, as I only was able to get into the webinar after 1/2 hr)

Elizabeth Dunn: Elizabeth Dunn, Impact LLC. Mary McVay's comment is important. Something that might be helpful for implementers would be early indicators of systemic change. How do we monitor so that we know when this early change is emerging?

Brian Cheung: fail forward!

USAID Microlinks: Thanks to everyone for your questions and comments! We will try to get to as many as possible while also taking questions from the in-person audience.

Chris Kagy: @brian - EXACTLY!

Kristen Hassmiller Lich: Kristen Lich, working with MEASURE evaluation. How do we join the listserv? I agree with the previous comment that making inroads around specific challenges makes systems thinking more actionable. Can you point us to any exemplars of this being well done on USAID-related challenges? If there aren't examples (YET!), what do you see as the most relevant exemplars in other spheres? (I have a few ideas I'm happy to share.)

scott yetter: Where does political will and authority fit in to systems thinking and how will USAID play a more progressive role in supporting implementing partners working in contexts where the local sysetms are not inclusive but good development requires more inclusive systems? Will this type of thinking propel USAID to make a stronger stand for good development?

gary alex: There is a danger of going too far with such systems analysis, as these are almost always complex and the operational resources and timeframes for USAID program design is limited. But, it seems to me that these should be back on the radar scree for project design in the Institutional Analyses and Social Analyses, which have often been standard considerations for project feasibility, planning and sustainability strategies.

flacia wanjiru: I am interested to know if the receipents are willing to change

Mary McVay: Mary McVay: I can send some examples. FINTRAC 's work generally is a good example. They tend to be very hands on at the early stages in projects, and build systems as they go.

flacia wanjiru: scott my experience is development projects fit into the political and adminstrative systems of a nation. This because it is the political and administrative systems of a nation that aprove the development projects to be implemented and which developments organisation will implement. Therefore in my opinion an organisation buys into the political good will if they do not want to work in a vacuum

indra klein: in fulfilling USAID's mission as well as those of NGO's, how is USAID and its partners better promoting themselves (projects and systems frameworks evolution to philanthropy and businesses, especially with the use of technology? (It would seem logical to create an on-line platform that maps ALL programs, their progress/setbacks, targets/timelines, to include video of those served.)

USAID Microlinks: Wonderful Mary, please send them on!

USAID Microlinks: ALL, if we are not able to get to your question or share your comment right now, we will post them on the event page on Microlinks and will follow up with Tjip for responses.

USAID Microlinks: Thank you for the rich discussion!

flacia wanjiru: thank you

nidal karim: Thanks for a great presentation and discussion!

indra klein: Thank you

Brian Cheung: thanks enormously for a great discussion

Mary McVay: Thanks so very much - this is critical work! (Mary McVay)

Carolyn Ramsdell: Thank you!

Lauren Caskey: thanks very much

Robin DePietro-Jurand: Thank you!

Matthew Kennis: thank you!

John Canellakis: thank you

USAID Microlinks: Thank you for joining us online! We sincerely appreciate your participation!

USAID Microlinks: We will be sending out an email next week with the recording and other post event resources.

USAID Microlinks: Feel free to share any feedback on the "Event Page", located in the "Links" pod.

scott yetter: thank you. well run!

USAID Microlinks: Thank you Scott! Nice to see you online.

flacia wanjiru: Good presentation

USAID Microlinks: Thank you Flacia!