PEER-LEARNING EVENTS ORGANIZERS' GUIDE

A CASE STUDY OF LEO'S MARKET FACILITATION REGIONAL PEER-LEARNING EVENTS

LEO
Leveraging Economic Opportunities

REPORT #9

JANUARY 2015

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CONTENTS

ACRONYMS

BFS	Bureau for Food Security
CLA	Collaboration, learning and adaptation
COP	Chief of party
IP	Implementing partner
LEO	Leveraging Economic Opportunities
MPEP	Microenterprise and Private Enterprise Promotion
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

I. INTRODUCTION

Leveraging Economic Opportunities (LEO) is a three-year USAID-funded contract to support programming that fosters inclusive growth through markets. Building on the value chain approach, LEO focuses on:

- ***a systems approach*** to markets, acknowledging the complex interrelationships among market actors, market and household systems, climate change, nutrition, the policy environment, and sociocultural factors, including poverty and gender; and
- ***inclusion***, recognizing the role that a spectrum of actors—from resource-poor households and small-scale enterprises to larger and more formal firms—play in catalyzing market change and growth that benefits the poor.

One of LEO's activity areas is to organize regional peer-learning events to promote the sharing of experiences among USAID implementing partners (IPs) in order to strengthen collaboration, learning and adaptation of market facilitation approaches.

Market facilitation peer-learning events focus on the approaches, outcomes and challenges of market facilitation within value chain and market systems development projects in the context of USAID programming. By bringing together IPs from the same region, the events aim to stimulate peer-learning communities around market facilitation approaches. Key practitioners in the region explore ways to improve the quality and consistency of market facilitation approaches in a country or region and learn from what is working, what isn't and why.

In October 2014, the LEO project, in collaboration with USAID's Bureau for Food Security (BFS), organized two market facilitation peer-learning events in East Africa. The first of these events took place in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from October 2-3, 2014, and Lusaka, Zambia from October 6-7, 2014. Participants were comprised of senior technical representatives from IPs that were involved in agricultural value chain development projects using market facilitation approaches (focusing on, but not limited to, Feed the Future projects) in the region.

A. PURPOSE OF THE GUIDE

The purpose of this guide is to support the future planning and organization of similar events in other countries or contexts. This guide details some of the decision-making and planning to ultimately result in two successful peer-learning events driven based on USAID's collaboration, learning and adaptation (CLA) approach.

B. INTENDED AUDIENCE FOR THE GUIDE

The ideal audiences for this guide are those who are involved in organizing project-level or country-level trainings or workshops with an overall goal of sharing learning.

C. HOW TO USE THE GUIDE

This guide is not meant to be a "how-to-guide" with step-by-step instructions. Rather, this guide explains the approach taken in the first two peer-learning events in Ethiopia and Zambia in October 2014. This guide will include tips and potential areas of discussion, but because the focus is on peer-learning, it is really up to the facilitator(s) to drive the conversation and learning based on the examples, challenges and experiences raised by participants themselves.

II. REGIONAL PEER-LEARNING EVENTS

A. RECOGNIZING THE OBJECTIVES

Regional peer-learning events can accomplish multiple goals. In the case of the LEO peer-learning events, the events had the following objectives:

- **Gain insight into projects:** Exploring what projects are learning and reflecting on from practical experience; channeling information and messages back from field projects to headquarters and donors.
- **Strengthen practice:** Focusing on reaching scale and effective market facilitation approaches.
- **Strengthen coordination:** Building awareness of other projects/strategies that it would be beneficial to coordinate with.
- **Strengthen collaboration:** Building relationships among senior technical leads, incentivizing improved collaboration.
- **Strengthen a culture of learning:** Building relationships and demonstrating practical benefits of sharing that incentivize continued opportunities to share and learn.

B. ORGANIZING THE EVENT

When organizing a peer-learning event, it is useful to consider the profile of the participants, and the purpose and method of soliciting pre-event input. Each of these areas is discussed in greater detail below.

ASSESSING THE NEED FOR A PEER-LEARNING EVENT

When considering whether to organize a peer-learning event, it is helpful to consider whether or not such an event is needed. Peer-learning events are particularly applicable for strengthening practice when cross-learning around a particular technical areas is important yet there is currently scarcity of cross-learning taking place among projects.

FACILITATING EARLY INPUT FROM LEAD PARTNERS

It is key to ascertain early buy-in and input from key partners who have an interest in the peer-learning event. In the case of LEO's peer-learning events, each stage of the initial planning process was designed to ensure high-level buy-in and ownership of the event. This emphasized the high-level nature of the event throughout the process, including during the invitation process (which is discussed further below). The initial rationale for and high-level design of the event was led by relevant members of USAID's Bureau of Food Security and USAID's mission representatives. The following process took place:

- Basic presentation of the peer-learning event concept and the initial concept design took place with BFS and LEO at the Feed the Future Forum in Washington, DC.
- At the Forum the BFS Chief Strategy Officers invited USAID mission representatives to discuss the key design components of the event. (As an example, one such discussion was whether USAID staff should be actively encouraged to attend the event.) The BFS invitation to the meeting gave a clear message to USAID missions that BFS was behind the event and gave missions comfort to support event.
- At the Forum and by email following the Forum, USAID missions deliberated the purpose, participant profile and high-level agenda of the peer-learning events. The missions, with support from LEO, also discussed which countries should be included in each regional event and the key projects to target for participation.

IDENTIFYING THE ORGANIZING & FACILITATION TEAM

The organizing team for a peer-learning event functions best when it is comprised of organizations or individuals who have the following combination of skills sets:

- high-level technical expertise
- practical, field-based expertise
- facilitation, training and learning expertise
- event organization and management expertise

In the LEO peer-learning events, the core organizing team comprised of ACDI/VOCA and EcoVentures International, with support from USAID's Office of Microenterprise and Private Enterprise Promotion (MPEP). The individuals from these organizations are all well-recognized in the area of market facilitation and learning event facilitation, in particular Jeanne Downing (USAID/MPEP), Ruth Campbell (ACDI/VOCA), Mike Field (EcoVentures International), and Margie Brand (EcoVentures International). They were supported by Madiha Nawaz (ACDI/VOCA), Caroline Fowler (EcoVentures International), and Ben Lownik (USAID/MPEP). Mike Field, as the lead technical expert, gave the event credibility among the high caliber group of IPs present.

DEFINING PARTICIPANT PROFILES

Peer-learning events are particularly effective when the majority of participants have high-level technical experience, including extensive practical, field-based experience. This ensures enough room for active debate and discussion without too many participants operating as passive learners. In the case of the LEO peer-learning events, participants were defined as senior technical representatives from IPs that were involved in agricultural value chain development projects using market facilitation approaches. It was emphasized that these were not necessarily chiefs of party (COPs), particularly in larger projects with many technical leads for sub components of the project. Projects predominantly comprised, but were not exclusively limited to Feed the Future projects.

The intention was for the events to act as a launching pad for continued technical support to other country-level projects and an even larger number of implementers. See Appendix 1 for a list of the type of project representatives that attended the LEO events.

SETTING PARTICIPANT NUMBERS

Peer-learning events are particularly effective when participation is limited to a small number. A small number of participants ensures a greater level of interaction. The LEO peer learning events intentionally limited participation to between 20 – 30 participants to ensure higher-level discussion.

The intention was for the events to act as a launching pad for continued technical support to other country-level projects and an even larger number of implementers. See Appendix 2 for a copy of the Participant Registration Form.

After much deliberation, it was agreed by BFS and USAID missions that USAID mission staff would not be encouraged to attend the event. It was felt that discussion would be more open and frank without mission staff participation as IP participants would not feel that they were being assessed by their USAID counterparts for their knowledge and technical competence, but could instead be open about their challenges and realities.

INVITING PARTICIPANTS

It is important that projects are encouraged to recognize the value of a peer-learning event and are thereby incentivized to send high profile representatives (if this will add to the level of discussion necessary to achieve the desired outcomes). For the LEO peer-learning events, each stage of the design and invitation process emphasized the importance and high-level nature of the event. USAID missions, together with LEO, identified leading market facilitation projects from each country in the targeted regions to invite. LEO designed the letters of invitation. The invitations requested two technical leads and gave suggestions on who these might be in each project.

The process included the following components to incentivize high-level involvement and responses from projects:

- **Created external pressure for IPs to respond and participate**: The role of BFS in backing the event was emphasized throughout the process, including in the letters of invitation. In addition, USAID missions sent out the letters of invitation to the Implementing Partners. This was a critical process in emphasizing the importance of the peer-learning events to projects from the mission perspective, as this is the entity to which they would report at USAID.
- **Created a sense of competition between IPs to participate:** The letter of invitation included a list of the other projects that had been invited in the country and region.
- **Created a perception (which was indeed a reality) of scarcity of available places:** The letter of invitation limited the number of participants per project and the number of participants overall.
- **Registration process required steps to demonstrate commitment of participants:** As part of the registration process, participants were asked to complete an input survey. Participants were also asked to write a justification for requests for any additional participants

See Appendix 3 for an example of an invitation to one of the LEO peer-learning events.

SELECTING PARTICIPANTS

Often more people request participation than those initially invited, increasing the number of potential participants. In the case of the LEO peer-learning events, many more requests for participation were submitted by USAID missions on behalf of their IPs and by projects themselves. This created a challenge as the organizing team recognized that too large a number of participants would likely limit the quality of interactions and learning, while excluding participation could potentially create animosity and resistance to future collaborative learning processes.

Ultimately, LEO worked closely with USAID missions on how to limit numbers while still ensuring that missions and their projects felt comfortable with the representation at the event. It was emphasized that initial regional events were simply a way to spark further country or regional level peer-learning events and processes.

Ultimately, the LEO organizing team together with USAID missions followed a deliberate and strategic participant selection process. All participants had the following characteristics:

- Participants were identified as representatives from key projects and key countries in the region by BFS and the USAID missions. As a result additional countries were added to the events in several circumstances.
- Participants were exclusively USAID IPs (predominantly BFS-funded projects) and did not include representatives of projects funded by other donors. This allowed for discussions around the realities of USAID contractual and bureaucratic implications on market facilitation in practice.
- Participants included two representatives per project—although after specific requests and a case being made, three representatives were approved for some projects.
- Participants were technical leads within projects (not necessarily COPs)—although in many instances COPs were also playing a technical leadership role.
- Participants were prime contractors as the assumption was that prime contractors would extend learning processes to their subcontractors at a later stage. Many requests were received to include subcontractors, although this will likely take place as the next phase at country level. After a special request and a good case being made, subcontractors were accepted in very select cases.
- A select number of participants from USAID missions were invited to attend when a special request was made by a mission and when these mission staff expressed a desire to learn together with participants.

OBTAINING PRE-EVENT INPUT FROM PARTICIPANTS

Learning is enhanced in peer-learning events when participants provide input on key areas of interest prior to the event. For the LEO peer-learning events, participants were sent a survey before the event to indicate areas that they were interested in having the event focus on. See Appendix 4 for a copy of the pre-event participant survey and for a synopsis of the key pre-event survey results.

	Collaboration	Learning	Adaptation
Pre-Event: Intentional Process	Emphasized spirit and tone of collaborative-style learning by: • including "Peer Learning" in title • not using "workshop" or "training" in title, but rather simply "event" • describing event as participative in invitation	Stimulated learning pre-event through: • requiring reflection on own activities during registration survey • sharing key technical readings before event • assisted participants to be at more of an equal footing technically through pre-readings	Adapted agenda through: • input from participants on key interest areas and challenge areas completed as part of registration process

DECIDING ON LOCATION AND VENUE

To enhance commitment to a focused learning process, it is very beneficial to choose a location for a peer-learning event that is located away from project offices, where participants cannot be easily tempted to leave for meetings and focus on other work. Venues that offer both the participant accommodation and the workshop facilities create a more relaxed atmosphere without stresses and time spent on transport logistics. In the case of the LEO peer-learning events, venues were chosen that were located approximately an hour's drive away from the capital in a retreat type environment. In one of the locations, the participants were the only guests staying at the hotel, creating an even greater sense of community and opportunities for relationship-building.

If a peer-learning event will be held over more than one day, there is an even greater incentive in choosing a location away from the city. Because participants will need to stay at the venue overnight, there is less pressure in terms of timing of the agenda to end right at 5pm. Likewise, the start time the next day is more flexible, as there is no need to take into account travel time in the morning.

LENGTH OF THE WORKSHOP

It is important to consider the length of the workshop. A two-day workshop works well. Based upon the LEO peer-learning events' post-assessment survey, a common response was that participants would like to have seen a longer workshop. However, in reality, the organizers recognized that due to time commitments of the participants themselves, they probably would not have registered for a longer session in the first place. Further, a two-day workshop is short enough for participants to carve out time of their own agendas, yet long enough for real learning to be shared.

PARTICIPANT IDENTIFICATION

Preparation of workshop materials is important to consider. It is recommended to have both name badges that hang around the neck and name placards to place on the tables. On both the badges and the placards, it is effective to print participants' preferred names (which can be gathered on registration forms). In addition, be sure that the names can easily be read by others. In the example of the LEO events in East Africa, the organizers listed participants' names and their projects, rather than their affiliated organizations, because of the realization that there is a competitive environment between organizations, and the event wanted to focus on peer learning between particular projects.

C. RUNNING THE EVENT

When running a peer-learning event, it is useful to consider the event facilitation, room layout, etc.

	Collaboration	Learning	Adaptation
During Event: Intentional Methodology	• Included many small group dialogues and debates to encourage sharing • Included session on how to collaborate moving forward • Venue outside city to set retreat type mood • Emphasized that messages could be taken back to donor—participants had incentive to influence	• Created a safe space for sharing and learning among peers • Used CLA methodology in facilitation • Reinforced that learning was not coming from "front of the room" • Continuous reflection sessions on what participants were learning • Captured video interviews	• Flexibly methodology and agenda with adaptations to agenda to issues that arose • Adapted methodology to learning styles and evolving energy • Technical: Encourage participants to consider and share how to adapt the thinking and examples to their own contexts

Each of these areas is discussed in greater detail below.

EMPHASIZING A MULTI-DIRECTIONAL LEARNING & SHARING

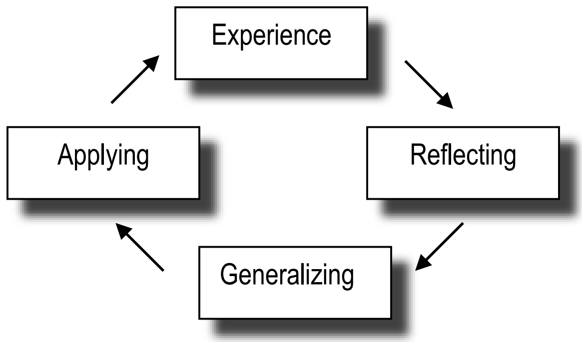
Peer-learning events are particularly effective if the multi-directional purpose of the learning is emphasized. In the case of the LEO peer-learning events, it was emphasized that messages would be taken back to USAID and BFS in Washington, D.C. This stimulated more high-level discussion as participants were incentivized to take the discussions more seriously knowing that they had a larger audience than simply those in the workshop. Participants recognized their ability to influence practice and decision-making through more active participation and messaging about real issues.

FACILITATING USING APPROPRIATE METHODOLOGIES

Peer-learning events are most effective when different types of learning methodologies are used which emphasize participant interaction and maintain energy through out the process. See Appendix 6 for the agenda used for the LEO peer-learning events.

The facilitation methodologies used at the LEO peer-learning events were all based on experiential learning methodologies.

Figure 1. Experiential Learning Cycle



The experiential learning cycle in its simplest form can be defined as learning by doing. The experiential learning cycle is especially effective in peer-learning events since it requires the active participation of the participants in the learning process. There are four basic phases in the cycle:

1. **Experience:** The participant uncovers new information or contexts that requires a response on their part.
2. **Reflecting:** The participant sorts out the information developed from the experience. They will use this information to develop key 'learnings' about the subject matter in the next phase, but first they need to analyze the experience.
3. **Generalizing:** The participants interpret what was discussed to determine what it means and what lessons can be learned to draw principles.
4. **Applying:** In order for the participant to feel the discussions are significant, the new learning must relate to their own life situation. Here, the participant makes the connection between the peer-learning setting and the real world.

Examples of methodologies used at the LEO peer-learning Events are listed below. Only five PowerPoint slides were used throughout the two days in one of the events, and no PowerPoint slides in the other!

Small group dialogue circles:

- This is a special type of small group activity that is used when participants need to discuss a topic, express opinions, and share examples to promote learning.
- Process: The main activity and/or discussion questions are introduced in a large group. The facilitator then divides the participants (or invites them to self-select) into groups of 3 or 4 each. Within these small groups, participants are able to discuss the topic or questions freely without an expectation of having to report out to the larger group.
- Advantages: With this small group, participants are able to discuss in more detail a specific topic or question.

Ranking:

- This technique allows participants to explore the items on a list and form an opinion about the value of each. This is useful when different categories or components are being introduced and the facilitator would like the participants to really think through and understand each component. The ranking itself is ultimately of no consequence, but simply a method to get participants to critically discuss each topic/ component.
- Process: The facilitator presents a list of items. The facilitator asks participants to organize the items in order of importance, and have a debate around why they ranked certain items as higher as lower than others. There are no right or wrong answers. Some may place the items in a linear way, others as circular, etc. The items could be printed in large font on different colored cards and given to participants to stick on the wall as they are discussing the ranking.
- Advantages: The ranking is not about getting the right or wrong answer, but getting participants to talk about definitions or examples. This can help participants to understand the content as they need to discuss what something means in order to have an opinion about its importance.

Role playing:

- This technique encourages participants to explore situations or problems under discussion. A role-play is a small, often unrehearsed drama where participants are given roles to act out. There is no 'script' or specific words they must use, but there is a description of the situation, the positions they should take, and what they might do or opinions they should express.
- Process: Roles may be set up by the facilitator or participants themselves. The description of a role-play can be given orally or by handout. Participants acting in a role-play should be given some time to prepare. The facilitator guides a discussion and analysis of what was seen or felt by participants. 'Actors' are given a chance to describe their own roles and what they were doing, to see if it matches with what participants observed. Participants then discuss how what they say relates to their own lives and situations they encounter.
- Advantages: Discussions following the role-play can focus on the role, opinions, actions of characters as presented by the participants, and thus avoid criticism of the participants themselves. This technique is entertaining as well as educational, and improves participants' skills of expression and observation. Role-plays are also particularly effective for sharing examples of bad practice.

Fishbowl observation:

- This technique allows participants on the 'outside' to see something being done on the 'inside'. Participants may observe a role-play or an actual situation such as a discussion or a planning meeting and then analyze it. Used in combination with other techniques, a fishbowl offers a physical and organizational structure that focuses attention on particular issues.
- Process: The facilitator divides the participants into two groups. A small group performs an action or activity in the center of a 'circle' formed by the larger group. The outer circle of participants is asked to observe and analyze the interactions of the inner group. The observers may be broken into subgroups and/or provided with specific observation tasks, tools or guides.

- Advantages: As with a fish placed in a bowl of water, participants get an overall picture of what is happening and discuss what they see. When used in conjunction with another technique, the fishbowl can appropriately alter or tighten the focus. For example, a simple role-play may demonstrate how a specific technical task is carried out. When the 'fishbowl' observation element is added to it, it allows observers to give feedback on how effectively the task was carried out or question how it might be adapted and made more appropriate to their situation.

Reflection:

- This methodology is typically used at the end of a session or a day. The facilitator will pose a question, asking participants to reflect on what was discussed in that session or over the course of the day. The facilitator will also ask participants to reflect on the day as well as think about how something can be applied to reality.

In addition to these methodologies, an important role of the facilitator is to make sure the participants *feel* like it is peer-learning, from the beginning. An example of how this was applied during the LEO peer-learning events was during the small group debriefs and large plenary discussions. If small groups have been discussing a topic and are prompted to share with the larger, plenary group, the facilitator asked the person to stand up to share their ideas, and the facilitator in turn sat down to become one of the audience. This emphasized the perception of peer-learning. Another example was that participants were asked to help write on flip charts during plenary discussions—again having the participants seen a standing upfront and participating in the process. The overall goal is to not always have the facilitator been seen up front.

NETWORKING AND RELATIONSHIP-BUILDING

Networking and relationship-building is as important as the technical learning. It is important to consider how to intentionally include time for this. The relationship-building that comes from networking and socializing serves to spur the peer-learning to continue after the event.

In the LEO peer-learning events, the organizers achieved this relationship-building in a couple of ways: good food was offered during tea and lunch breaks in inviting and relaxing environments where participants could hear each other speak; there was a social event at the end of the first evening to ensure that the relationship building and networking occurred on this first day (rather than waiting until the end of the event just before everyone leaves).

ROOM LAYOUT

The layout of the room can help to emphasize the peer-learning nature of the environment. By using smaller tables with chairs around the tables, as opposed to lecture style seating or U-shaped seating, participants can easily see each other and have conversations. If a peer-learning event is going to have breakout sessions, the location and layout of these sessions are important. In the LEO peer-learning events, for example, facilitators took advantage of outdoor spaces, arranging chairs in a circle to create a sense of sharing and equality (rather than having the facilitator standing and leading the discussion and always being indoors). As a note of caution, if the decision is made to use community spaces within a hotel (outdoor or indoor) it is important to consider whether other guests of the hotel will be using those spaces as well or if this area will be quiet during the breakout sessions.

CAPTURING THE LEARNING AND DISCUSSION

In order to capture the learning and discussion that emerge during a peer-learning event, it is important to have note-takers at all sessions, and especially in breakout sessions where the discussions tend to be even richer. Note-takers should take notes verbatim rather than by summarizing, so that the facilitators can review these in detail afterwards to use in different ways. In the LEO peer-learning events, for example, a note-taker was present in each session, and often there were two note-takers present. It is also important for the note-takers to capture the rich examples shared during the peer-learning event. At the LEO events, the organizers, in hindsight, wished that they recorded the sessions to have truly detailed accounts of the discussions.

Using multimedia is also important to capture the learning. This can be done through photos, capturing methodologies being utilized. This can also be done through the use of video, to record interviews with participants. This can be especially useful if a participant used a particularly rich example during a session, this could be recorded afterwards. In the LEO events, participants were invited to share particularly interesting examples after a session, and this was then captured on video in an interview-type format.

HAVING TIME FOR REFLECTION

As the experiential learning cycle shows, reflection is a key part of learning. A very successful way to close the day is by asking participants to share what stood out for them throughout the day, what excited them from the day's discussions, etc. This is an effective methodology to summarize the day's discussions in a way other than having the facilitator just summarize the key learning. At the LEO events, participants were asked to highlight anything that someone else raised or discussed that was offered particular insight to them or was particularly interesting.

D. AFTER THE EVENT

EVALUATING THE EVENT

See Appendix 5 for a copy of end-of-event evaluation form.

FEEDING INFORMATION BACK TO KEY STAKEHOLDER GROUPS

Just as key stakeholder groups can feed into the design and planning of peer-learning events, it is also important to feed information back into these key stakeholder groups. In the case of the LEO peer-learning events, the organizers had debrief meetings with BFS and hosted a brownbag lunch with the Bureau of Policy, Planning and Learning. The organizers shared feedback informally with missions who supported the event.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: LIST OF TYPE OF PROJECT REPRESENTATIVES THAT ATTENDED THE LEO EVENTS

Market Facilitation Peer-Learning Events 2014

East & Southern Africa region

I. Registered Participants*

Ethiopia / Kenya / Uganda / Peer-learning event

<u>Ethiopia</u>

Agricultural Growth Program – Livestock Market Development (AGP- LMD)

- Chief of Party, CNFA
- Livestock Value Chain Advisor, CNFA

Agricultural Growth Program - Agribusiness & Market Development (AGP-AMDe)

- Chief of Party, ACDI/VOCA
- Deputy Chief of Party, ACDI/VOCA
- Senior National Value Chain Specialist, ACDI/VOCA

Pastoralists' Areas Resilience Improvement and Market Expansion (PRIME)

- Chief of Party, Mercy Corps
- Livestock Productivity and Marketing Advisor, Mercy Corps
- Alternative Livelihoods Advisor, Mercy Corps

Agriculture Knowledge, Learning, Documentation and Policy Project (AKLDP)

- Chief of Party, Tufts University

<u>Kenya</u>

Kenya Agricultural Value Chain Enterprises (KAVES)

- Chief of Party, Fintrac
- Technical Director for Market Development, Fintrac

Resilience & Economic Growth in the Arid Lands–Accelerated Growth (REGAL-AG)

- Deputy Chief of Party, ACDI/VOCA
- Value Chain Investment Advisor, ACDI/VOCA

Kenya Horticulture Competitiveness Project (KHCP)

- Marketing and Trade Promotion Manager, Fintrac
- Market Information Systems Manager, Fintrac

Uganda

Feed the Future Agricultural Inputs Activity (Ag-Inputs)

- Chief of Party, TetraTech/ARD
- Business Management Specialist, TetraTech/ARD
- Support Systems Specialist, TetraTech/ARD

Feed the Future Commodity Production and Marketing Activity (CPM)

- Chief of Party, Chemonics
- Commodity Portfolio Director, Chemonics

Northern Karamoja Growth Health and Governance (GHG)

- Deputy Chief of Party, Mercy Corps
- Country Director, Mercy Corps

Monitoring, Evaluating and Learning Program

- Senior Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist, QED

Zambia / Malawi / Tanzania / Zimbabwe / Rwanda Peer-learning event

Malawi

Integrating Nutrition in Value Chains (INVC)

- Senior Agriculturalist, DAI
- M&E Component Lead, DAI & Michigan State University

Tanzania

Tanzania Staples (NAFAKA)

- Deputy Chief of Party, ACDI/VOCA
- Association Development Specialist, Rural Urban Development Initiatives (RUDI)
- Market Linkage Officer, MVIWATA

Tanzania Agriculture Productivity Program (TAPP)

- Chief of Party, Fintrac
- Deputy Chief of Party, Fintrac

Zambia

Mawa

- Chief of Party, CRS
- Market Engagement Technical Quality Coordinator, CRS

- Agriculture Production Technical Quality Coordinator, CRS

Production, Finance and Improved Technology Plus (PROFIT+)

- Chief of Party, ACDI/VOCA
- Agriculture Finance Specialist, ACDI/VOCA

Commercial Agribusiness for Sustainable Horticulture (CASH) Project

- Chief of Party, Agribusiness in Sustainable Natural African Plant Products (ASNAPP)
- Program Manager, Agribusiness in Sustainable Natural African Plant Products (ASNAPP)
- Professor in Dept. of Agricultural, Food and Resource Economics, Rutgers-The State University of New Jersey

Rwanda

Rwanda Dairy Competitiveness Project II (RDCP II)

- Chief of Party, Land O'Lakes
- Deputy Chief of Party, Land O'Lakes

Integrated Improved Livelihood Program (IILP)

- Chief of Party, Global Communities
- Agricultural Specialist, Global Communities
- Senior Livelihoods Team Leader, Global Communities

Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe Agricultural Income and Employment Development (Zim-AIED)

- Deputy Chief of Party, Fintrac

*Various USAID Mission staff also attended the events.

APPENDIX 2: COPY OF THE PARTICIPANT REGISTRATION FORM

II. REGISTRATION FORM

Please register up to two (2) senior technical representatives by Aug 8, 2014.

Please return to leo@acdivoca.org by Aug 8, 2014.

<u>Senior technical representative #1:</u>

Name on Passport: (First/Given, Middle, Last/Surname)

Preferred Name:

Title:

Organization / Firm:

Project:

Email:

Business Address:

Business Phone:

Phone (with country code):

Skype:

The following information will be used to request country clearance:

Nationality:

Date of Birth: (day, month, year)

Place of Birth:

Passport Number:

Passport Type: Official/Personal

The following information will be used in case of emergency:

Emergency Contact #1:

Relationship to Participant:

Phone (with country code):

Email:

Emergency Contact #2:

Relationship to Participant:

Phone (with country code):

Email:

The following information will be used to make the event more comfortable:

Special Dietary Requirements:

Special Needs:

<u>Senior technical representative #2:</u>

Name on Passport: (First/Given, Middle, Last/Surname)

Preferred Name:

Title:

Organization / Firm:

Project:

Email:

Business Address:

Business Phone:

Phone (with country code):

Skype:

The following information will be used to request country clearance:

Nationality:

Date of Birth: (day, month, year)

Place of Birth:

Passport Number:

Passport Type: Official/Personal

The following information will be used in case of emergency:

Emergency Contact #1:

Relationship to Participant:

Phone (with country code):

Email:

Emergency Contact #2:

Relationship to Participant:

Phone (with country code):

Email:

The following information will be used to make the event more comfortable:

Special Dietary Requirements:

Special Needs:

APPENDIX 3: EXAMPLE OF AN INVITATION TO THE EVENT

USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Market Facilitation Peer-Learning Events 2014

East & Southern Africa region

July 22, 2014

Letter of Invitation

Two (2) senior technical representatives from the project are cordially invited to attend USAID's Market Facilitation Peer-Learning Event to be held in **Addis Ababa, Ethiopia** from **Oct 2-3, 2014**. Please note that participation is by-invitation-only. There are a limited number of seats, and participation is on a first-come-first-served basis.

USAID's Market Facilitation Peer-Learning Event aims to strengthen Implementation Partners' (IPs') market facilitation approaches in the region. These events are being organized through USAID's Leveraging Economic Opportunities (LEO) project in close collaboration with the Bureau for Food Security (BFS).

The Market Facilitation Peer-Learning Event focuses on the successes and struggles of value chain and market systems development within the context of USAID programming. By bringing together IPs from the same region, the event aims to stimulate peer-learning communities around market facilitation approaches. Key practitioners in the region will explore ways to improve the quality and consistency of market facilitation approaches in a country or region and to learn from what is working, what isn't and why.

Registration: Please register senior technical representatives using the attached registration form by August 8, 2014. Approximately 25 – 30 participants from Feed the Future focus countries in the region will attend each event. Participants will comprise senior technical representatives (not necessarily COPs) from USAID IPs that are involved in agricultural value chain development projects using market facilitation approaches (focusing on, but not limited to, Feed the Future funded projects). The events are intentionally limiting participation to ensure high-level interaction and discussion. The intention is for the events to act as a launching pad for continued technical support to other country-level projects. This technical support will target an even larger number of implementers. (Participation requires participants to pay their own travel and accommodation costs for the event. All event and meal costs will be covered by LEO project funds.)

Agenda Input: **Please submit agenda feedback from participants, if they would like, on key areas that they would most like to focus on by August 8, 2014, using the survey form attached**. This can be submitted after the registration is completed.

Thank you,

Jeanne Downing	Ruth Campbell
Senior Enterprise Development Advisor	Program Manager, LEO
USAID	ACDI/VOCA

APPENDIX 4: COPY OF THE PRE-EVENT PARTICIPANT SURVEY

III. SURVEY to solicit input into Agenda

To be completed by senior technical representatives invited to attend the peer-learning events.

Please return to leo@acdivoca.org by Aug 8, 2014.

Name: Project:

1. With respect to project **implementation**, what are some of the **greatest challenges** for market facilitation projects**?**

2. With respect to project **management**, what are some of the **greatest challenges** for market facilitation projects**?**

3. Please **select the 5 topics of <u>greatest</u> interest** to you personally for potential inclusion in the agenda:

- ☐ SCALING IMPACTS (technologies, business models, outreach): what is working/what isn't/why
- ☐ SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT models to empower smallholder suppliers
- ☐ INPUT SUPPLY SYSTEMS that effectively reach low-income and/or remote smallholders
- ☐ EQUITY INVESTMENT models to shift performance of markets
- ☐ ENSURING SUSTAINABILITY of impact through market systems development
- ☐ STRUCTURED TRADE that benefits smallholder farmers
- ☐ MANAGEMENT of market facilitation teams
- ☐ ANALYTICAL TOOLS for economic, social and political analyses to understand markets
- ☐ MONITORING DIRECT & INDIRECT BENEFICIARIES to capture the full scale of results
- ☐ FEEDBACK LOOPS to identify project direction, momentum, and scale
- ☐ INTEGRATING THE POOR: how growth can tangibly benefit the poor
- ☐ INTEGRATING GENDER in market systems development
- ☐ RESILIENCY of market systems to deal with shocks
- ☐ INTEGRATING NUTRITION considerations within market systems

☐ BENEFICIARY BEHAVIORS and risk profiles

4. Please **select the 5 topics of <u>least</u> interest** to you personally for potential inclusion in the agenda:

☐ SCALING IMPACTS (technologies, business models, outreach): what is working/what isn't/why

☐ SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT models to empower smallholder suppliers

☐ INPUT SUPPLY SYSTEMS that effectively reach low-income and/or remote smallholders

☐ EQUITY INVESTMENT models to shift performance of markets

☐ ENSURING SUSTAINABILITY of impact through market systems development

☐ STRUCTURED TRADE that benefits smallholder farmers

☐ MANAGEMENT of market facilitation teams

☐ ANALYTICAL TOOLS for economic, social and political analyses to understand markets

☐ MONITORING DIRECT & INDIRECT BENEFICIARIES to capture the full scale of results

☐ FEEDBACK LOOPS to identify project direction, momentum, and scale

☐ INTEGRATING THE POOR: how growth can tangibly benefit the poor

☐ INTEGRATING GENDER in market systems development

☐ RESILIENCY of market systems to deal with shocks

☐ INTEGRATING NUTRITION considerations within market systems

☐ BENEFICIARY BEHAVIORS and risk profiles

5. What **cases or activities** are you particularly interested in **hearing more about**?

6. What **cases, intervention activities, or management practices** from your own experience do you think would be relevant to share, and are you willing to share these?

7. Any **other insights** or input into the agenda?

APPENDIX 5: COPY OF END-OF-EVENT EVALUATION FORM

EVALUATION

Name: ______________________________(optional)   Organization: ____________________(optional)

1. Please indicate which type of organization you represent:

Development organization (non profit or for profit)	O	Donor	O	Other: ___________________	O

2. Please rate the overall event based on the:

	Very High	Somewhat	Somewhat Low	Very Low
Relevance of the discussions and learning to your current work	O	O	O	O
Extent to which you have acquired information that is **new** to you	O	O	O	O
Usefulness to you of the information that you have acquired	O	O	O	O
Overall usefulness of the event	O	O	O	O

3. How likely will you **apply** this thinking in your programming and work activities **in the next year**?

Unlikely	Unsure	Highly Likely
O	O	O

4. Did the event **impact the way** you will **design, implement, or evaluate** in your area of work?

It had great impact!	It made a little bit of an impact	It made no impact this time	I'm unsure
O	O	O	O

5. If the overall intention of this event is for lead technical practitioners to be able to **share and learn more about strategies and approaches to implement a market systems approach more effectively** ... this event ...

Failed miserably**!**	Was partially successful	Was very successful	Was absolutely brilliant
O	O	O	O

6. Feel free to share **any other comments** here, such as what was particularly successful or what could have been improved, or what was most or least useful.

APPENDIX 6: EXAMPLE OF AN EVENT AGENDA

Market Facilitation Peer-Learning Event 2014

East & Southern Africa region

AGENDA

Day 1

8am: Registration & Breakfast

1. Opening & Welcome

2. Introduction

3. Participant Survey – Summary of input

4. **Input supply market systems that benefit smallholders, including low-income and/or remote producers**

   a. What are you doing to facilitate improved performance in input supply systems?
   b. How do you know if your interventions are working (achieving change in the system)?
   c. How do you link technical information and research to commercial input markets?
   d. How do you achieve increased scale of outreach, adoption of new technologies, practices and business models?
   e. How do you increase inclusion (gender, vulnerable populations, etc.)?

Break

Select between:

5a. **Sustainability: Market facilitation in practice**

   a. What are facilitation tactics to achieve sustainable scaling?
   b. How do you make the case for facilitation tactics in light of the pressure of attaining immediate results?

5b. **Incentives to adopt & innovate within market systems**

   a. How can you create momentum for change in market systems?
   b. What are the roles of incentives and feedback loops in understanding if change and/or adoption are taking place within market systems and why that is happening?

Lunch

6. **Market linkages and supply chain management** - output market systems that are inclusive of smallholder suppliers

   a. What are you doing to facilitate improved performance in output market systems?
   b. How do you know if your interventions are working (achieving change in the system)?
   c. How do you develop partnerships with input providers and service providers?
   d. How do you achieve increased scale of outreach, adoption of new technologies, practices and business models?
   e. How do you increase inclusion (gender, vulnerable populations, etc.)?

Break

Select session that did not attend before lunch:

7a. **Incentives to adopt & innovate within market systems**

   a. How can you create momentum for change in market systems?
   b. What are the roles of incentives and feedback loops in understanding if change and/or adoption are taking place within market systems and why that is happening?

7b. **Sustainability: Market facilitation in practice**

   a. What are facilitation tactics to achieve sustainable scaling?
   b. How do you make the case for facilitation tactics versus the pressure of attaining immediate results?

5:30 pm Close

6:30 pm Cocktails

Day 2

7:30am: Breakfast

1. Opening & Key Priority Areas

2. **Financing private sector growth** to improve the performance of input & output markets

2a. **Appropriate and cost-effective financial services and financial management**

   a. Does cost of finance generate appropriate returns?
   b. What are appropriate terms and conditions for financial services?
   c. Which constraints can be addressed by alternative financial services?

Break

2b. **Appropriate types of finance for firm and market system growth**

a. What is management for growth?
b. What are firms' capacities for growth?
c. How do you understand the role of equity versus debt in terms of managing incentives for growth?

Lunch

Select between:

3a. **Adaptive management practices**

a. What are effective adaptive management practices of market facilitation teams?

3b. **Tracking system change**

a. What do you need to do to track/ measure scaling?

Break

4. Learning & practice priorities at country-level

a. Taking learning back to your project
b. Exploring Local Learning Hubs and Solution Sharing Exchanges

5. Closing & Evaluation

5:30 pm Close

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