

Preface

The Participatory Market Chain Analysis Guide was developed as a key step in the 'area-based approach to rural agroenterprise development'. The *guide* is based on the principles of developing market-led interventions that go beyond single intervention projects. The aim of this *guide* is to enable service providers to work with a range of actors in selected market chains and design interventions that initiate systemic changes in the marketplace.

The approach seeks to empower producer groups to engage with markets more effectively and strengthen their business linkage with other entrepreneurs. The goal is to upgrade the level of competitiveness for all actors within a market chain and thus enable rural producers, traders, and processors to make the shift from opportunistic and irregular market linkages to systematic players within growth value chains.

This *guide* is the fourth in a series of documents designed to support agencies implementing participatory agroenterprise development programs operating within defined geographical areas. The guide series currently includes:

1. Strategy Paper: A Participatory and Area-based Approach to Rural Agroenterprise Development.

2. A Participatory Guide to Developing Partnerships, Area Resource Assessment and Planning Together.
3. Identifying Market Opportunities for Rural Smallholder Producers.
4. **Participatory Market Chain Analysis for Smallholder Producers.**
5. Evaluating and Strengthening Rural Business Development Services.
6. A Market Facilitator's Guide to Participatory Agroenterprise Development.
7. Collective Marketing for Smallholder Producers.
8. A Guide to Rapid Market Appraisals for Smallholder Agroenterprise Development.
9. A Guide to Agricultural Marketing Extension.
10. A Guide to Policy Analysis for Smallholder Agroenterprise Development and Advocacy.

Note to users

Service providers should read the guides in their entirety, to absorb the ideas and concepts prior to going to the field. Our experience has shown that best results are attained when these processes are not implemented in a mechanical manner; rather that the principles are interpreted and adapted to local conditions based on the marketing environment, available resources, and anticipated scale of implementation.

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