



The Donor Committee for Enterprise Development

## Market Systems Development Working Group

### MINUTES

Wednesday 26th November 2024 at 13:00 UCT

#### Chair

Pauline Baars (CBI)

Nic van der Jagt (IKEA)

#### Apologies in advance

Margot Lobbezoo (CBI)

#### Members present

Elisabet Montgomery (Sida)

Rob Skidmore (ITC)

David Neven (FAO)

Gun Eriksson Skoog (Sida)

Steve Hartrich (ILO)

Pascal Fabing (LuxDev)

Karen Kimami (Gatsby)

Steven Geiger (SDC)

Ranal Fakhoury (UNIDO)

Kristin O'Planick (USAID)

Susanne Thiard-laforet (ADA)

Guy Redding (MFAT NZ)

Marleen van Ruijven (MoFA)

#### DCED Secretariat

Severin Oman (FAO)

Merten Sievers (ILO)

Mike Albu, Mike Klassen,

Urkaly Isaev (IFC)

Isabelle Gore

### AGENDA

1. Welcome & introductions
2. Agency updates
3. Brief Workstream activity updates
  - 1.2 BEAM CMS & search upgrade
  - 3.1 MSD & Dev Finance
  - 3.2 Youth Employment / MSD4E
  - 3.4 MSD in FCAS Learning brief
  - 3.5 MSD & Trade
4. Fresh SDC guidance on System Change
5. Reflections & lessons from the DCED Global Seminar

*Members organised into two 'breakout rooms' to discuss issues for 30 mins; then return to plenary for 10 minutes to compare*
6. Closing remarks, ideas for next WG Meeting

## 1. Welcome & introductions

Co-Chair Pauline (**CBI**) welcomed all to the 35th meeting of MSD Working Group. She thanked Karen (Gatsby) for stepping up as co-Chair during her recent absence and for all her support for the Global Seminar.

## 2. Member agency updates

Kristin (**USAID**) shared that they are expecting an administration change so in a period of uncertainty. She also mentioned that they have 25 participants signed up for their popular MSD 101 course; and are in a flurry of reporting period.

Rob (**ITC**) shared that they have two ongoing project development processes involving MSD. One is in Uganda where sector selection processes are ongoing. The other is in Iraq, in collaboration with ILO. Thanks to Sida in both cases for their support. Kristin (**USAID**) reminded members about this new [Uganda MSD learning network](#) here

Steven (**SDC**) explained they are also expecting budget cuts in near future. He mentioned that he is trying to convince his colleagues to include ex post evaluations in their project designs. The office in Bosnia has agreed to do this. He is reaching out to other country offices to find funds for ex-post evaluation.

Steve (**ILO**) mentioned two things for 2025. First, a consultant is now working on how to promote job creation in MSD programmes. Second, ILO is about to start a learning exercise taking stock of ten years of experience using systemic approaches.

Marleen (**MoFA NL**) reported that she presented their programmatic approach in five workshops during a conference, and now is conducting an internal review within MoFA NL on how this approach has contributed to change management.

Pauline (**CBI**) noted that CBI is currently working on a new strategy for 2026 and beyond, while they are also responding to changes in the Dutch government and related budget cuts.

## 3. Workstream activity updates

### Workstream 1.2 BEAM Website CMS and Search upgrade

Isabelle (**DCED Secretariat**) discussed the ongoing work on the website, including content review and graphic design tweaks. She also mentioned the potential implementation of a new search facility, with a consultant's recommendation to use vector search. The web developer is set to work on this project over the next year. Mike A (**DCED Secretariat**) invited feedback on the website redesign, and Pauline suggested he present this in the next WG meeting.

### Workstream 3.1 MSD & Dev Finance

Karen (**Gatsby Africa**) reported on two ongoing activities. The first is a case-study by ISF Advisors on Gatsby's aquaculture in Kenya, and tea programs in Rwanda, viewed from an investment perspective. She expects conclusive outputs to be sharable in the next January WG meeting. The second activity is BII's case-study examining donor - DFI collaboration. This is in final stages & expect to be published in December.

### Workstream 3.2 Youth Employment / MSD4E

Mike K (**DCED Secretariat**) provided updates on the youth employment work stream, mentioning some progress on contracting, and the dissemination of the MSD4E landscape study that collated information about 53 interventions. These searchable resources are now uploaded and published on BEAM. He also mentioned a webinar planned for January to discuss

the study. MSD WG's recent support to the MSD4E community, including high visibility at the Global Seminar, has really borne fruit with a 40% increase in membership.

#### Workstream 3.4      MSD in Fragile & Conflict settings

In the meeting, Mike Albu (**DCED Secretariat**) informed members about the successful completion of the activity on MSD in fragile and conflict-affected settings. He flagged up the final [Learning Brief](#) on using MSD approaches in these contexts that is now published on BEAM.

#### Workstream 3.5      MSD & Trade

Gun (**Sida**) discussed the initial review of the nexus between MSD and trade, which was conducted by consultants, already published on BEAM Exchange. This topic requires further work. Gun went on to discuss the micro clinic on trade at the recent Global Seminar. This highlighted the conceptual need for a taxonomy to clarify the confusion between the two areas. There was also interest from attendees to contribute as a reference group for the MSD WG task-team.

The next step is to have a meeting for the task team, which will likely take place in January. Pauline (**CBI**) encouraged the team to keep her updated on the developments in the group.

### **4. SDC Guidance on system change**

Steven (**SDC**) briefed members about the user-friendly and concise [slide deck](#) developed to guide SDC program officers in steering programme implementers to achieve, assess, and report system change. The slide deck was designed to incentivize colleagues in the field to think about what they can do differently.

He said SDC are organizing two online learning clinics with programme officers in Asia and the Caucasus by mid-December to present the slide deck and discuss concrete cases of projects where program officers contributed to system change. The learning clinics aim to increase ownership and capacity among programme officers. In response to questions, Steven clarified that the focus was on programme officers and that the slide deck did not explicitly discuss the involvement of target groups.

Mike Albu (**DCED Secretariat**) reminded members of the availability of all papers discussed in MSD WG meetings on the MSD WG micro site.

### **5. Reflections & lessons from the Global Seminar**

Pauline (**CBI**) asked about documentation from the Global Seminar's micro clinics, to which Mike K (**DCED Secretariat**) raised the possibility of sharing these documents with those who attended the seminar and considering a more formal review process for wider publication. Mike Klassen also mentioned his intention to send out a check-in email to facilitators to gauge their progress on writing up their micro clinic experiences.

The Working Group then divided into two break-out rooms for 30 minutes to discuss lessons from the Global Seminar, also drawing on the [notes gathered in advance](#).

The two groups reflections were summarised thus:

- Attendees 'loved it'. The high proportion of donor staff drove the agenda and content in different directions. There would be value in maintaining particularly the engagement with front-line staff in embassies and missions – to support and celebrate their work.
- Energy and engagement for the green agenda has expanded significantly. The tension between developing new green sectors and greening existing activities remains a challenge.

- Measuring impact and results of the 'greening' programmes is a high priority.
- Similarly, members were encouraged that the range of sectors being discussed has significantly broadened beyond conventional Agriculture
- Interest in and the ambition for transformational change was noticeable. But recurrent challenges of programming timeframes, finance and how to work with Governments remain.

Coming back together, the WG agreed to consider these issues for future working group sessions.

## **6. Closing remarks, ideas for next WG Meeting**

Pauline (**CBI**) wrapped up the meeting by thanking members for the time and contributions.

**ACTION:** Mike A (**Secretariat**) will poll members for a next date in late January.