



DCED Global Seminar

Nairobi

1st – 3rd October 2024

Systemic approaches for sustainable growth, employment and resilience

Organised in collaboration with Gatsby Africa and the ILO

Provisional Agenda

Outline of the content to be featured in the main seminar sessions

Updated as details of speakers and topics are confirmed

v. 21 August 2024

The **DCED's 2024 Global Seminar** focuses on using systemic approaches for growth, employment and resilience. Sessions will prioritise practical lessons emerging from PSD field experience, evidence of what is working well, along with analysis of the pitfalls. We aim to create a space conducive for constructive conversations between donors and experienced PSD practitioners.

The Seminar's sessions will be organised broadly around the following six strands:

- [Systemic approaches in practice](#)
- [Employment and decent work](#)
- [Innovative financing for systemic development](#)
- [Climate adaptation & environmental sustainability](#)
- [PSD in fragile & conflict-affected settings](#)
- [Effective donor-implementer relationships](#)

The content of many sessions will also feature two important cross-cutting themes:

 The challenges of measuring systemic results (MEL)

 How to promote gender equality, diversity and social inclusion (GEDI)

In addition, various [independent side events](#) are also planned on **Monday 30th** and **Friday 4th**.

Sessions summary

Systemic approaches in practice

- Language matters: the meaning of systemic approaches
- What counts: assessing system change 
- Back to basics: principles of good PSD practice 
- Beyond incremental change: risk & systemic ambition in PSD programmes
- Systemic approaches for trade-related outcomes
- Transformative impact: how can programmes select sectors with high potential

Employment and decent work

- Charting the landscape: systemic approaches to employment
- Job creation: how does it happen and why isn't there more of it?
- Setting targets and ambitions for realistic employment programme design 
- Green jobs and the 'just transition': experimenting with a systems lens 

Innovative financing for systemic development

- Building financial markets that support systemic change
- Bridging the financing gap in practice: examples from climate financing
- Innovating financing practices for small and women-led enterprises 
- Let's talk business

Climate adaptation & environmental sustainability

- Navigating green PSD
- Bridging the financing gap in practice: examples from climate financing
- Greening the MSD approach in agriculture
- Green jobs and the 'just transition': experimenting with a systems lens 
- Measuring green PSD 

Fragile & conflict-affected settings

- Making it work: adapting PSE & MSD to fragile & conflict-affected settings
- Can PSD achieve meaningful impact in fragile contexts? 

Donor-implementer relationships

- Reaching across the aisle: the importance of donor-implementer relationships 
- Interpreting the rules: managing compliance in systemic programmes 
- Donor policies that affect systemic practice 
- Investing in emerging leaders on MSD/PSD programmes

Systemic approaches in practice

Language matters: the meaning of systemic approaches

What does it mean to use a 'systemic approach'? This session will explore the diverse and sometimes contradictory interpretations of system change, systems thinking and systemic approaches. The aim is to lay a foundation for constructive dialogue during the Seminar. Walking through the Agenda, the session also looks to shift the conversation from 'what' systemic approaches are, to 'how' to make them work in diverse contexts and with different funding goals.

Assessing system change: what counts?

To make the case systemic for approaches we must demonstrate that systems have changed as a result of programmes' interventions. This session will share recent examples of evidence for successful system change, and will describe the diverse assessment methods used to substantiate it. Crucially, the session will explore what donors did that facilitated the generation of this evidence. This aims to open up discussion about future programme design; and about how best to foster and support staff in donor agencies to champion these approaches.



Learning from experience: principles of good PSD practice

Lessons from the past 30 years of private sector development efforts point to a core set of critical factors for success. This session will take everyone on that journey and explore what good PSD practice may look like, covering practical implications for donors and implementers alike.



Beyond incremental change: risk & systemic ambition in PSD programmes

We all seek to run innovative programmes that deliver real change at scale which benefits people living in poverty. We are often faced with both real and perceived boundaries, such as related to targets, budgets, and contracting procedures. This session will explore how programmes can be designed with the expectation that some initiatives will fail, while setting high ambitions and encouraging innovation to reach their goals. It will also examine the arguments for using theory-based evaluation methods.

Systemic approaches for trade-related outcomes

Trade can serve as a pull for value addition and better quality products and services that ultimately create opportunities for job creation. How to do this using a systemic approach for trade outcomes that are enduring and scalable is however less clear. This session will highlight lessons from recent experiences - in both MSD and trade projects - to help understand how donors and practitioners can do more in this space in the future.

Transformative impact: how can programmes select sectors with high potential?

Many development programmes select sectors or industries to focus on, but often this is based on whether many poor people are active in that sector, rather than an assessment of the potential to have a transformative impact on inclusive economic development through higher productivity, better quality jobs and/or export growth. How can sector selection be done more effectively?

Employment & decent work

Charting the landscape: systemic approaches to employment

Employment interventions go beyond job creation: they include access to work via job matching or skills development, and job quality improvements. This session presents findings of the global landscape study of MSD for Employment and its implications for donors and implementers in terms of programme design, results & evidence, staffing and capacity building. Donors need to make important trade-offs between these different objectives, and implementers need to be clear about what they can realistically deliver.

Job creation: how does it happen and why isn't there more of it?

Job creation continues to be an important priority for donors. Can a systemic approach offer any new insights on how to tackle this enduring challenge? The session will combine research from labour market experts with practical experience of MSD projects targeting job creation to clarify what it means to create a job, and where MSD programmes should focus their efforts.

Setting targets and ambitions for realistic employment programme design

Employment-focused PSD interventions vary dramatically in scale depending on their objectives and context. Numbers can range from hundreds (new jobs) to thousands (people trained), to hundreds of thousands (job matching via digital platforms). This session will explore how donors can set clear parameters for what they mean by 'employment' as well as realistic expectations about the scale of results during project design and inception. It will also emphasise the role of implementers in setting expectations and working with donors to ground programme design in reality.



Green jobs and 'just transition': experimenting with a systems lens (see below)



Innovative financing for systemic development

Building financial markets that support systemic change

This scene setting session will make a pitch for innovative financing to help drive systemic change in sectors of the economy relevant for achieving development outcomes. It will discuss ongoing efforts and challenges in building financial markets that generate economic, social and environmental returns at acceptable risks and that create appropriate financial products for small enterprises. Investors, DFIs and donors all have a role to play.

Bridging the financing gap in practice: examples from climate financing

Donor investment can 'originate' increasingly well-established enterprises operating in increasingly well-known less risky markets. How can we create financial pathways that enable these enterprises to continue to grow when donor support can no longer be justified? The session explores lessons learned from projects and DFIs and reflects on the importance of developed domestic financial markets to offer 'point-to-point' access.

Innovating financing for small and women-led enterprises

Small and women-led enterprises often face particular challenges in terms accessing finance. They may lack collateral, financial records and business plans. This session showcases innovative investment and banking practices that can foster financial inclusion of small and women-led enterprises.



Let's talk business

Projects, investors, DFIs and donors are invited to discuss concrete financing needs and offers. Specific topics for discussion will be determined closer to the time, based on interest expressed by participants

Climate adaptation & environmental sustainability

Navigating green PSD

What does Green PSD look like in practice? How do we make sense of the murky jargon around 'green growth'? This session presents a Green PSD Framework, articulating how different PSD programmes aim to achieve green and economic outcomes, and showcases practical experiences in using systemic approaches.

Bridging the financing gap in practice: examples from climate financing

See above

Greening the MSD approach in agriculture

How can donors and practitioners design and implement impactful agricultural programmes that use the MSD approach, and want to be intentional about achieving environmental goals? This session will draw on the DCED's recent 'Greening MSD' guide, and several practical examples that illustrate this guidance.

Green jobs and the 'just transition': experimenting with a systems lens

As governments dedicate more resources to climate change mitigation, green policies create both winners and losers - for industries, firms and workers. How can donors leverage this changing landscape to support employment outcomes? What do early-stage systemic interventions look like in this area? And how are implementers reconciling competing objectives (environment, employment and inclusion) in project implementation?



Measuring green PSD

Navigating green PSD is complex, so how to measure its impact? Green PSD requires new indicators and new ways of measuring. This session will be a candid discussion between donors and practitioners on where to set the bar for the measurement of green PSD programmes. It will explore questions such as what indicators to track; how to make sure that we are reporting credible data; what resources are needed for such measurement; and how to contextualize findings and trade-offs between economic and green impact results.



Fragile & conflict-affected settings

Making it work: adapting PSE & MSD to fragile & conflict-affected settings (FCAS)

In regions struggling with conflict and climate-related risks, the private sector offers opportunities to deliver investment that mitigates risks, and helps communities become more resilient. This session will explore the practicalities of programme design in these settings, using examples from recent programs in Sudan, Ethiopia, Somalia and Haiti. We will examine opportunities for donors to build in flexibility so that programmes can respond to emerging opportunities or shocks. We will also look at how teams adapt PSE & MSD practices in FCAS, and compare their tactics for staying or divesting when conflict flares.

Can PSD achieve meaningful impact in fragile contexts?

This session highlights the results from three mature programs that have adapted PSE and MSD approaches to different fragile contexts, including areas with long-term refugees, areas gradually moving out of conflict, and areas with overlapping development and humanitarian programs. Examples will demonstrate what can be achieved and why this makes a difference for short-term livelihood outcomes, social cohesion, and long-term economic recovery.



Effective donor-implementer relationships

Reaching across the aisle: the importance of donor-implementer relationships in PSD

Systemic approaches require trust and a mutual understanding between donors and implementers about key issues including programme design, staffing, flexible planning, and accountability (MEL).



This plenary explores how donors and implementers can 'reach across the aisle' to build better relationships and tackle these key issues together during different phases of the project lifecycle. It will be guided by the ideas framed in the BEAM paper 'Deepening the relationship'.

Interpreting the rules: managing compliance in systemic programmes



Every donor has its own set of rules and policies that govern critical aspects of PSD projects: procurement/grants, measurement, budgeting and staffing. Opportunities for working systemically may be undermined and learning lost when narrow and risk-averse interpretations get codified as the only way of doing things. This session will spotlight some positive deviants in this regard:

1. internal champions within donors pushing for org-wide reinterpretations of rules, and
2. implementers that have succeeded at pushing the boundaries - by challenging interpretations to create space for flexibility and learning

Donor policies that affect systemic practice



Many donor agencies give their missions or embassies autonomy to design and manage programmes, but also regularly roll out new policies and priorities from above. This can lead to surface-level compliance without affecting real change. This session examines donor policies that successfully influenced practice in missions/embassies and project implementation. What do these examples teach us about the conditions and factors that led to 'success' in policy implementation? How can we then apply those lessons to critical areas affecting the implementation of systemic approaches (e.g. results measurement, staffing)?

Investing in emerging leaders on MSD & PSD programmes

Staffing, including leadership, is critical to the success of programmes that use a systemic approach. Yet investment in future leaders is a vital missing piece across our industry. Recent research shows many of the actions needed to strengthen the leadership pipeline lie with implementing agencies. This session will explore initiatives of implementers who have invested their own resources in cultivating MSD leadership. Given the importance of budgeting and resource allocation for such initiatives, the session will also include donor views on how these initiatives were funded and justified.



This event is organised with generous support from Gatsby Africa and the International Labour Organisation



There is no fee for participating in the main three days of the DCED Global Seminar 2024. Participants will be responsible for their own travel, accommodation and subsistence.

Please address any questions to seminar@enterprise-development.org

Independent side events & training workshops

Contact providers directly to register

Monday 30th September

Results Measurement Best Practices according to the DCED Standard (full day)

Facilitated by: Aly Miehlbradt & Phitcha Wanitphon, Miehlbradt Consulting Ltd

This [comprehensive workshop \(flyer\)](#) will discuss the fundamentals of good results measurement. It covers why an effective results measurement system is crucial for managing systemic programmes, as well as practical applications of the key elements of the DCED Standard. Fees apply.

For more information contact Aly Miehlbradt: holm@miehlbradt.com

How to be a Good Funder of MSD programmes (full day)

Facilitated by: Dr Ben Taylor & Zannatul Ferdous, Agora Global, in collaboration with Sida

This full-day workshop will cover the basic concepts of MSD, including the design of programmes, the selection of implementers, management and results measurement. Participation is free for DCED member agency staff.

For more information contact Dr Ben Taylor: btaylor@agoraglobal.org

Friday 4th October

Assessing System Changes (full day)

Facilitated by: Alby Miehlbradt & Phitcha Wanitphon, Miehlbradt Consulting Ltd

This [dynamic full-day workshop \(flyer\)](#) is inspired by the '[Pragmatic Approach to Assessing System Change](#)' guidance. It will cover the practical methodologies for assessing system changes, as well as actionable insights and tools for effective implementation. Fees apply.

For more information contact Aly Miehlbradt: holm@miehlbradt.com

Applying the MSD approach in fragile settings that host large numbers of forcibly displaced people

Co-hosted by: DAI and the ILO

This free discussion will draw on practical experiences in implementing the FCDO-funded Strengthening Host and Refugee Populations in Ethiopia (SHARPE) programme and ILO's experience of private sector and market systems development across multiple refugee-hosting countries in Asia and Africa.

For more information contact Elise Rohan: elise.rohan@dai.com

Gatsby Africa Open House (8:00 – 13:00)

Hosted by Gatsby Africa @ Merchant Square, Riverside Drive, Nairobi

A chance to delve into Gatsby Africa's sector transformation initiatives with staff involved in Aquaculture, Livestock, Water, Forestry, and Textiles & Apparel programmes across the East Africa region. The sessions will also cover Gatsby's efforts to bolster centres of government capacity to transform sectors. Participants will explore innovative interventions, exchange insights about managing PSD programs in East Africa and learn about the successes and challenges encountered by donor-implementers.

For more information contact Karen Kimami: karen.kimami@gatsbyafrica.org.uk

Innovative Solutions Workshop on Unlocking Capital for African SMEs and Growth Businesses

Hosted by Frontier Finance

With the appropriate support of donor agencies, development finance institutions, African pension funds, government agencies and foundations, small business growth funds are positioned to channel \$4.5 billion in new impact capital for African/MENA's SMEs. This one-day workshop and networking opportunity will explore innovative financing models that are being used to bolster such local fund managers. Building upon examples, participants will co-create approaches that leverage their own organization's resources and capabilities to drive capital mobilization at scale.

[See the flyer for more information](#) and register by emailing **lisa@frontierfinance.org**