

Facilitator guide

MODULE 3: DESIGNING STRATEGIES AND INTERVENTIONS

Purpose: Participants are able to design strategies that are attractive to donors while allowing them to facilitate sustainable transformations in the market system.

Learning objectives:

Participants...

- Can explain why it is important to balance the needs of donors with the needs of market actors
- Become familiar with the three fundamental principles of designing strategies and interventions
- Are able to list a number of example activities in line with PMSD principles
- Understand that unique activities will need to be designed for the particular context and market system

Note:

- **Invite fundraisers to take part in this module;** they will have extremely useful insights into specific donors and will also benefit from understanding the particular flexibility required by the PMSD process.

Materials (see individual sessions for more details):

- ❖ Flipchart paper and pens
- ❖ 8 balloons – 4 each of two colours (see session 1 for details)
- ❖ 3 different colours of post-its
- ❖ Flipchart with the vision tips written on it
- ❖ [3.1 Module 3 Slides](#)
- ❖ [3.2 Fundamental principles statements](#) x 2 (see session 2 for details)
- ❖ [3.2a Fundamental principles signs](#) x 1
- ❖ [3.3 Facilitation activities](#) x 1
- ❖ [3.4 Preliminary Vision Questions](#) x 1 per group
- ❖ [3.5 Plan Your Strategy worksheet](#) x 1 per group

Session	Session title	Time
1	Introduction – meeting the needs of donors and market actors	20
2	The fundamental principles	50
3	Facilitation activity plays	70
4	Vision maps and statements	100
5	Identifying leverage points, activities and exit strategies	150
Total		6hrs 30 mins

Session title: Intro – meeting the needs of donors and market actors

Time: 20 mins

Materials:

- ❖ [Slides](#)
- ❖ 4 red balloons and 4 blue balloons, blown up and tied; each balloon should have one of the following phrases written on a small piece of paper inside the balloon (it is a bit difficult but possible to do this)
 - Red balloons - donors:
 - **Impact**
 - **Value addition**
 - **Cost-effectiveness**
 - **Relevance**
 - Blue balloons – market actors:
 - **Listen**
 - **Involve**
 - **Leadership**
 - **Flexibility**

If you are struggling to do this or are worried that participants won't like popping the balloons, then you can just write the words in bold on the balloon using a permanent marker.

Objective:

- Highlight key message of module – balancing needs of donor and market actors

Process:

Activity:

- *[This should be the first thing you do as soon as you start the session]*
- Can everybody please stand up?
- The object of this exercise is to try and keep all the balloons in the air for 3 minutes. If any of the balloons fall on the ground, they cannot be picked up again.
- *[Bounce the balloons towards the group one by one. When they are all in the air, start timing. Ensure that dropped balloons aren't picked up again. When 3 minutes are up, note whether any have fallen on the floor]*

Present:

- A good PMSD Strategy should **meet the needs of the market actors** while also **responding to the interests of the prospective donor(s)**.
- In that game the red balloons represented the donors while the blue balloons

represented the market actors. In order for a PMSD process to be successful, we need to keep all the balloons in the air, i.e. meet all their needs.

Discuss:

- How did we do? *[encourage some sharing from the game]*
- What will happen if we neglect the needs of the donors/market actors? *[start with whichever balloon was dropped first]*
- How can we meet the needs of donors? Luckily the balloons can give us a clue – pop a red balloon to find out
- *[have participants pop them one by one and read out the word]*
- What do you think this word means in this context? *[ask this for each balloon/phrase]*
- Are any of these needs in conflict with each other?
- *[stick the signs up on the wall to refer back to throughout the module]*

- *[go through agenda – slide 2]*

Notes:

- **Definitions of the words and phrases in the donor balloons:**
 - **Impact:** Donors want assurance that the proposed work is going to have a tangible impact. They look at milestones and targets against objectively verifiable indicators (OVIs) for a sense of ambition and commitment from the applicant.
 - **Value addition:** Donors want to understand what sets you apart from other applicants. This is your opportunity to convince them that the PMSD approach described in the PMSD Roadmap adds enormous value in terms of sustainability and scale of impact. You should seek to reflect this added value in the proposal narrative and in the OVIs and targets.
 - **Cost-effectiveness:** First of all donors are looking for accounting and budgetary competency: they will check to see that the budget that is submitted is realistic and reflects what is discussed in the proposal narrative. They will also be comparing proposals against each other in terms of value for money: where are resources used for the greatest effect. Once again, you should use the proposal narrative and the OVIs and targets to clearly signal the value for money of your proposal.
 - **Relevance:** Donors want proposals to fit with their values, priorities and objectives. Proposals should therefore be tailored to the specific interests of each donor and particular calls.

- **Points to bear in mind for the discussion:**
 - **If you neglect the needs of the donor** you won't be able to access the funding required to facilitate the process, or if you are able to gain

- funding but not able to meet their indicators, funding may be withdrawn
- **If you neglect the needs of the market actors** you may be able to make some short term changes but they will not be led by the market actors themselves, and so will lack scale and sustainability
 - **Reference can be made to this exercise throughout the rest of the day** e.g. 'Will that strategy keep both your blue and red balloons in the air?'

Session title: The Fundamental Principles

Time: 50 mins

Materials:

- ❖ [3.2a Fundamental principles signs](#) - cut up and stuck up on the wall in three different parts of the room
- ❖ [3.2 Fundamental principles statements](#) x 2
 - One to be cut up into the individual statements to be mixed up and handed out randomly to participants
 - One to be kept whole as a reference sheet for the facilitator
- ❖ [Slide 3](#)

Objective:

- Participants can state and explain the three fundamental principles and their importance in PMSD
- Participants are aware of their overlapping nature of the principles

Context:

Livelihoods and microenterprise development efforts often have limited success in delivering sustainable impacts because they ignore the connections that exist or should exist between marginalised people and the systems that surround them. Furthermore, successes often remain contained in small “pockets” that only benefit the lucky few.

Recognising this problem, in 2002 Practical Action adopted a systemic approach to making markets work for the poor. This was combined with the organisation’s long-standing commitment to participatory, bottom-up development. This commitment stems from the recognition that, as temporary, grant-based actors, an organisations’ support should not create aid-dependency; rather, it should take a facilitative approach.

This creates the conditions for the market actors to drive deep and lasting change themselves.

Process:

Present:

[Slide 3] There are three fundamental principles of PMSD, which are like the three legs of a stool. They must be taken into account at all times in order to keep the stool balanced. The principles are Systemic Thinking, Facilitation and Participation. When all these legs are in place, there is potential for change that is **sustainable** with impact at **scale**.

- Could anyone give us a general definition of ‘**Systemic thinking**’?
- *[If no one offers, say something along the lines of... **Systemic thinking is***

about looking at a system as a whole and understanding how it's component parts influence and interact]

- Could anyone give us a general definition of **Facilitation**'?
- *[If no one offers, 'Facilitation' is defined as the act of making things easier. In other words you are enabling others to do things.]* In PMSD this principle emphasises the temporary and catalytic nature of our role.
- Could anyone give us a general definition of **Participation**'?
- *['Participation', according to the Oxford English Dictionary, is 'the action of taking part in something.']* In PMSD, this principle emphasises the participatory nature of the process, the specific tools we use to bring actors together to drive their own market transformation.

This exercise will help us to better understand what these principles mean in practice, and specifically how they are used in relation to PMSD.

Activity:

Part 1 - 5 mins:

- *[Give each participant a statement. If there are fewer than 16 participants, try to ensure that there are a roughly equal number of statements for each definition. If there are more than 16, then statements can be shared between 2 people]*
- You must decide which principle your statement best fits with; 'Systemic thinking' 'Facilitation' or 'Participation' *[point out the signs around the room that correspond with these]*
- In pairs, share your statements and discuss where they best fit. When you have decided, go and stand under the relevant sign. There may be significant overlap so don't worry if you are not sure

Part 2 - 15 mins:

- Each of you will now read out your statement to the rest of the group.
- If everyone is happy that you are in the right group, we shall move onto the next statement. If anyone thinks you are in the wrong group and should be in their group instead, they should put up their hand and be ready to explain why.
- It is ultimately the decision of the statement holder where they go.
- *[when someone puts up their hand] Why do you think they belong in your group? Do any of the other groups think the statement belongs with them?*
- *[all groups that wish to can make a case, then the statement holder decides which group to go with – keep discussions short]*
- *[continue until all statements have been read out and everyone has decided where to stand]*

Part 3 - 15 mins:

- In 10 minutes each group must now write a summary of your principle, based

on all the statements in your group, which completes the following two phrases:

- '[The principle] is important in PMSD because...'
- 'Without [the principle]...'

Part 4 - 10 mins:

- Each group should now read out their summary
- Does anyone have any questions/comments about this?

Present – 5 mins:

These 3 principles when used together have the potential to lead to sustainable impacts at scale. The guidelines in step 3 are full of examples of how this works in practice.

Notes:

- The principles work hand in hand with each other so there is a degree of overlap and some of the statements may address more than one principle. Acknowledge this to participants and ensure that the discussion about where it best fits only lasts as long as it is interesting and productive then share the correct answer

Session title: Facilitation Activity Plays
Time: 70 mins
<p>Materials:</p> <p>❖ 3.3 Facilitation activities – 1 copy - cut up into separate pieces and divide into 3 piles for 3 groups. Give 1 copy of the subsidy box to each group.</p>
<p>Objective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Participants are able to list a number of example activities in line with PMSD principles ➤ Participants understand that unique activities will need to be designed for the particular context and market system
<p>Context:</p> <p>Now that you have a better understanding of the fundamental principles of PMSD, you may already be questioning some of the traditional activities and interventions used by development organisations, which may not all fit with these principles.</p> <p>Therefore, we need to be thinking about some new kinds of activities that do fit within the principles of PMSD. Every market system and context we work with will be unique, as will each vision for change. This means that you cannot cut and paste a successful set of activities from another system and expect it to have the same impact. You will need creativity, experience and flexibility in your approach.</p> <p>However, it can help to be exposed to examples from elsewhere to see <u>what</u> kinds of activities can fit within these principles and <u>how</u> to facilitate their implementation to ensure that they do so.</p>
<p>Process:</p> <p><i>Activity:</i></p> <p>Part 1 - preparation - 30 mins:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each group has been given a number of examples of real-life activities that have been undertaken by Practical Action as part of a PMSD process. • You will have 30 minutes to prepare a 5-minute ‘play’ to illustrate one of these activities • Start by reading through all the examples you have been given. Note that activities 1-6 are all purely facilitative, while activities 7-14 involve some element of subsidy. Please read the additional box advising how to use subsidies in a smart and strategic way. • As you read through them, select the one you would like to act out • Then, using the information in the table as well as your own experience and imaginations, come up with your 5-minute play, demonstrating this activity in practice

Part 2 - performance - 20 mins:

- Groups will take it in turns to perform their play, one after the other. The rest of us will watch, bearing in mind the following questions:
 1. What do you think was the activity they were trying to demonstrate?
 2. What worked well in that activity in relation to achieving **sustainable impact at scale**?
 3. What were the possible risks in that activity in relation to achieving **sustainable impact at scale**?

Part 3 - discussion 20 mins:

- Let's look at the three activities in turn, starting with the first, and try to answer our three key questions. Starting with the first play...
 1. What do you think was the activity they were trying to demonstrate?
 2. What worked well in that activity in relation to achieving **sustainable impact at scale**? You may wish to comment on what the activity was and how it was facilitated...
 3. What were the possible risks in that activity in relation to achieving **sustainable impact at scale**? Likewise, you may wish to comment on both the what and the how.

[repeat for all 3 plays, taking note of the key points on a flipchart, flipcharts should then be stuck on the wall for participants to refer to in the final activity]

Conclusion:

Each of these activities was used because it addressed an opportunity or blockage in a particular market system. The market facilitators who used these activities will also have tried out various other approaches, some of which will have worked and others which won't. There are no 'cut and paste' solutions in PMSD. However, this has hopefully given you a taste of some activities which fit within the 3 principles.

Notes:

- You can draw a huge amount of learning from this exercise. Use your judgement to decide how long you want the discussion to be. One key point to draw out: **It is not just what the activity is, but how it is done that is important**

Session title: Vision Maps and Statements

Time: 100 mins

Materials:

- ❖ [3.4 Preliminary Vision Questions](#) - 1 per group (of 4 – 5)
- ❖ Flipchart with the vision tips written on it, i.e:
 - Clarify the time-frame
 - Write as if the vision has already been achieved
 - Balance ambition and realism
 - Stay focused and relevant
 - Balance being specific and measurable and building-in room for evolution and adaptability
- ❖ 3 different colours of post-its
- ❖ Flipchart paper

Objective:

- Participants are able to create Vision Statements and Vision Maps to guide their strategies and sell their proposals to donors

Context:

- At this stage we need to build a preliminary vision for an efficient, inclusive and equitable market system.
- This vision will guide the strategies and activities we propose and help us to evaluate our effectiveness.
- It must be specific and concrete enough to be fundable and it should seek to be as close as possible to the aspirations of where the market actors want to go so that they are engaged and motivated.
- We will use a number of ways to understand and communicate this vision – both visually - using a **vision market map**, and in writing – producing a one-page, one-paragraph and one-line version of the vision

Process:

Activity:

Part 1 - 30 mins:

- *[Split participants into groups of up to 5 people. (guidance for this can be found in the top facilitation tip for module 1) If groups have been working on different market systems and you wish to provide continuity, get them back into their market groups]*
- *[Hand out one copy of **Preliminary Vision Questions** per group]*
- Go through the preliminary vision questions for your market system and answer them as well as you can. Naturally there will be a number of questions you are unable to answer without further research.

- Make a note of any information gaps / further questions

Part 2 - 20 mins:

- We will now create a written version of the vision for an efficient, inclusive and equitable market system, based on your answers to the preliminary vision questions.
- As mentioned previously it is useful to have this in three formats for different uses:
 1. A one-page vision for change for the market system to include in longer proposals;
 2. A one-paragraph description of the vision that you can use in an email or as part of a concept note;
 3. A one-line headline statement of the vision that grabs attention and excites the reader.
- When doing this it is important to bear in mind the following tips: *[refer to the vision tips on the flipchart]:*
 - **Clarify the time-frame** – to focus people’s minds and enable you to set achievable milestones. For example, ‘By the end of 2017...’
 - **Write as if the vision has already been achieved** – to help everyone imagine where the market system can go and be motivated to take it there. For example ‘farmers and traders are working together to improve quality and volume of [the product] to enter new markets’
 - **Balance ambition and realism** – Stakeholders should get excited about the vision for change, but if it is unachievable, neither the market actors nor the donor will buy it.
 - **Stay focused and relevant** – Use the information from the preliminary Market Map, analysis of key actors and systemic issues to keep your visioning process specific and relevant to the market system in question
 - **Balance specific targets with flexibility and space for the project/intervention to evolve** – Donors will need you to be specific to some extent about what you want to achieve, however this must be balanced with space to allow for the unexpected and to be open to the distinctive nature of each situation.
- You will now complete versions 2 and 3 – i.e. the one-paragraph description and the one-line headline statement. We will leave you to create the one-pager as and when this is necessary.

Part 3 - 20 mins:

- Now you have the chance to represent your vision using a visual format, by creating a Vision Market Map to contrast with the Current Market Map you have already created

- You may wish to incorporate additional symbols in to the new map to show changes in the system
- Go back to the key preliminary vision questions to remind yourselves of all the elements in which changes will have taken place.
- Stick these maps on the wall, next to your 'current system' maps

Plenary - 30 mins:

- Each group will briefly report back by presenting their vision statement and map
- [After each presentation] Everybody check back with the vision tips; do you think this statement has covered these? How could it be improved?
- *[Use the vision tips to probe and challenge participants]*

Session title: Identifying leverage points, activities and exit strategies

Time: 2hrs 30 mins

Materials:

- ❖ [3.5 Plan Your Strategy worksheet](#) – 1 copy per group
- ❖ [Slide 4](#)

Objectives:

- Participants able to describe what a leverage point is and critically assess proposed leverage points
- Participants able to identify relevant activities to touch on the leverage points identified
- Participants understand importance of planning your exit before you enter

Context:

Market analysis is about identifying the leverage points, where the minimum effort could have the maximum effect. These could be current blockages or new opportunities.

Process:

Activity:

Part 1 - 25 mins:

- In your ‘market system groups’, review your 2 maps, and discuss:
 1. What are the possible ‘leverage’ or ‘entry’ points? In other words what are the points in the system that would have the biggest effects on the system using the smallest efforts? List up to 5.
 2. For each leverage point you have identified, identify one activity from the *Facilitation Activities* list used in a previous session, which you could adapt to have an impact on that leverage point.
 3. If you don’t think any of the activities are relevant, then create your own

Part 2 - 35 mins:

- *[Hand out 1 copy of the **Plan Your Strategy** worksheet to each group]*
- You will notice that the worksheet is structured to make you think about your exit strategy even in the initial phases of planning your activities. This is part of PMSD’s focus on ‘planning your exit before you enter’. In order for them to be sustainable, improvements in the market system must not depend on your on- going support. This is why it is essential that you devise the facilitation strategy around the time-bound nature of the interventions.
- *[go through slide 4]*
- In your groups, use the worksheet to plan your strategy. It will help you to think about how it will be implemented during the PMSD process and how it

will be carried out once you have left

Part 3 - 30 mins:

- You now have 30 minutes to prepare a 5 minute pitch to a donor organisation for the resources to implement your strategy. Given that you have already presented your current situation and vision maps, this presentation should cover:
 - The leverage points you are targeting
 - The activities you have chosen and how these would eventually be taken over by market actors
 - How you expect these activities to lead to structural (or deep) changes in the system
 - Any assumptions you are making

Part 4 - 60 mins:

- Each group will give their 5-minute pitch, followed by 10 minutes of challenging questions and comments from their potential funders (other groups will take on the role of these funders)
- As you listen to each presentation, think about:
 - Are the assumptions valid?
 - Does their logic make sense? Are the interventions likely to lead to the outcomes they have identified or are there other possible consequences?
 - Will it be expensive, lengthy or unsustainable?
 - Could it be done in an easier way?

[You may wish to write these questions up on a flipchart]

- At the end of each group's pitch and questions, take a vote from the rest of the group on whether they would fund this initiative. Ask a couple of people to explain why / why not.

Conclude:

This preliminary mapping and analysis in practice forms the basis of a project outline and some proposals for intervention. You may need some fairly specific ideas in order to get funding. It is very important to be able to think about the system as a whole and how to have the greatest impact with the least resources. However, it is very important to maintain flexibility – the participatory mapping and analysis with market actors will ultimately decide which ideas go forward and which don't.

**Top
Facilitation
Tip!**

If it's just not working:

Here is a set of tips to help you deal with those times when what you're doing just doesn't seem to be working...

- If **participants seem disengaged** during a plenary session, try getting them into **small groups** to discuss learning, then ask them to share the highlights
- If **report-backs are taking too long** and are too detailed to hold people's attention, try **focusing** the reports e.g. by asking 'what did you disagree on?'
- If **the group don't seem to understand** what you're saying, try illustrating it with an **example**, or ask if someone else would like to try explaining it
- If **energy is low**, **move quickly** to the next session and get people into different groups, requiring them to get up and **move around**
- If **people seem a bit overwhelmed** with information, take some **time out** for individual or group reflection on what has been covered so far
- If **you're not really sure how participants are doing**, you can quickly take the 'temperature' of the room by asking each person to say **two words** that describe how they're feeling e.g. 'tired and frustrated' or 'inspired and motivated'
- If **participants keep looking to you** to have all the answers, try **reflecting** questions back to the group
- If **participants are asking lots of questions about an exercise** and you have explained it clearly a few times, ask them to **try it out** and see what questions come up as they go
- If **a topic is brought up that is not directly relevant** to the session and is likely to cause long and heated discussion, don't be afraid to say that it is unfortunately **not** a question that it is **within the scope** of the session to answer
- If **you are really not sure what to do...** announce a short '**energy break**' to give yourself time to stop and think!