

# Better business: market chain workshops

## Tool

### Purpose:

Market chain workshops are an effective means to improve the livelihoods of small-scale producers and traders. For small-scale producers, a market chain workshop is an opportunity to share and to improve their knowledge of the market and of market policies, a means to voice their problems and expectations, and a rare chance to contribute to government policies and their implementation.

This experience is from Vietnam, where the representatives of different groups of market actors in upland areas come together to discuss how to improve market performance of products.

### Activities:

#### 1 Planning

##### 1.1 Characterising market chains

Basic information is needed on market structures (production areas, annual production, traded volume, economic values, number of people involved in production, trade and processing), as well as information on what governments at all levels have done to support product marketing.

Direct market actors are members of the market chain through which the product moves. They include producers, middlemen, traders, transporters, processors, exporters, wholesalers and retailers. Indirect actors are those who have an influence on the product marketing. They may be policymakers, managers, policy implementers, banks, development programmes, NGOs or others.

### Keep in Mind

- ★ Some government officers in power, or individuals may not like the event and may try to sabotage it
- ★ Assistance from local authorities is most important in order to encourage attendance of those invited.





*A simplified diagram of the market chain and its direct actors*

Market chain analysis is a useful methodology for obtaining this basic information.

- 1.2 List potential participants: make a list of representatives for each group of market actors, based on the results of market study.
- 1.3 Contact potential participants to find out whether they are interested in attending the workshop.
- 1.4 Make the final list of invitees: focus on representativeness and number of participants; 30-50 is a suitable number for easy handling.
- 1.5 Logistical preparation: Basic principles of workshop organisation apply here.

## 2 Running the workshop

Facilitators should be neutral in conflict management and consensus building. Enthusiasm, patience and sensitivity in gender and cultural issues also help.

The workshop should include both plenary and group work. All group discussion questions should lead towards the expected outcomes, which include improvements in policy awareness and market information, identified constraints, and recommendations for addressing these constraints – such as practical measures to put the proposed recommendations into place.

## 3 Follow-up activities

The organiser should wrap up the workshop with two types of report: a record and summary of outcomes with details of agreed tasks and responsibilities. These documents should be sent to participants and related institutions within two weeks of the workshop.

## 4 Workshop impact evaluation

An evaluation six to twelve months after the workshop can capture experience and hold government departments accountable to the promises they have made.

## Further information

Find full tool and other related tools and resources at:

[www.policy-powertools.org](http://www.policy-powertools.org)

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