

## ACTIVITY OVERVIEW

# Market System Monitoring Feed the Future - Value Chain, Uganda

photo by Tim Russell

The Market System Monitoring (MSM) activity develops systemic approaches for assessing the impact of market facilitation activities in the USAID/Uganda Feed the Future Value Chain (FTF-VC) project. Methods complement the monitoring and evaluation efforts of individual activities by assessing how the combination of activities enables systemic change in agricultural markets. MSM supports development and implementation of the FTF-VC Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning Plan (MELP) through ongoing methodology development, data collection, and analysis.

## CONCEPTUAL APPROACH

To monitor systemic change, we iterate between **two levels of analysis**: the overall market system and more detailed collections market activity referred to as subsystems. This approach, depicted in Figure 1, allows for deeper analysis of particular areas of interest that reveal insights regarding the broader market system. The levels and iteration between them are detailed further below.

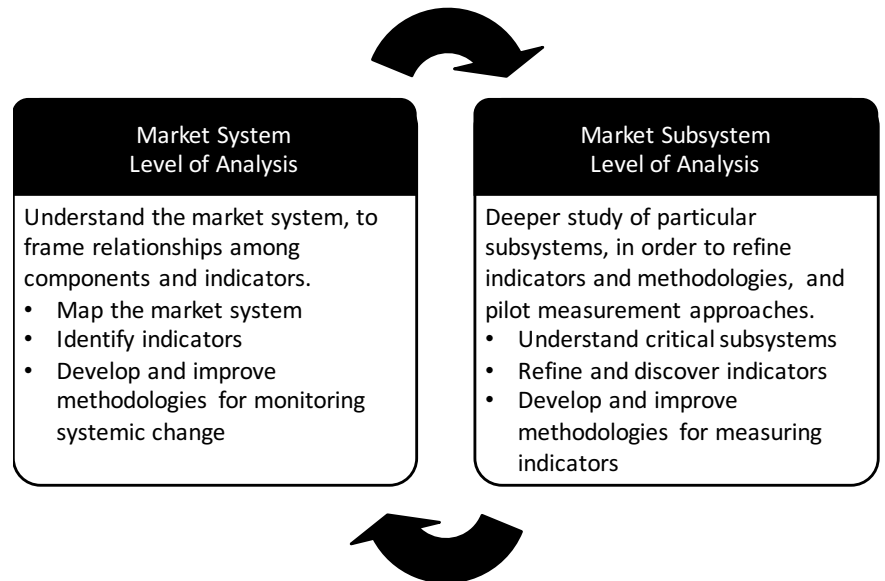


Figure 1: Conceptual approach: iterate between two levels of analysis.

### Market System Level

At the market system level, MSM aims to identify system components and understand dynamics among them. To do this, we developed **mapping frameworks** to depict the system and key dynamics in an intuitive format. These frameworks have been used to map the agricultural market system in Uganda, drawing extensively from collaboration with the USAID FTF-VC activities. The maps are informed by in-house studies, new analyses of existing data, and expert input. In addition to representing the market system visually, the maps are used to capture complexity, engage stakeholders, and identify indicators of systemic change. MSM is further developing methodologies for using these indicators to characterize the type and scale of systemic change.

### Market Subsystem Level

At the market subsystem level, MSM works closely with market facilitation activities to characterize key behaviors, relationships among actors, market conditions, and interventions that lead to development objectives. By studying subsystems, we are able to refine the indicators of systemic change identified at the market system level, ensuring that they are measurable and informative. We use qualitative and quantitative methods (see section on Methodology below) to analyze existing data, collect new data when necessary, and develop models. In doing so, we develop methods for identifying and measuring indicators of change in the subsystem.

### Iteration of the Levels

MSM's approach is to iterate between these two levels, so that what we learn from each informs the next iteration of the other. For example, we use the system maps to identify areas for further investigation in subsystem studies. The results of the subsystem studies then inform map content and methods for identifying and measuring indicators of systemic change. MSM plans to iterate in this manner through 2020.

## METHODOLOGIES

To capture the complexities of the agricultural market system, MSM leverages mixed quantitative and qualitative research methods. MSM's methodology continues to evolve and includes the following techniques:

### Data Collection and Analysis:

- **Qualitative data collection and analysis:** MSM uses interviews, observational field research, and case studies to understand aspects of the market system that cannot be easily quantified and to identify indicators of change (examples include the way actors perceive supply chain relationships, the concerns of individual commodity traders, and the factors that weigh into the decisions of organizations).
- **Quantitative data collection and analysis:** Quantitative data plays an important role in understanding the nature of relationships and decision-making within the supply chain and in identifying correlations among relevant factors. We draw upon existing M&E data, and also collect new data using surveys, transactions, or other techniques as required. Statistical/econometric analysis techniques are employed where appropriate.

### System Mapping:

- **Role Map:** This map illustrates the roles that agricultural market actors assume in the value chain, showing the material, financial, and information flows among them. Roles are defined for each core market activity that an individual or entity can conduct, such as selling inputs, providing finance, or providing extension services. Actors, meanwhile, are the individuals or entities engaging in these activities. Since an actor can assume multiple roles, the MSM team distinguished the roles an actor can play in order to describe market conditions using standard terminology.
- **Behaviors, Relationships, Conditions (BRC) Map:** This map diagrams the complex dynamics at play in the agricultural market system. It visually distinguishes the market with subsystems, or distinct spheres of market activity. Market conditions, actor behaviors, and inter-actor relationships are depicted with specific shapes that are connected by arrows. Arrows directionally indicate that one behavior, relationship, or condition enables another to occur. More information can be found in the notes that accompany the latest release.

### Models:

- **System dynamics models** are being developed to quantitatively simulate causal interactions and feedback loops within the market system. System dynamics models can be used to understand unexpected outcomes and assess proposed market facilitation interventions (such as subsidies, training, risk mitigation, or regulatory changes).
- **Social network analysis (SNA)** is a method that is used to understand how specific actors interact. SNA sheds light on the nature of relationships among actors and can be used to assess inclusivity of the market system.

## PRODUCTS

MSM's primary outputs are:

- system maps and accompanying release notes, published annually;
- analyses and reports from subsystem studies;
- summaries of workshops and other events that document MSM's process;
- and academic papers.

Documents are posted on the MSM website, <http://humanitarian.mit.edu/projects/feed-the-future-uganda>.



## ABOUT MSM

The Feed the Future Uganda Market System Monitoring (MSM) Activity is developing new approaches that assess the impact of market facilitation activities on systemic change in the Uganda agriculture sector. It is a joint implementation by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and The George Washington University. Contact us at [msm.uganda@mit.edu](mailto:msm.uganda@mit.edu).