

FACILITATION TACTICS AND ACTIVITIES

In a nutshell:

A list of possible activities that a project can undertake to support or influence a market actor to change their behaviour.

Status:

Core Tool

Key principles:

Unsurprisingly, Facilitation tactics are strong on the principle of Facilitation. Some key underlying principles for this approach:

- **Ownership at every step:** Look for signs of actors taking steps without you, and don't be afraid to cut off support if you sense they are not investing personal resources and effort.
 - **No free lunch:** Don't make it easy to get your time or resources. Build in incentives for the actors to perform and own the change. They need you more than you need them.
 - **Low or no visibility:** Downplay the project, organisation or donor's name and logo. So that market actors are in the driver's seat.
 - **Work with influencers and early adopters:** Who will be willing to try new things, take risks and reach scale? What actors are looked up to by others – this will help things spread faster.
 - **Make a clear and specific offer:** Make a credible and distinctive offer – why should they want to work with us? What do we expect? And what can they expect of us in return?
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Preconditions and preparation:

To meaningfully use the set of facilitation activities provided in this tool, a project needs to have a solid understanding of the market system, the vision for systemic change, and some of the specific aspects of the particular market actors they want to approach. It will take time to define specific behaviour changes for each actor – that align with systemic change goals – but these are crucial to specify and write down. Behaviour change is the core of working with permanent actors – and it is important to clarify.

Timeline and resources:

There is substantial variability in the timeline and resources depending on the tactics chosen.

Outputs

The core of this tool is the table below with a list of possible actions you can take as a facilitator. Once a market actor has a few defined behaviour changes, it can be useful to review the list and to note/mark the most promising facilitation tactics to take with each actor. This can then be integrated into planning tools such as the **Firm Level Improvement Plan**.

The facilitator actions are categorised according to an influence model that outlines the four necessary components to any change management initiative. This is useful for thinking about why a certain tactic or activity might be chosen over any other.

The model argues that individuals and organisations are more likely to change their behaviours when multiple components are present and conducive to the desired change.

- 1. Role Modelling:** People model their behaviours on “significant others.” If an individual sees someone of significance walking the talk, they will be more likely to follow suit than they would be without the role model.
- 2. Capacity Building:** In order to carry out a change, people must be equipped with the necessary skills to behave in a new way. A change initiative can only be successful if the people involved have the capabilities required to implement it effectively.
- 3. Fostering Understanding and Conviction:** It is not enough for people to understand the mechanics of the specific change. People must believe in it. Any change initiative must be supported by a compelling story. Changes must be communicated in a way that creates conviction amongst the target audience.
- 4. Reinforcing with Formal Mechanisms:** New behaviours must be reinforced with the appropriate systems. Incentives and structures must be conducive to the change: if they do not exist or are reinforcing undesired behaviours, they should be created or changed to reflect alignment with the desired behaviour.

Table: Facilitation strategies

Action	Prerequisite?	Behaviour Change Driver	Market Actors
Working through projections of market demand. “Selling” an improved business practice before action has been taken through highlighting future social, financial or personal benefits against costs and risks.	None – this can be one of the first activities after understanding the business..	Building understanding and conviction	Single actor
Working through evidence / observation-based Return On Investment calculations with the actor to evaluate the impact of a changed behaviour (returns don’t have to be financial!)	After a changed action has been taken, and enough time has passed to see the benefit (e.g. increased sales, better relationships, etc)	Making a reinforcing mechanism visible	Single actor
Organising structured, intentional learning/ exchange visits to related actors for experiential learning & following up on the momentum	None, but some level of self selection would be good to ensure actors are valuing the process (e.g. transport is arranged, but actors have to pay their own costs of living). The key is to hold off on any further action after this, leave it in the actors’ hands to take a next step (however small)	Leveraging role models	Multiple actors with similar roles
Buying down the risk of taking a new action by sharing the cost (rapidly declining, one-off, etc) of an innovation with the actor. Can be disbursed through challenge funds and other catalytic funding for innovation in the private sector. <i>** High risk! Cost share is not the same as financial assistance! Can other firms copy the action? Can the targeted actor continue it alone?</i>	Do not use as a first or second step. Wait. The relationship must be built, trust must be there, and the actor must have taken some basic steps on their own. There must be evidence of ownership, and seriousness on the part of the actor. There must be a clear rationale and exit strategy for financial support.	Building conviction	Usually single actor; but could be a combination of multiple actors working together

<p>Facilitating cost-shares or deals between vertical actors in a market (e.g. wholesaler and retailer sharing the cost of promotions, off-take buyers striking a contract with produce traders, etc)</p>	<p>Not a first step, but less risky than a cost share since the financing is coming from within the system rather than from outside of it.</p>	<p>Reinforcing mechanisms, and capacity [financial]</p>	<p>Two or more actors</p>
<p>Hiring a technical expert: consultant, intern, specialist or mentor to provide targeted, short-term, tailored support to an actor with a capacity gap.</p> <p><i>** Beware of gap-fill! Has the actor shown enough commitment to using the technical support? Does he/she have the human resources to do so? What do they commit to in return?</i></p>	<p>Not a first step. Once again, wait till there is enough evidence of buy-in from the partner.</p>	<p>Capacity [technical], and building understanding and conviction</p>	<p>Single actor (typically)</p>
<p>Market interest groups: Organising peer groups for similar groups of actors to share progress, learning, ideas, and challenges.</p> <p><i>** Ask yourself if this is meant to be a one-off or a recurring interaction. If recurring, whose responsibility is it to take it forward? The actors themselves? Industry associations? Another group?</i></p>	<p>Wait until specific learning areas have been identified (i.e. what are the actors doing that is similar, different? What are the specific learning goals you hope they will achieve from interacting? How to structure that learning?) If done without purpose, a lot of credibility and trust can be lost with the partner.</p>	<p>Leveraging role models, and reinforcing mechanisms</p>	<p>Groups of similar peer actors</p>
<p>Organising business networking meetings and trade shows with supporting-market actors to spark linkages between target actors and supporting services.</p> <p><i>** Sometimes specific supporting services can be cost-shared from the back-end to offer promotional deals to actors (hidden subsidy)</i></p>	<p>Same as above. Seek a professional organisation such as a chamber of commerce to host and promote the meetings/shows instead of an NGO, to signal the professional, business nature of the gathering. These provide a coordinating function that is critical to the market system, so consider how you can encourage market actors to organise these fairs themselves.</p>	<p>Building understanding, conviction, and capacity [technical, maybe financial]</p>	<p>Multiple actors with different roles</p>

<p>On-the-job coaching and mentoring, shadowing the business and helping them hands-on in the first couple of steps in a new strategy – to boost confidence, support, provide technical backstopping. Building trust as a secondary goal.</p>	<p>No pre-requisite. This action can be taken in the initial stages of partner interactions.</p>	<p>Building understanding, conviction, and capacity [technical]</p>	<p>Single actor</p>
<p>Using credibility of the development sector to vouch for an actor to trigger a new type of linkage or a risky business linkage. This could be with a bank, a service provider, a large supplier, government institution, etc.</p> <p>Common format: Risk guarantee funds, where facilitators guarantee part of the risk taken by credit-providers and insurers as they pilot new financial products.</p>	<p>Be careful...reputation, credibility, and trust are on the line here. Do not use this option until there is a strong level of understanding of the market actors in question, and the real risk involved (versus the perceived one).</p>	<p>Capacity [social], and conviction (on the part of risk-assuming business)</p>	<p>Multiple actors with different roles</p>
<p>Participatory Market Mapping Workshops: Bring together all the key market actors in a single space to build levels of trust and strengthen relationships between market actors.</p>	<p>Limited prior interaction required.</p>	<p>Not targeting any one specific behaviour</p>	<p>Large group of diverse market actors.</p>
<p>Market opportunity groups or other producer representation approaches: Facilitators must help producers work within existing or new groups and organisations to appoint or elect trusted representatives.</p>	<p>Buy-in or commitment from members to election processes and engagement in their group's activities. Be careful not to create a new organisation for the sake of having an organisation.</p>	<p>Capacity (organisational); and building conviction</p>	<p>Groups of target beneficiaries (usually as producers)</p>
<p>Building competencies and skills of marginalised actors through market system games, market mapping, role-plays, dialogue and negotiation skill-building.</p>	<p>Same as above</p>	<p>Building capacity</p>	<p>Representatives of groups</p>

Outcomes/behaviour changes

Given the contextualised nature of each facilitation activity, the behaviour change should be tailored to the particular market actor and intervention.

Resources and templates:

Webinar: The Offer Arsenal Tool and how it's used

Being a Market Facilitator – A guide to staff roles and capacities, USAID, 2011