

GUIDELINES FOR VALUE CHAIN ANALYSIS

Pathway Component: food production; processing & storage

Search Category: agricultural productivity; value chains & market systems

Date of Design: 2006

Designer: Food and Agriculture Organization

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URL: ftp://193.43.36.92/es/esa/lisfame/guidel_ValueChain.pdf

CONTENT SUMMARY

Brief Description: This document is the result of a research program that investigated how agricultural markets affect farm-level decisions on utilizing crop genetic resources. Understanding the relationship between different players in the seed input and product output chains is required when conducting a value chain analysis. The resulting guidelines are based on a qualitative approach to mapping value chains in Mexico, Bolivia, and Ecuador. This document presents the market map and explains the process used in Mexico to help readers conduct their own value chain analyses.

Uses: This analysis facilitates understanding of various actors within a market system, the relationships between them, and relevant constraints or blockages.

Tool Components: The guidelines are broken into two key parts:

1. Mapping the Market
2. Practical Use of the Market Map Framework

OPERATIONS

Number of Staff Required: Not specified; the Mexico example in the document was led by one individual with support from research assistants.

Time: Not specified, but the process is very flexible. If time and funds are short, it can be reduced to qualitative research and secondary data analysis.

Cost of Assessment: Not specified, but the document emphasizes the flexible, iterative nature of the analysis. If funding is limited, the assessment can be modified within the limitations.

Training: Not specified, but the person leading the analysis would likely need prior experience with assessment or value chains.

Geographic Targeting: The analysis focuses on value chains, which may span multiple areas; the geography will be determined by the value chain selected.

Type of Data Collection: The guide explains that there are no fixed rules on whether quantitative or qualitative tools are a better research approach for value chain analysis, but strongly recommends using a qualitative approach first, followed by a quantitative study. The guide explains techniques including participant observation, semi-structured interviews, focus groups, and survey questionnaires.

Degree of Technical Difficulty: The value chain analysis is an iterative process and while predetermined topics for discussion are identified, it is hard to prescribe specific questions to use. This means that you cannot train enumerators with questionnaires before the process so the individual leading the analysis must be skilled and experienced enough to complete the process without a preset list of questions.

Complements other Resources: An in-depth understanding of a few critical value chains could be a useful addition to a broader livelihoods analysis, and could feed into availability and access components of a food security analysis.