



THE NEXT GENERATION OF CIVIL SOCIETY ENGAGEMENT: BOLDLY GOING WHERE NO NGO HAS GONE BEFORE

CHAT TRANSCRIPT

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PRESENTERS

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WEBINAR CHAT TRANSCRIPT

USAID Agrilinks: Welcome to today's Agrilinks event. The speaker's will begin in about 10 or so minutes. In the meantime, please introduce yourself (name, organization, country) and share your interest in today's topic.

Julie MacCartee (USAID/BFS): Good morning, everyone! This is Julie MacCartee with USAID in Washington, DC. I'll be facilitating today. Thank you for joining!

Edgar Guardia: Good morning Julie. Greetings from Bolivia. I'm the Executive Director of Fundacion Valles in Bolivia

John Holtzman: Hello Julie et al., I'm at Abt up in rainy Bethesda. Senior agricultural economist.

Nene Diallo, Africare HQ: Good morning everyone! I'm Nene Diallo from the Office of Health at Africare headquarters in Washington

joseph rurangwa: Good morning Julie. Greetings from Rwanda

Louise Buck: Hello all, I'm Louise Buck with EcoAgriculture Partners and Department of Natural Resources at Cornell university in Ithaca, NY

USAID Agrilinks: Hi everyone!

USAID Agrilinks: Welcome to today's webinar!

USAID Agrilinks: We will be getting started shortly.

USAID Agrilinks: Please introduce yourselves!

Maureen Herman: Good Morning from Catholic Relief Services in Baltimore, MD. I am the new Technical Advisor for Youth at CRS, and we are working to better engage youth in agricultural livelihoods.

Julie MacCartee (USAID/BFS): Welcome! We're glad that you all could join!

Gelsey Bennett: Hello from Arlington, VA. I'm a Program Officer with Winrock International's Volunteer Technical Assistance team.

KDAD AV Tech (DC): Finish up the polls please and we'll get going!

Dilip Bhandari: Dilip Bhandari, Heifer International, AR.

Julie MacCartee (USAID/BFS): We welcome networking and resource-sharing in the chat box at any time.

Carrie Hubbell Melgarejo: Nutrition Advisor, SPRING Project, Arlington, VA.

Travis Massar: Good morning all, I am a Senior Business Analyst with ACDI/VOCA.

Sara Steffan: Good morning! I'm in communications at Fintrac in DC.

Jessica Joye: Jessica Joye, Communications @ Fintrac, Washington DC.

USAID Agrilinks: Welcome everyone from all parts of the world!

Gretchen Thompson: Good morning! I'm a scientist with Family Health International.

USAID Agrilinks: We are looking forward to a lively chat about civil society engagement: and its next generation of approaches!

Jason Girard: good morning I am a technical associate with Tetra Tech ARD working in agriculture and natural resources management

Arlie Reeves: Good morning from Washington (state)! I'm a graduate student at Northeastern University in International Relations and Agricultural Development. I'm also a livestock producer. Looking forward to learning more about civil society engagements, particularly related to agriculture/food security!

Gretchen Thompson: Hi Arlie! I have family in WA and love visiting there.

Arlie Reeves: Hi Gretchen! That's wonderful! You're welcome to visit any time! Where are you based?

Kate Mayne: Kate Mayne, Partnership Advisor, Self Help Africa, Dublin, Ireland

Gretchen Thompson: Durham, NC. Hail from Greenville, NC and grew up on a dairy farm. NC State University alum.

Douglas Hertzler: ActionAid USA, in Washington DC

Angela Stene: Good morning everyone. Are people getting any sound?

KDAD AV Tech (DC): Thanks for joining. Julie MacCartee from USAID is introducing the event.

Gretchen Thompson: @ Angela, yes, I did the audio wizard

Vicki Morrone: Greetings, I work at Michigan State University and work in Malawi and Tanzania

Jessica Joye: Love that photo of a Fintrac farmer in Honduras!

KDAD AV Tech (DC): Please note that we have presenters from all around the world, DC, Virgin Islands, and Tanzania so please bear with us as we transition back and forth

Ed Kiely: Anne Naggayi - Alliance to End Hunger

KDAD AV Tech (DC): @Gretchen, please private message me

Gretchen Thompson: Vicki, I have a close colleague at MSU, RV Rikard. He's in the communications department on a postdoc.

Heather Weeks: Hi everyone- dairy business educator with Penn State Extension

Arlie Reeves: Gretchen, great to see some others with a dairy/livestock background! :)

USAID Agrilinks: Have a question? Post it here and we will try to ask during the Q&A portion.

USAID Agrilinks: Have a tech issue? Private chat with AV Tech!

Christopher Miller: I work with an NGO in Peru on sustainable ag projects in high-altitude communities. We also work with academic institutions in the U.S. to carry out research projects in these areas. Often times, however, the needs of the academic institutions are often prioritized, even though we try to stress the needs here on the ground. What are some practical steps we can take to balance the priorities? This is complex and includes things like credit requirements, financing, power relations, distance communication, and much more...

Madeleine Smith: Good morning, Madeleine Smith here - I'm an Agriculture Advisor on the USAID SPRING Project.

KDAD AV Tech (DC): Susan Pologruto (USAID) is our first presenter and speaking now. If you're just logging in, please introduce yourself and tell us your affiliation.

Julie MacCartee (USAID/BFS): Thanks for your question, Christopher

Julie MacCartee (USAID/BFS): If anyone would like to view the discussion from last week's Ask Ag chat on civil society, visit this link: <http://agrilinks.org/events/ask-ag-about-engaging-civil-society>

Jillann W Richardson-Rohrscheib: Good Morning! Microfinance/Business Development Consultant

USAID Agrilinks: Keep the questions coming!

KDAD AV Tech (DC): Kindly adjust volume on your computer as to better hear the speaker. Thanks.

Julie MacCartee (USAID/BFS): If anyone would like to download the presentations, you can do so in the "Resources" box at the left of your screen.

Gretchen Thompson: How is long term success being measured? Also, are the SBCC initiatives coupled with any other programmatic interventions, such as economic strengthening?

Beatrice Pierre: Beatrice Pierre from USAID Haiti

Julie MacCartee (USAID/BFS): Thanks for your question, Gretchen. And welcome, Beatrice!

Eva Kassara: Eva Kassara - Graduate student from Michigan State University

Rebeca Anzueto: I don't see the presentation in the resources box - I have just a fact sheet on the new platform and the Civil Society Action Plan.

Vicki Morrone: can you share the process of the assessment you used to select the CSO?

Gill Vogt: Hi! Gill Vogt working with Pastoral Civil Society in Tanzania.

Julie MacCartee (USAID/BFS): Rebeca - you're right - we'll see if we can get it up there

Julie MacCartee (USAID/BFS): Gill (and others) - would love to know any tips you have for civil society engagement!

Cyd Hamilton: Hi, what defines a 'normal gov database' for reporting and presumably M&E?

Richard Tinsley: My usual question to nutrition projects, what is the caloric base your program is based on, 2200 Kcal as the FAO rate for basic metabolism but not allow energy for manual field work, or have you raised that to 4000 kcal. that will allow a diligent day field work? Until this level of energy is provided what is the higher priority, getting sufficient energy or the more diversified and balanced diet being proposed.

Cyd Hamilton: To follow-up with calories...total Kcal consumption doesn't involve nutritional absorption, perhaps a luxury at some point but a necessity as well to real growth and health/food capacity building - is there a venue to address this or a plan in place in general through FtF/USAID/CSO programs? Thank you!

Julie MacCartee (USAID/BFS): Hi Richard and Cyd - we are not directly addressing design for nutrition programs today, but I will share your questions with our nutrition staff and others

Arlie Reeves: What are going to be the greatest challenges facing the "next generation" of successful civil society engagement steps?

Julie MacCartee (USAID/BFS): All - the PPT slides are now available in the Resources box at left!

Cyd Hamilton: Thank you Julie.

Richard Tinsley: also thank you Julie

Maureen Herman: Very happy to see youth inclusion.

Gill Vogt: In East Africa there is a tendency towards Governments tightening control over CSOs. This will be a challenge for full CSO development.

USAID Agrilinks: Arlie-- thanks for the question. We will try to pose it to the panel. What do you foresee them as being?

Cyd Hamilton: Why resistance of some to coop idea and how was this overcome?

Vicki Morrone: can we get a copy of this PP too?

Beatrice Pierre: how did you measure the incremental sales when we know that we did not start with all of the beneficiaries from the offset in order to have a good baseline?

Carrie Hubbell Melgarejo: What Adam mentioned about legacy of sociopolitical history and its influence on civil society sounds familiar... other countries seem to have same issues, e.g., where someone is trying to forcibly create civil society groups.

Gretchen Thompson: Were there efforts build local markets for agricultural products?

Beatrice Pierre: what is a level of delinquency among the peer guarantee lending opportunities? Also did the project provide fund to use as collateral to the MFIs?

Maureen Herman: What are some specific ways in which youth are included?

Vicki Morrone: to serve these 800+ farmers how many technical persons are part of this work?

Beatrice Pierre: what is the level of literacy for the beneficiaries of the HARVEST project in order to have such a good record keeping?

Richard Tinsley: Could you give a quantitative estimate of the advantage of bulking inputs and market produce, and what are the sustainable overhead costs being incurred by the group to get those bulking advantage

Carrie Hubbell Melgarejo: Administration/record keeping seem to be a common theme in these two presentations.

Julie MacCartee (USAID/BFS): Indeed, thanks for pointing that out Carrie

Gretchen Thompson: Was women's empowerment observed and analyzed as a program outcome?

Madeleine Smith: I think it is critical to ensure all the skills are supported, it is hard to do one without the other. I'm curious as to the timeline and learning approach - did the project start with improved practices? Market orientation, and at what point was farm management introduced?

Richard Tinsley: How many spontaneous groups were developed based on your success of groups

Madeleine Smith: Also, in terms of livelihoods and vulnerability, were these groups able to "pull" in the more vulnerable farmers that may not have initially had the financial or technical capacity to join?

Todd Johnson 2: The new NGO Law in Cambodia makes groups / gatherings of more than a few people (~7 or more if I remember correctly). Are these informal associations feeling any repercussions from LANGO?

Richard Tinsley: if no overhead costs how about imposition particularly on the leadership

Cyd Hamilton: How does one gain a comprehensive understanding of the local context - undoubtedly complex in many situations and with limited time/money resources could be problematic to attain.

Gretchen Thompson: presentation is no longer on display

USAID Agrilinks: Yes- sorry. It will come back.

Arlic Reeves: I foresee some of the greatest future challenges being: faltering in the effectiveness of external roles, unexpected disasters (disease, natural disasters, conflict, droughts, etc.), internal group conflict, and the potential unwillingness of communities to work collectively under foreign guidance due to the trust factor. I hope others share their thoughts on potential challenges of civil society engagement success in the next generation!

Adam Keatts, Fintrac: Cyd -- I agree. Need to hire and engage dynamic national teams. This can help shorten and flatten the learning curve

Julie MacCartee (USAID/BFS): Thanks for your insights, Arlie!

Adam Keatts, Fintrac: Richard -- imposition on leadership in terms of time is very low. It may also be possible that they gain social capital from these leadership positions that encourage their participation

Cyd Hamilton: Arlie's point is excellent - how does one foster CSOs being negatively impacted by CC....

Adam Keatts, Fintrac: Todd -- you are right, the new NGO law is quite restrictive. These groups are organized with buy-in at the commune level, so we have not experienced any pushback from our government counterparts. Quite to the contrary, they are very supportive

Cyd Hamilton: Yes thank you all for your insights and work!

Nene Diallo, Africare HQ: Agreed that having the right local staff is critical to understanding context. Africare's partner/beneficiary of capacity building was a women led organization. At the community level peer support type of groups are composed mostly of women.

Madeleine Smith: Are these CSOs and other civil society actors also engaged in mobilizing around policy issues, or access to information or services, such as extension, provided through the ministries of agriculture?

Nene Diallo, Africare HQ: They spread the word about the importance of good nutrition especially exclusive breastfeeding, and complementary feeding for children under 2

Cyd Hamilton: For that analysis does when is the project considered mature enough to collect a second set of data for sig comparisons?

Beatrice Pierre: Do you mean that at the 6 months of implementation you already have all the beneficiaries of the project? How do you treat the ones that join the project later? Do you assume that they the same characteristics as those who constitute the sampling population

Julie MacCartee (USAID/BFS): Thanks for your questions, all. Some discussion has also popped up on the event page: <http://agrilinks.org/events/next-generation-civil-society-engagement-boldly-going-where-no-ngo-has-gone>

Gretchen Thompson: Thank you, Janeth!

Adam Keatts, Fintrac: Hi Beatrice -- baseline data collection is random statistically significant sample. This allows us to extrapolate to the population level.

Julie MacCartee (USAID/BFS): If we can't get to your question, we will still share them with the presenters

USAID Agrilinks: Nene from the Africare DC office is with us, and she has been on the chat, and is now providing insight as well. Thank you Nene!

Gretchen Thompson: Thank you!

Krishna Pathak: I could not open the next generation CSE PowerPoint. Can anybody help?

Julie MacCartee (USAID/BFS): Hi Krishna - we will also be posting a PDF on the event page shortly: <http://agrilinks.org/events/next-generation-civil-society-engagement-boldly-going-where-no-ngo-has-gone>

Madeleine Smith: Adam - this may be a question to follow up on afterwards, but I'm very interested to know if HARVEST also has nutrition specific activities, or how you are integrating agriculture and nutrition. I noticed that you have a wasting indicator. On SPRING we are very interested in learning about how this integration is happening and effective approaches.

USAID Agrilinks: This questions comes from the Agrilinks event page: <http://agrilinks.org/events/next-generation-civil-society-engagement-boldly-going-where-no-ngo-has-gone>

Cyd Hamilton: Could you rephrase... is the question about the financial or governance opp for agencies to support CSO development abroad....beyond USAID-type agencies - poss roles for Dept of State?, P3s with academic support via NIH and NSF?

USAID Agrilinks: Yes- How do implementing partners and donors support civil society to make the transition after democratic transitions or civil strife, especially in light of private sector partnerships as you mention, Cyd.

Julie MacCartee (USAID/BFS): Thank you so much for joining everyone!

KDAD AV Tech (DC): Thanks to our presenters from around the globe!

USAID Agrilinks: Additionally, if you want to keep the discussion going join online from: <http://agrilinks.org/events/next-generation-civil-society-engagement-boldly-going-where-no-ngo-has-gone>

Julie MacCartee (USAID/BFS): If you have any comments, you may contact me at jmaccartee@usaid.gov, or the Agrilinks team at agrilinks@agrilinks.org.

[End Chat]