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► Implementing Market Systems Development for Decent Work in the Middle East and North Africa



Technical training on how to apply systems thinking in practice

10-12 September 2024 at the Grand Hyatt in Amman, Jordan

Dive into a unique opportunity to explore market systems development, job creation, job quality, and decent work with a market systems perspective. Engage with experts and peers in a quest to foster sustainable economic growth and social justice in the region.

The [ILO Decent Work Team for the Arab States in Beirut](#), the [ILO Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises \(MSME\) Branch](#) and the [Systems Change Initiative](#) are offering an in-person, 3-day training on Market Systems Development for Decent Work¹ in Amman, Jordan in September 2024.

The training's objectives are to explore how a market systems approach can be used to improve livelihoods, boost job creation and address Decent Work. It will build on ILO's lead position in implementing a market systems approach for employment creation and job quality.

The training will be set up around a series of questions of relevance to policy makers, project implementers and practitioners on how to best make use of this innovative approach to project implementation.

In view of the many situations of fragility and conflict in the region, the training will also put an emphasis on how to use a market systems approach in situations of fragility, in the humanitarian-development nexus and for specific vulnerable target groups, including key lessons emerging from the "[Approach to Inclusive Market Systems](#)" and the 2024 "[Designing and Implementing Market-led Interventions in Forced Displacement Settings](#)" Guide.

¹ More on what this means here www.ilo.org/sci and www.ilo.org/aims. The core guide on applying systems thinking in Value Chains and for job creation is this one: https://www.ilo.org/empent/areas/value-chain-development-vcd/WCMS_434362/lang--en/index.htm



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Overview

Training contents will be based on a consultation process prior to the training with key stakeholders in the region and their project portfolio. Questions to be addressed are likely to include:

- ▶ What is a market systems approach to job creation and job quality improvement?
- ▶ What have we learnt from more than 15 years of project implementation with an MSD approach? (with a guest speaker from the BEAM Exchange) and where is the field heading?
- ▶ How is MSD being used and applied in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region? Case work on examples from Lebanon and Jordan.
- ▶ Are rights-based approaches and a market-based approach compatible?
- ▶ What is the value of a systems approach for a variety of objectives (economic development and job creation, income generation and jobs in forced displacement settings, job quality improvement, extension of social protection)?
- ▶ How can MSD be useful in promoting a Just Transition?
- ▶ What is the benefit and what are the challenges in using the approach for new projects?

Some of these questions will be addressed in an interactive training in the first two days. In the second part, group clinics will discuss how the approach can be used in specific countries and objectives. Participants will learn about:

- ▶ What it means to take a market systems approach.
- ▶ How this approach is implementable in different realities.
- ▶ Examples of new ways of operationalizing development cooperation based on incentives and capacity of local actors.
- ▶ Asking hard questions about the “why” of development interventions and long-term financial and social sustainability.
- ▶ Addressing issues of reaching scale and in development cooperation through a systems approach.



Experts

The training will be imparted by a core team of MSD and AIMS experts from ILO HQ in collaboration with technical staff from the region and the regional enterprise development specialist (Badra Alawa). The training will also count on selected guest speakers, including from the Donor Committee on Enterprise Developments (DCED) BEAM Exchange.

- ▶ www.ilo.org/valuechains



Target audience

The training is directed at:

- ▶ Those working on systemic approaches to job creation, value chain development, private sector development, economic empowerment, sustainable livelihoods, the human-development nexus; and
- ▶ Policy makers, development cooperation practitioners and project back stoppers interested in exploring how a systems approach might advance their objectives.

Prior to coming to the training, participants will be expected to finalize the 1-hour [Essentials for MSD and Decent Work](#) introductory online course.

Key facilitators



Fernando Martinez is a Markets Systems Development Specialist specializing in economic inclusion with a strong emphasis on social dimensions, particularly around capacity building, governance, poverty reduction, and equity building. His expertise lies in programme management, design, and monitoring, with a robust focus on marginalized groups such as the poor, internally displaced persons, refugees, ethnic minorities, and women. With experience spanning across all sectors of development and humanitarian work, he has contributed through hands-on approaches in multilateral agencies, national governments, NGO management, activism, and research, across four continents. He has led multiple teams from diverse backgrounds, and is currently managing a project focused on extending social protection to vulnerable workers in Jordan.



Merten Sievers is the Value Chain Development and Entrepreneurship Coordinator at ILO's MSME Branch. Merten has been working on market systems development for more than 15 years and in other fields of livelihood promotion and private sector development (entrepreneurship, BDS, LED, WED, Microfinance) for over 24 years. His portfolio includes a large part of ILO's work on [value chain development and market access](#) and importantly the "[Systems Change Initiative](#)" [innovation project](#). He also started off the collaboration with UNHCR in support of refugee and host community livelihoods under the "[Approach to Inclusive Markets](#)", jointly implemented with UNHCR. Merten's team backstops approximately 60% of ILO's technical cooperation activities in enterprise development and job creation with activities in more than 60 countries.



Nadja Nutz is a Technical Specialist with 15 years of experience in private sector development, entrepreneurship promotion and market systems development in various contexts and regions, including in the Arab region. She is currently working at ILO's MSME Branch where she is coordinating ILO's work on entrepreneurship and inclusive market systems, managing and backstopping a global portfolio of projects in over 100 countries that use systemic approaches to promote entrepreneurship and inclusive markets for vulnerable groups. Prior to joining the ILO in 2014, Nadja worked on SME promotion with GIZ in Algeria, and on private sector development in the MENA region with the OECD.



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Luana Ayala is a Market Systems Development Technical Officer. She has experience working on private sector and market systems development, entrepreneurship promotion, and financial inclusion. She has over 7 years of experience working for international organizations, national governments and the private sector. She has experience in designing, operating and managing projects on SME resilience, entrepreneurship, value chain and market systems development to create more and better jobs for vulnerable communities. She is currently coordinating a market systems development project in Lebanon, focused on refugee and host community livelihoods.



Badra Alawa is the Enterprise development Specialist for the ILO Regional Office for Arab States since June 2022. She supports the region to promote decent work through sustainable enterprises, including in the areas of support to SMEs, Social and Solidarity Economy, Social Finance and responsible business conduct. Badra has about 24 years of working experience, 19 of which in the ILO, in various fields of sustainable enterprise development, Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work with a focus on child labour, supply chains, gender equality, and women entrepreneurship. She has managed regional and global projects such as the EU-funded CLEAR Cotton project implemented in collaboration with FAO, and “The Way Forward after the Revolution: Decent Work for Women in Egypt and in Tunisia”.



(Joining remotely) - **Mike Albu** is the Director of [BEAM Exchange](#), a specialist platform for knowledge exchange and learning about using market systems approaches to reduce poverty. He is a social entrepreneur and long-time development practitioner, who discovered from first-hand experience how profoundly markets matter for people living in poverty. He spent 20 years working directly with communities, informal enterprises and small-scale producers across several countries in South Asia and East Africa. He is passionate about the opportunity (and the challenges) of transforming markets as to amplify the beneficial role that private sector activity - corporate, small and micro - can play in reducing exclusion and poverty. He is inspired by people who understand realities of business in developing countries, and are prepared to think deeply about the complexity of using aid to change market institutions.

How to apply?

Please [click here](#) to express interest in the training before **23rd July 2024**.

Up to 25 places are available. Participants will be expected to have a reasonable understanding of private sector development approaches and an initial idea on how to apply the content of the training to their work.

Participation will be by invitation only and participants will be selected based on a short online questionnaire.

The training is free. Participants are expected to cover their travel and lodging.

Venue: Grand Hyatt Amman.

More information

ILO Decent Work Team for the Arab States in Beirut, ILO Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises and ILO Systems Change Initiative

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