

BENEFITS

Bottom-up multi-stakeholder processes facilitate critical reflection and dialogue, promote shared decision-making and build trust. They are well-poised to contribute to the co-creation of context-specific innovations for value chain development.

For example, the bottom-up multi-stakeholder processes that involved small-scale dairy value chain actors in Nakuru (Kenya), yielded



Milk traders preparing for dialogue

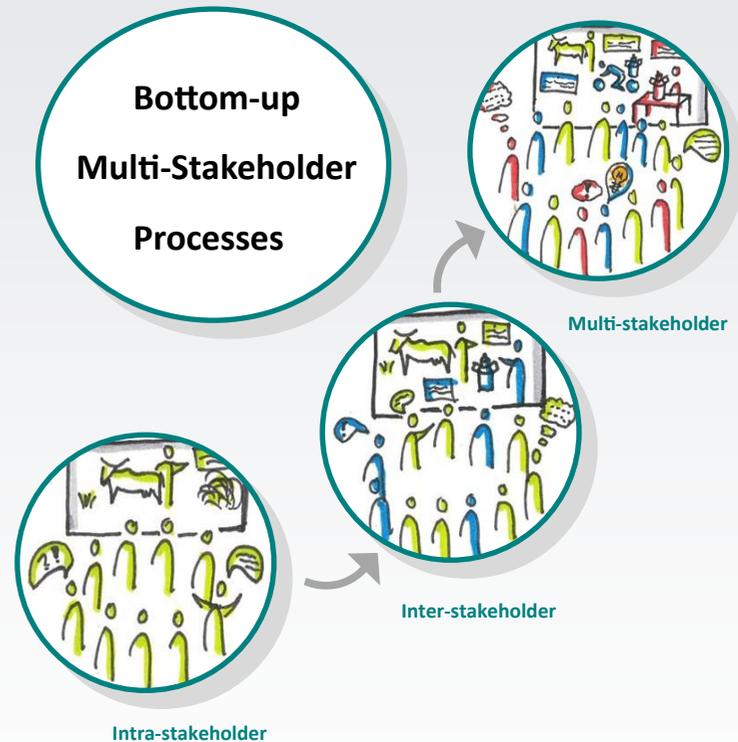
- * Increased awareness of differences between various production contexts,
- * Comparison and contrasting of practices from multiple areas,
- * Peer-to-peer exchanges to promote improved practices,
- * Awareness of interlinked challenges faced by different value chain actors,
- * Dialogue among multiple stakeholders for increased room of maneuver and better coordination within the value chain,
- * Collaborative learning about common problems,
- * Changes in perceptions and practices of the small-scale value chain actors.

Bottom-up multi-stakeholder processes **strengthen the role of societal stakeholders** in transdisciplinary research to address complex problems in food and farming systems.

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For innovation and transformation

in food and farming systems



A milk bar owner contributes to setting multi-stakeholder goals

Transdisciplinary research builds a close collaboration with societal stakeholders in order to find solutions to complex real world problems, for example in food and farming systems.

A **stakeholder analysis** is a way of identifying who should be involved related to a specific issue or problem situation, and serves to make their interests, objectives, power dynamics and relationships explicit.

Stakeholder involvement in the research process, as active participants, is both a means of increasing the utility of research output and the likelihood that it will shape the decisions, actions and capacities of primary stakeholders, such as value chain actors, so that they will gain new action possibilities.

Multi-stakeholder processes (MSPs) can be designed in several steps to enable many different people to meaningfully contribute. Although multi-stakeholder platforms typically are composed top-down with an emphasis on government, industry and large organizations, the concept can be applied to create bottom-up MSPs.



Farmers from different areas comparing practices

For example in our research with the small-scale dairy sector in Nakuru (Kenya), we brought together smallholder dairy farmers with independent milk traders and milk retailers who ran “milk bars”. At strategic intervals, MSPs also included government officials for policy dialogue.

Organising multi-stakeholder processes in a step-wise process is a social innovation that aims at gradually building relationships between different stakeholders to create trust and balance power.



Intra-Stakeholder

(e.g. milk traders from different areas)

- * Comfortable setting to practice articulating problems
- * Development of ideas to improve their own profession
- * Clarification of topics to be exchanged with other stakeholders
- * Motivation to continue stakeholder processes



Inter-Stakeholder

(e.g. farmers and milk traders)

- * Improved understanding and trust between two different professional groups regarding each other's activities, challenges and perceptions
- * Identification of solutions to problems relevant to two specific stakeholder groups or related to their interactions



Multi-Stakeholder

(e.g. farmers, milk traders and retailers)

- * Discussion of issues relevant to multiple stakeholder categories
- * Appreciation of other perspectives leading to positive inter-group relations to improve coordination along the value chain
- * Preparations for interactions and exchange with secondary stakeholders (such as government officials)
- * Opportunity to bridge across differences

Graphics by Joana Albrecht