

Dear madam, sir

We - Bert Helmsing (ISS) and Sietze Vellema (Wageningen UR) - invite you to a morning of **bilateral dialogues** and a **dinner meeting** setting the research agenda on the issues of value chains, inclusion and endogenous development. These events will take place on **Tuesday September 28**, at the Institute of Social Studies in The Hague. The bilateral dialogues and dinner meeting are integrated with a Provocation debate organised by HIVOS, IIED and LEI-Wageningen UR in the afternoon.

The bilateral dialogues and synthesising dinner meeting on September 28 are part of the Development Policy Research Network (DPRN) project "Value chain governance and endogenous economic growth: how can NGOs, firms and governments achieve inclusion and poverty reduction?" This project builds on the premise that considerable progress can be made in the promotion of sustainable markets, achieving inclusion, endogenous economic growth and poverty reduction when diverse analytical and policy frameworks are systematically compared, discussed and integrated. The bilateral dialogues aim to explicate the assumptions and underlying intervention theories of development practice and policy of businesses, NGOs and governments. The dinner meeting aims to integrate these different perspectives into a shared knowledge agenda.

Bilateral Development Dialogues: practice and policy for inclusive value chains and endogenous development (9:00-12:00 - ISS)

For the morning event, we invite people from business, government, and civil society organisations for separate bilateral dialogues with researchers. The rationale for bilateral dialogues in stead of one single multi-actor consultation is to investigate in-depth and make explicit the particular intervention theories of each actor. This sets the right conditions for subsequently moving to a higher level of synthesis and abstraction for the purpose of synergy and future collaboration. During these dialogues, the partners from different social actors, together with researchers, will explore the explicit and implicit assumptions on development pathways fundamental to their own practices and strategies targeting inclusion and endogenous development.

The bilateral dialogues will be inspired by a selection of case studies presented by

Relevance

Value chains are receiving a lot of attention from various economic actors and for several reasons. In the context of globalizing markets, companies want to assure the supply of their key inputs and the quality thereof. Also corporate social responsibility has generated interest in value chain organization and its governance. In addition, civil society organizations and co-financing agencies increasingly define their interventions in the area of economic development and poverty reduction in the framework of a value chain approach. And, in public development policy, value chains are considered an instrument to fill the meso gap between general macro policy and interventions at the micro level.

Registration at:
www.hivos.net

The program on Tuesday September 28 is as follows:

- ⇒ **9:00-12:00** Bilateral dialogues (DPRN ISS-WUR). Institute of Social Studies (ISS), Kortenaerkade 12, 2518 AX The Hague. For directions to the ISS [click here](#)
- ⇒ **12:00-12:45** Lunch. Institute of Social Studies (ISS)
- ⇒ **13:00-16:00** Provocations: producers agency and the agenda to "make markets work for the poor". Museum for Communication, Zeestraat 82, 2518 AD The Hague (just around the corner of ISS). For directions to the Museum for Communication [click here](#)
- ⇒ **17:00-20:00** Dinner meeting: setting the research agenda (DPRN ISS-WUR). Institute of Social Studies (ISS). For directions to the ISS [click here](#)

representatives of businesses, NGOs and governments. Researchers involved in the DPRN project will further contribute to the dialogues by sharing key insights derived from our joint endeavour in 2009. The central argument developed through integrative research and contrasting of theories and realities is that the development impacts of inclusion of small producers, local firms and workers into (global) value chains importantly depends on two conditions: the terms of participation in the process of inclusion and the degree of alignment of value chain logics with the capacities of actors and institutions embedded in local business systems. The discussion suggests that effectiveness and viability of development-oriented intervention strategies and partnerships, anchored in value chain dynamics, can benefit from an ability to accommodate multiple perspectives, which need careful consideration of the terms of inclusion. Likewise, the scalability of chain-based development interventions and partnerships relies on the capacity to embed dynamics internal to the value chain, such as networking and compliance with standards, in capacities, conventions, policies and institutional arrangements driven by chain and non-chain actors aligned in a local business system.

Dinner meeting – setting agenda for research – towards synthesis (17:00-20:00, ISS)

During the dinner meeting, we seek an interactive exchange and discussion with the aim to sketch the contours of one or more shared knowledge agendas. We invited researchers to translate the perspectives discussed during the day, from business, NGOs', farmers, and governments, into researchable issues relevant for development practice and policy. The dinner meeting creates the opportunity to shape and refine a knowledge agenda. We aim for a knowledge agenda that sets the conditions for further collaboration between firms, NGO's, network organisations, associations of producers and workers, governments, and research. Perhaps a focus on research makes it possible to explore how inputs from the various stakeholders can be combined for defining a joint effort to achieve greater policy coherence, to design development oriented intervention strategies, and use theory-based monitoring and evaluation methodologies of chain level interventions.

With the dinner meeting we hope to open a discussion at meso-level. Taking the meso-level as entry point is motivated by the idea that this is the level at which the different stakeholders, i.e. business, civil society, and government, engaged with pro-development value chains meet. Moreover, the meso-level is where leverage points for change may be detected. Reconfiguring chain characteristics, which are embedded in institutions, and behavioural patterns, entails more tenacious interventions trajectories, but may eventually lead to systemic changes and sustainable forms of development. The analysis of terms of inclusion in value chains, the degree of alignment of value chains with local business systems, and the institutional architecture and performance of partnerships, central to the research effort in this project, also focuses on this level.

Partners

Concept Fruit BV, Woord en Daad, HIVOS, ICCO and the ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality. With contributions from the Directorate-General for International Cooperation (DGIS) of the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Involved researchers

Institute of Social Studies, Wageningen University and Research Center, University of Amsterdam, Tilburg University, University of Utrecht, Centre for International Development Issues Nijmegen, University of Groningen, Erasmus University Rotterdam, Maastricht School of Management, ECSAD -Expert Centre for Sustainable Business and Development Cooperation-, and Royal Tropical Institute.

Previous Events

Over a period of 24 months, the following events are scheduled:

- ⇒ Dinner meeting (November 2008) – a report of this meeting can be found [here](#). This event assembled almost 50 representatives from business, NGOs, governments, and research. This meeting set the direction for a continuing dialogue in the research community.
 - ⇒ Researcher's workshops and writeshop for joint analysis by research teams (2009-2010). This process resulted in an edited volume entitled "Value chains, inclusion and endogenous development: contrasting theories and realities" (Routledge – February 2011). The Table of Contents can be found [here](#)
- In 2009 and the first half of 2010 a group of researchers produced a collection of 13 papers that unpack the configurations linking value chains to endogenous development. In the papers, new combinations of researchers from a range of disciplines and theoretical traditions explored the conditions that make global value chains inclusive to vulnerable groups, such as small producers and workers in the South. Also, the ways in which global value chains articulate with endogenous economic development have been examined. And, finally, the role of partnerships is discussed.

Website

<http://value-chains.global-connections.nl/>