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# Increasing Program Reach Through Learning Networks

EGAT KM Fair  
February 25, 2008

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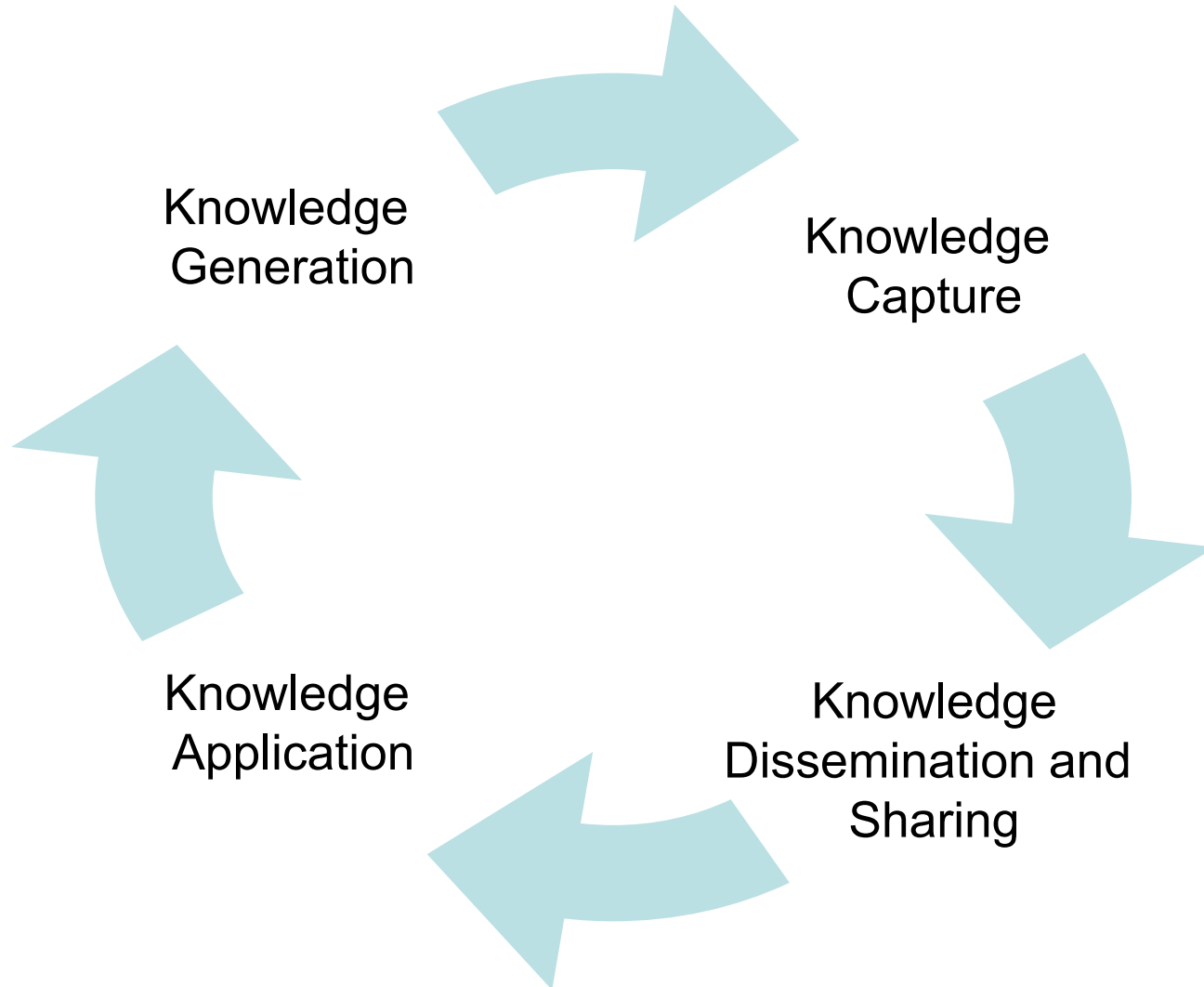
## MD office's scaled approach to knowledge

- Emphasizes collaborative learning and industry-wide impact
- Supports collaborative learning in all aspects of achieving scaleable microenterprise innovation:
  - Identification, research and development
    - Dissemination
      - Adaptation and application
        - Refinement
- Contrasts with one-way approach that splits K generation from dissemination from application
- Employs a broad definition of “knowledge management”: addresses the entire knowledge cycle



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# The Knowledge Cycle





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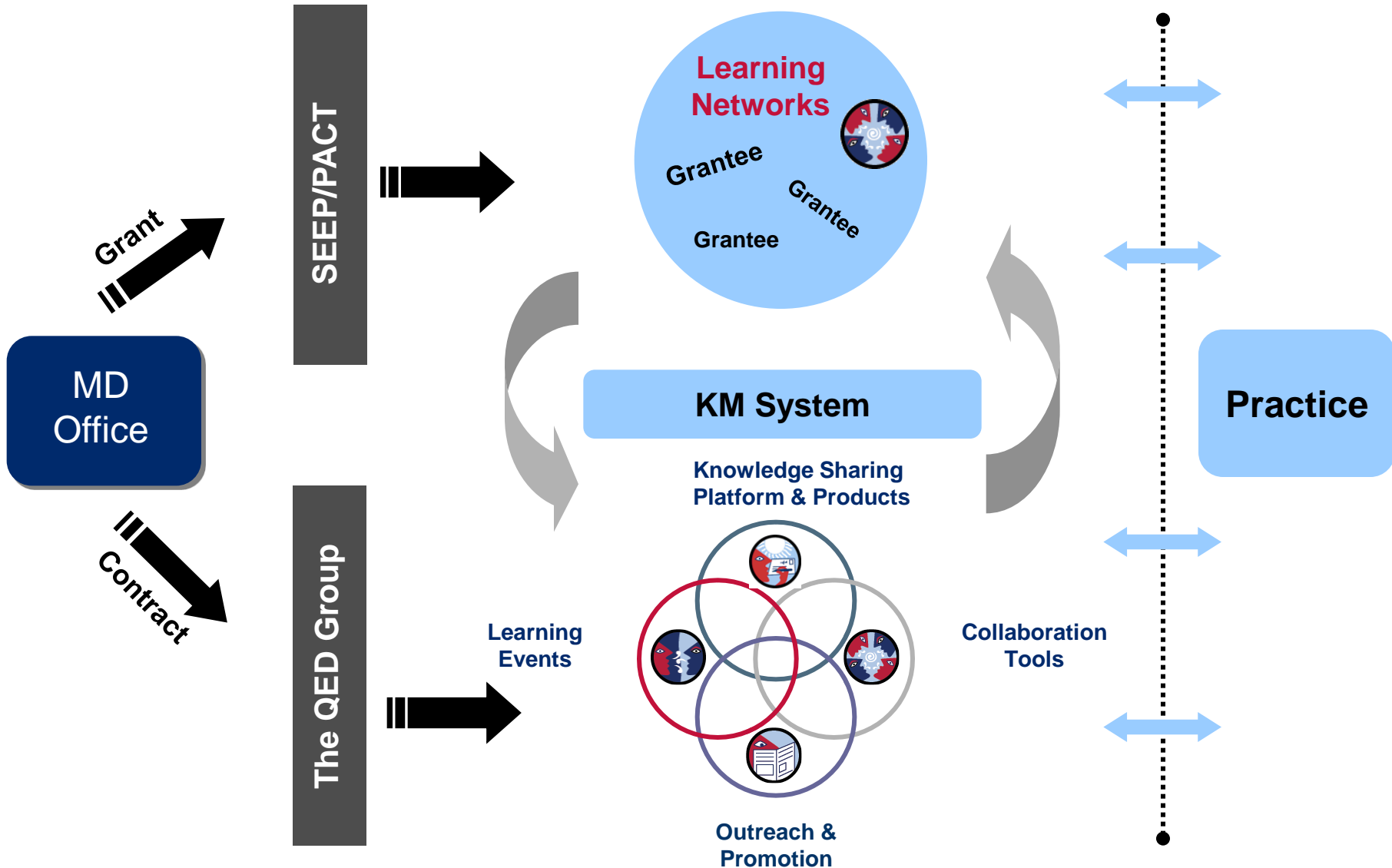
## Learning Network model

- First developed by EGAT/PR/MD and SEEP Network  
Jimmy Harris, Jennifer Hansel & others
- Can be used with grantees and contractors
- Award a grant/contract to partner
  - to implement a project (chosen for potential to generate replicable, scalable innovations)
  - and to participate in a Learning Network
- Requires coordination among several partners



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# Learning Networks & KM System





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## Some examples...

- **Strategic Alliances Practitioner Learning Program (PLP)**  
through the SEEP Network (facilitator: Lillian Diaz Villeda)
- **Consumer Finance for Alternative Energy PLP**  
through the SEEP Network
- **Financial Services Implementation Grant Program (IGP) in Reaching Hard-to-Serve Populations**  
through the SEEP Network
- **Building Effective Learning Organizations Grants Under Contract** through PACT
- **Global Value Chain Learning Network**  
through ACIDI/VOCA and QED



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## Launch phase

### Launch workshop: in person

- Learn about each other's projects (including field visit)
- Identify industry-level learning gaps, with the aid of resource people/subject matter experts
- Define a group learning agenda designed to capture project learning that's relevant to industry-level learning gaps
- Schedule virtual learning activities



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# Participants develop learning agenda







Figure 1: Learning Framework\*  
*Four Project Milestones*



\* For a complete version of our learning framework, contact Lillian Villeda, PLP Learning Facilitator ([lillian@online.com.kh](mailto:lillian@online.com.kh)).



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**as well as learning milestones**

**Building Effective Learning Organizations (BELO)  
learning network timeline**

**Jan 31: 2nd Project Report due**

**Feb 5: Tele Conference # 1 + New Learning Assignment**

**March 7: 2nd Learning Activity Report due**

**March: Individual Debriefings + Summary of Learning Trends**

**March 30: Tele Conference # 2 + New Learning Assignment**

**Apr 30: 3rd Project Report due**

**May 31: 3rd Learning Activity Report due**

**June: Individual Debriefings + Summary of Learning Trends**

**June 28: Tele Conference # 3 + New Learning Assignment**

**Jul 31: Last Project Report due**

**Aug 31: Last Learning Activity Report due**

**Sep: Individual Debriefings + Summary of Learning Trends**

**Sep 27: Tele Conference # 4**



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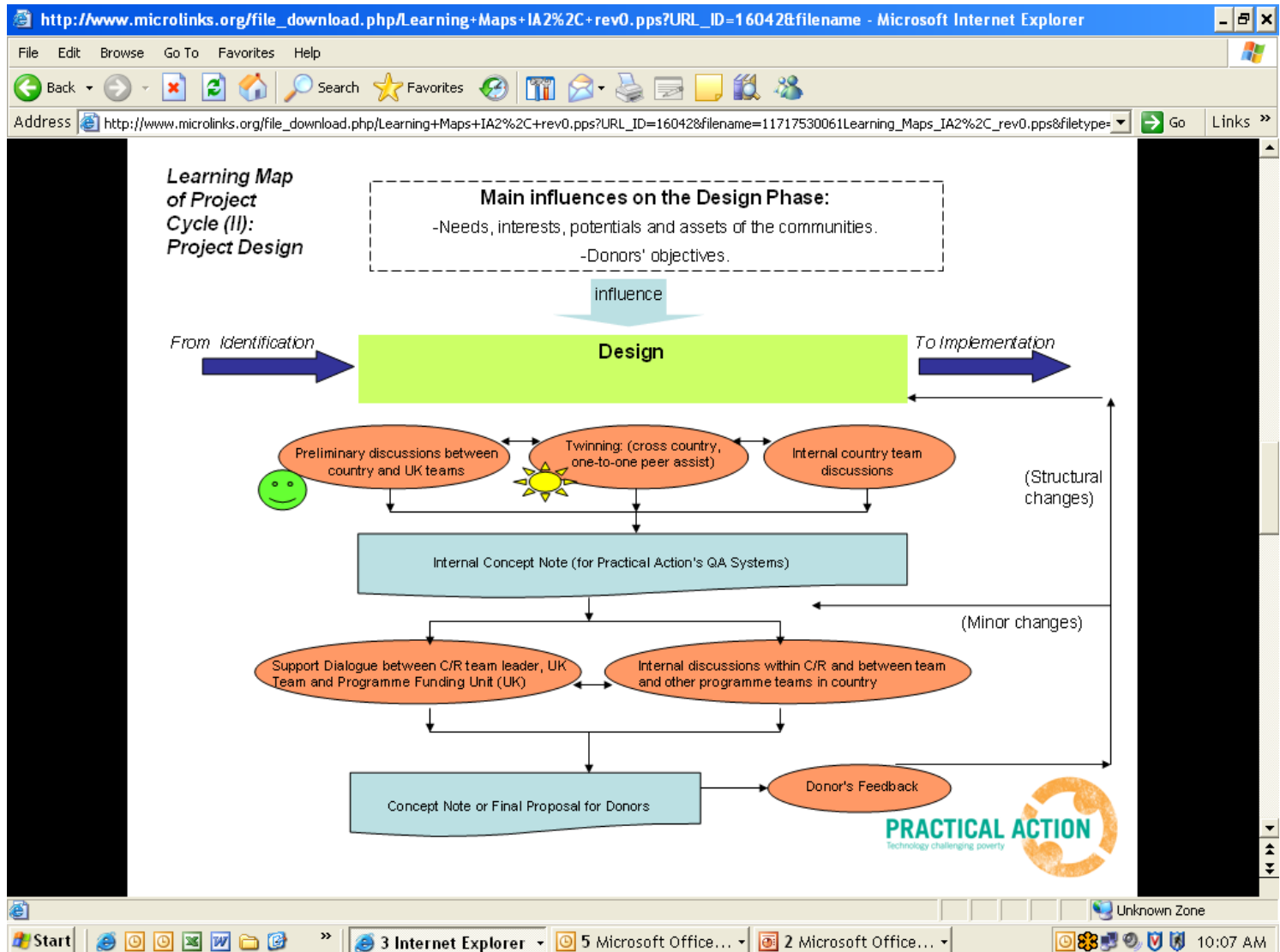
## Implementation phase + virtual learning activities

- Project implementation
- Learning diaries, learning maps, other activities
- Group phone calls
- Peer Assist phone calls
- Virtual TA from resource people



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# Practical Action's Learning Map for the BELO Learning Network





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# Interim knowledge sharing begins

## Rural Finance for Value Chains Quarterly

October 2005 • Vol 1 • No 1

*A quarterly publication from the PLP network in Strategic Alliances for Financial Services and Market Linkages in Rural Areas*

### PLP in Strategic Alliances for Financial Services and Market Linkages Launches

**Turin, Italy** – On May 9-13, 2005, The SEEP Network launched its Practitioner Learning Program (PLP) in Turin, Italy. This initial “start-up” PLP round focuses on different methods to help farmers and micro and small enterprises in rural areas gain access to finance for value chain upgrading. Strategic alliances within key value chains between rural financial institutions, market development facilitators, service providers, and value chain actors may be one promising way to make this happen.

Twenty-two celebrities (our PLP partners) from around the globe gathered to share their project ideas, deepen their understanding of key technical topics, identify ways this learning network could learn from each other, and develop learning products that will benefit the broader field.

On hand were a number of special guests. Bob Fries (ACDI/VOCA), Leonard Mutesasira (MicroSave CSP), Henry Panlibuton (AFE), and Lillian Villeda (this PLP’s Learning Facilitator) shared their experiences in market research and product development, value chain assessment, rural finance and value chain finance, and formation of strategic alliances. Geoff Chalmers (USAID) and Stacey Young (USAID) also participated in the



*Participants are “linked.”*

### The Learning Café: Testing a Knowledge Sharing Tool

**Turin, Italy** – Essential to forming a learning network is identifying common areas of interest and self-instructional questions that will drive the collective learning by the participants of the PLP network.

The Café Knowledge Sharing tool was used to help shape a learning agenda by gathering all participants together to discuss their commonalities in a café-style setting, literally over coffee. At the *Learning Café*, participants moved among three tables, holding in-depth



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# Interim knowledge sharing

## The Missing Link in the Value Chain: Financing for Rural Farmers and Microentrepreneurs

*Strategic Alliances for Financial Services  
and Market Linkages in Rural Areas*

Lillian Diaz Villeda  
and Jennifer E. Hansel



the  
**SEEP**  
NETWORK



*Conceptual Note*  
• October 2005 •



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## Mid-term workshop

- Update each other on progress in implementation
- Identify project obstacles, conduct peer assists
- Capture what's being learned about the various topics included in the learning agenda
- Map the learning and plan learning products, assign tasks



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## After the midterm workshop

- Continued implementation of project
- Development of learning products
- Continued knowledge sharing  
(e.g., virtual presentation at SEEP Network annual conference)





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## Final workshop + knowledge sharing

- Compile what's been done on the learning products, split into teams, continue work on the learning products
- Plan for finalization of learning products (implementers, facilitators, resource people)
- Plan for dissemination and K sharing (implementers, KM contractor)



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# Conference presentation, publication

*International Conference on Rural Finance Research:  
Moving Results into Policies and Practice*

## **Practitioner-Led Action Research** Making Risk-Sharing Models Work With Farmers, Agribusinesses, and Financial Institutions

*31 January 2007*

**Lead Authors**

*Lillian C. Diaz and Jennifer E. Hansel*

**Contributing Authors**

*Suresh Subramanian, Danilo Chavez Wendorff, and Bettina Wittlinger*

The  
**SEEP**  
NETWORK



The screenshot shows a Microsoft Internet Explorer browser window. The address bar contains the URL: [http://www.microlinks.org/ev\\_en.php?ID=11955\\_201&ID2=DO\\_TOPIC](http://www.microlinks.org/ev_en.php?ID=11955_201&ID2=DO_TOPIC). The page title is "Note from India: Accessing Finance in the Litchi Value Chain: MicroLinks - Microenterprise Learn".

The webpage layout includes a navigation menu at the top with tabs for "RESOURCES", "SHARING", "FUNDING", and "EVENTS". On the left side, there is an "EXPLORER" sidebar with a tree view containing the following items:

- microLINKS Home
- About microLINKS
  - microLINKS Features and Products
  - Notes from the Field
- Portal Pages
- microLINKS' New Look
- Contact Us
- Help
- Communities

Below the sidebar is a "MAIN NAVIGATION" section with the following links:

- About microLINKS
- USAID Microenterprise Development Programs
- Financial Services Resources
- Enterprise Development Resources
- Enabling Environment Resources

The main content area is titled "Note from India: Accessing Finance in the Litchi Value Chain". It features a "Note from the Field" section with a breadcrumb trail: "microlinks home > about microlinks > microlinks features and products > notes from the field > note from india: accessing finance in the litchi value chain".

The article title is "Note from India: Accessing Finance in the Litchi Value Chain" with a "Date Posted: June 30, 2006". A link is provided to "Download the pdf version of this Note." Below the text is a photograph of a group of people sitting around a table in an outdoor setting, likely a meeting or training session.

**An association of litchi farmers meets with EDA Rural Systems representatives.**

A project of the USAID-funded Practitioner Learning Program helps rural Indian litchi farmers access financial services through strategic alliances and market linkages.

Providing access to finance to India's rural poor is challenging given the high costs and risk often associated with lending in rural areas. For the litchi market in the Muzaffarpur District of Bihar State, challenges like poor transportation, limited access to technology, and a lack of credit information and collateral are exacerbated by a spoilage time of approximately 48 hours of the litchi fruits if they are not refrigerated.

EDA Rural Systems (EDA) in India is aiming to overcome some of the obstacles faced by the rural poor in accessing finance. Acting as a market facilitator, EDA is developing financial models to help increase access to finance through strategic alliances within the litchi value

The taskbar at the bottom shows the Start button, several open Microsoft Office applications (Word, Excel, PowerPoint), and the microLINKS application. The system clock shows the time as 12:16 PM on a local intranet.



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# Seminar presentation





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## belowiki

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### Welcome to the BELO wiki!

We will use this space to write our "learning document." Each of us should champion a section or page that we feel we have strong contributions for. Others will add and edit as they have ideas to contribute.

- [1. Introduction](#)
- [2. Knowledge and Learning Needs Assessment](#)
- [3. Implementation - Lessons Learned](#)
- [4. Tips](#)
- [5. Results and Outcomes](#)
- [6. Practical Tools](#)

[Comparison table between 'Programatic KM' and 'Organizational KM'](#) (these denominations are still to be discussed)

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  - D. Role of Knowledge Manager
  - E. Closing the Loop
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- Results and Outcomes

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# Audiocast

Digital Interview: Carmen Velasco - Microsoft Internet Explorer

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Address <http://www.microlinks.org/multimedia/carmenvelasco/player.html> Go Links >>

Digital Interview: Carmen Velasco (00:09 / 24:09) ATTACHMENTS



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**microLINKS**

**Digital Interview Player**

To jump through session, click on chapter names below or click the time bar at bottom.



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**microLINKS Digital Interview Series:**  
Perspectives and lessons from microenterprise practitioners

 **Note: Audio Presentation – requires computer speakers or headphones**



**Carmen Velasco**  
Co-Founder of Pro Mujer and  
Executive Director of Pro Mujer Bolivia



**Interviewed by:**  
**Tony Pryor**  
Knowledge Management Advisor,  
AMAP/KMC

**Carmen Velasco: Building Livelihoods for Latin American Women**

Carmen Velasco discusses her experiences as the co-founder of Pro Mujer, a women's development organization that establishes sustainable microfinance institutions in Latin America. Ms. Velasco speaks about founding Pro Mujer with Lynne Patterson in 1990, expanding the network into five countries, and how financial and non-financial services offered by Pro Mujer are improving the lives of thousands of families.

artikulite POWERED PRESENTATION

SLIDE 1 OF 24 PLAYING 00:09 / 00:13

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## Critical components for success

- Promising projects – technical agenda leads
- Funding for both implementation and knowledge sharing
- (With grantees) – support from their senior managers for participation in the learning network
- Quality facilitation of the network
- Achievable learning agenda synched with project activities
- Sound strategy for sharing the learning more broadly with the whole industry



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## Challenges we've encountered

- Facilitation, facilitation, facilitation
- Getting implementers to focus on knowledge capture and industry-level knowledge needs
- Coordinating multiple players
- Choosing the right knowledge-sharing vehicles
- Measuring and attributing *impact* (vs. results)





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## Results: project design is improved



*American Refugee Committee conducted a value chain analysis in November 2005 in Sierra Leone. Above, a picture taken at their value chain workshop. To learn more, see "Featured Columnist: Ask ARC"*



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# learning is shared widely

Rural Finance for Value Chains Quarterly

3

## Featured Columnist: Ask ARC



Individual interviews with buyers and suppliers, Sierra Leone.

### **Q: Tell us about your Value Chain Analysis.**

We initially conducted a baseline study and supply chain market studies in the districts of Kailahun, Kono and Koindadugu. The individual market studies looked at supply chains and market outlets at the rural

level for bananas, cocoa, cassava and groundnuts. We prepared subsector/value chain maps. Then, we reviewed the maps, synthesized information on the production yields, revenue potential, and identified the constraints faced in each subsector. Three main criteria to choose the subsector were identified using the Participatory Rapid Appraisal (PRA) technique of ranking. We felt that the value chain selected should 1) reach large numbers of MSEs from mil-

### Featured Columnists are:

Sarah Ward, previously worked for ARC and is now with IRC.

Mary Morgan, independent consultant who worked with ARC to conduct a value chain analysis with a financial services lens.

Ben Noballo, works with ARC and is a participant in this PLP.

well. Both the project and the farmers identified this as a relationship that could be improved.

### **Q: How did conducting a value chain analysis (VCA) with a financial services lens benefit your project?**

#### **What are your next steps?**

It allowed us to better focus our resources and efforts.

This was particularly important as value chains in Sierra Leone were severely weakened by the 10 years of civil conflict and none have sufficiently recovered. To be effective, we saw that we would have to use the different interventions in harmony to support one chain at many levels. The addition of the financial services lens assured



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# participants become long-term colleagues

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### My Mail - "Re: Knowledge Management vs. Learning"

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from [luchokool](#)  
to [sybsmic](#), members of [belowwiki](#)  
date Jan 15, 2008 1:58 am  
subject Re: Knowledge Management vs. Learning

Hi Sybil:  
A report on Participatory Video experiences and working plans will be ready by Feb/Mar.  
I'll share it with you all.  
Hugs,  
Lucho

### Reply

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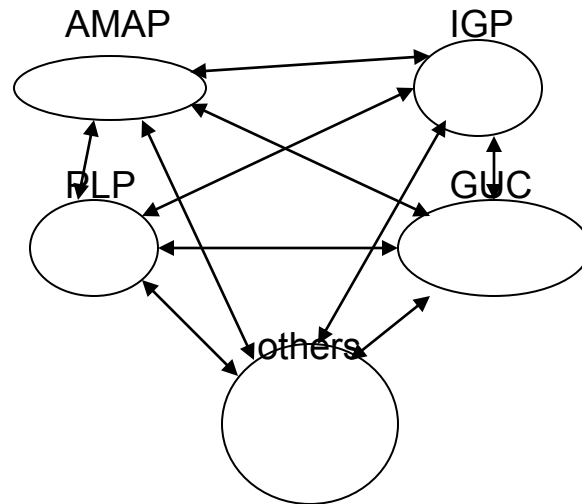
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## Next phase

- Application: how do we ensure shared K = applied K?
- Attribution: how do we capture impacts of K sharing?
- Integration: via KM system, link learning networks with other MD office mechanisms and knowledge generation investments





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**Thank you!**

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