About MSP:

The USAID-funded Feed the Future Market Systems and Partnerships (MSP) Activity is advancing learning and good practice on market systems development (MSD) and private sector engagement (PSE) within USAID, USAID’s implementers, and market actors. MSP provides and improves upon the evidence, capacity, tools, technical assistance, and services required to design, implement, monitor, and evaluate activities that lead to inclusive and resilient agriculture-led economic growth, improved food security and nutrition, and increased incomes for the poor.

As one component of the Activity, MSP facilitates private sector partnerships through a global Partnership Facility that creates shared value from the alignment of core business objectives and development goals. As of December 2022, MSP has seven active partnership facilities through buy-ins with USAID Missions and Washington covering footprint in over a dozen and a combined value of $17.1 million. The partners featured during the social media week come from the Southern Africa Agricultural Trade and Investment Activity with USAID Southern Africa Regional Mission, the Cambodia Agricultural Investment Activity with USAID/Cambodia Mission, and the Solomon Islands Partnership Facility with USAID/Philippines Mission.

About MSP’s Partnerships Social Media Week:

MSP launched the partnerships social media week in order to 1) highlight the inspiring private sector partners that MSP are working with around the world, 2) tell the story of the impact that USAID’s co-investment is having through these partnerships, and 3) share knowledge on MSP’s tailored to private sector engagement. The week’s theme was how the co-development process creates greater shared value—both for the firm and for development impact.

To learn more about MSP, visit our website and subscribe to our newsletter. For inquiries or further information on the stories included, please contact Keilah Niyomutabazi, Communications Specialist on MSP at keilah_niyomutabazi@ftf-msp.org
SNAPSHOT OF FEATURED STORIES:

1. **260 Brands, Zambia:** 260 Brands is introducing fresh organic soy milk—the first of its kind in the southern Africa region produced on a commercial scale—thanks to USAID’s partnership, which is allowing the company to test and innovate with reduced risk to their bottom line.

2. **Khmer Cold Chain (KCC), Cambodia:** Through a strong co-development process, MSP and KCC were able to work together to extend KCC’s temperature-controlled logistics cross-docking facility services to reach SMEs and agricultural cooperatives a full three years earlier than initially planned.

3. **European African Seed Initiative (EASI), South Africa, Malawi, Lesotho, and Eswatini:** Thanks to USAID’s co-investment, EASI is expanding and refining their innovative last mile business model, in which agropreneurs serve as decentralized extension officers to reach rural seed producers, to Eswatini, Malawi, and Lesotho.

4. **Amru Rice, Cambodia:** Co-investment with USAID, is offsetting the risk of Amru Rice’s expansion into vegetables and enabling Amru Rice to make a long-term investment in Cambodia’s vegetable supply chain and the farmers that comprise it.

5. **Solomon Islands Partnership Facility:** A snapshot on the upfront investment landscape assessment that MSP undertook and how it helped MSP to understand the potential risks, set realistic expectations for partnerships, and navigate negotiations and award implementation.

REACH OF STORIES:

- **Impressions:** 31,509
- **Likes:** 204
- **Comments:** 40
- **Reshares:** 31
We talk a lot about de-risking for SMEs. But what does this mean in practice? Check out this story from MSP partner, 260 Brands.

Through a co-investment partnership with USAID implemented by MSP, 260 Brands is introducing a new product line—fresh organic soy milk—to new markets in South Africa with a projected export volume of 121,000 liters reaching 2,000 smallholder farmers. This product, sourced entirely from smallholder farmers in Zambia will be the first of its kind in the southern Africa region produced on a commercial scale. A major barrier to SMEs being able to innovate is the financial risk involved—and this is an area where a well-designed partnership can help a firm move to the next level, ultimately creating more jobs and social impact. For 260 Brands, MSP’s investment allows them to test and innovate with reduced risk to their bottom line. CEO of 260 Brands, Gaurav Vijayvargiya, noted that, “USAID’s investment is the enabling factor” supporting his company’s ability to innovate this new product line.

Using a pay for results partnership format, MSP is co-investing with 260 Brands through a light touch grant mechanism that allows partners to focus on the success of the project outcomes. As of November 2022, 1,000 smallholder farmers in Zambia have been recruited and integrated into the 260 Brands supply chain for this pilot activity with initial batches of soy milk hitting the shelves this year.

Want to hear more lessons learned and practical insights on private sector engagement implementation? Stay tuned this week—we’ll be highlighting a new firm and element of our approach each day as part of our 2022 partnerships social media week.
One thing that has been exciting to see on MSP thus far is the impact that a strong co-development process can have for creating shared value for donors and private sector partners alike. Check out today’s story about MSP’s partner in Cambodia, Khmer Cold Chain (KCC).

KCC is an InfraCo Asia company set up in partnership with Phnom Penh Autonomous Port (PPAP) with an innovative and transformative concept: to establish the first centralized temperature-controlled logistics cross-docking facility in Cambodia.

Through a co-investment partnership with USAID, implemented by MSP, KCC is projected to increase cold storage space in Cambodia by 5,827 cubic meters. As a new operation, KCC initially came to the partnership with a plan to solely target larger customers for the facility, thinking that they would scale to reach SMEs and agricultural cooperatives after first establishing relationships with larger firms.

MSP saw that while KCC’s initial planned approach to establish the facility and focus its outreach and marketing on large, anchor firms only would still be an important development in Cambodia, it could run the risk of excluding smaller firms and cooperatives and concentrating the benefits of the new project to a limited and already more well-off group of customers. Through the co-development process, MSP and KCC were able to work together to establish a plan and targets to extend KCC’s reach to tailor services for SMEs and agricultural cooperatives a full three years earlier than initially planned, while simultaneously supporting KCC to attract larger, anchor clients to ensure the success of the endeavor.

Now, after ten months of implementation and the completion of a customer insights survey of “developmentally impactful customers”—mutually defined as SMEs, agricultural cooperatives, woman-owned firms, and firms that source crops or products mainly produced by women—KCC is increasingly seeing how they can more effectively develop and market services to include these types of customers. They are also seeing the impact of having a broader customer base earlier on.

Are you a firm, donor, or implementing partner who has participated in a co-development process? We’d love to hear your stories and tips on effective co-development in the comments below! And stay tuned for more lessons learned this week as we continue our 2022 partnerships social media week.

Notable Comments and Reshares:

M. Sahr Nouwah • 2nd
Civil Society Specialist/ Advocacy / Organization Development/Inclusion...

This is a concept we could borrow for Liberia as the country Agribusiness and agriculture sector begins to develop. This is welcoming.
Wondering how an effective partnership model can help firms adapt their business models to new environments?

European African Seed Initiative (EASI) is a seed company based in South Africa. They have an innovative last mile business model in which they liaise with agropreneurs to serve as decentralized extension officers to provide ongoing coaching, oversight, and field support to producers who supply open pollinated seed varieties to EASI in target production zones. EASI piloted the approach in Zimbabwe, which was highly successful and they hoped to expand this approach to additional countries.

Through a co-investment partnership with USAID implemented by MSP, the company is now testing its agropreneur model to source and supply open pollinated variety seed stock from smallholder farmers in Eswatini, Malawi, and Lesotho. MSP’s southern Africa partnership facility, under which the partnership with EASI sits, allows for and encourages this type of transnational concept in a way that is not always possible through bilateral partnerships. Through the partnership, EASI will be able to bring 1,080 new smallholder farmers into their supply chains.

Want to hear more lessons learned and practical insights on private sector engagement implementation? Stay tuned this week—we’ll be highlighting a new firm and element of our approach each day as part of our 2022 partnerships social media week.
Risk taking is critical to business growth, and yet it can be challenging for firms to take risks all on their own (especially in today’s economic environment!) Today, we return to the theme of de-risking as an important approach in private sector engagement, highlighting MSP partner, Amru Rice (Cambodia) Co., Ltd, in Cambodia.

Amru Rice is Cambodia’s largest producer and exporter of rice, successfully sourcing rice from smallholder farmers who form part of 36 agricultural cooperatives and 500 producer groups throughout the country. Amru Rice saw an opportunity to adapt this model and expand into vegetables with the aim of strengthening Cambodia’s vegetable supply chain and growing the untapped potential to export high quality produce. Amru Rice acknowledged several sector challenges that would make investing in the vegetable value chain a risky move, including inefficient management practices that prevent Cambodian vegetable production from meeting domestic demand, an absence of storage (especially cold storage) to allow for the aggregation of significant volumes of products, lack of consistent market access and fair prices, and overall disorganization and fragmentation.

A co-investment partnership with USAID implemented by MSP, has been able to offset some of that risk and enable Amru Rice to make a long-term investment in Cambodia’s vegetable supply chain and the farmers that comprise it. Over the course of the partnership, Amru Rice will work through agricultural cooperatives and producer groups to train at least 1,200 smallholder farmers in global good agricultural practice (GAP) standards and support them to implement them and meet those standards. Amru Rice will also establish a projected 143 cubed meters of decentralized cold storage spaces to allow the cooperatives and groups to aggregate and sell their produce for a fair price back to Amru Rice, which will buy the produce in bulk. MSP and Amru Rice are hopeful that this model, once proven successful, will incentivize other actors to invest in the vegetable value chain.

As of November 2022, Amru Rice has trained over 800 farmers, (77% of whom are women) through 10 agricultural cooperatives and producer groups and is in the process of establishing the first set of decentralized cold storage spaces using CoolBot technology.

We’d love to hear your stories about de-risking in partnerships!
One thing that MSP has learned in our first two years of implementation is that the design phase of establishing new partnerships is time and resource intensive but is absolutely critical to making sure the right partner firms are reached and selected—and that MSP understands the business operating environment well to be able to provide impactful support to firms once selected.

MSP is implementing a USAID co-investment partnership model in Solomon Islands. Prior to launching our partnerships program in Solomon Islands in 2022, we undertook a two-part agribusiness sector analysis and opportunity identification exercise to better understand the investment landscape in Solomon Islands, especially in light of the impacts of COVID-19.

As part of this Analysis, MSP conducted key informant interviews and desk research in early 2021 to better understand the operating environment in Solomon Islands, highlight the sub-sectors within the agriculture sector with the greatest opportunity, and identify the key players and target firms to engage with when designing the partnership facility. The exercise was a critical component of the design phase of the activity and continues to be an important management tool to understand the potential risks, set realistic expectations for partnerships, and navigate negotiations and award implementation.

And that’s a wrap for our 2022 partnerships social media week. Stay abreast of MSP’s innovative partnerships and co-investment opportunities by subscribing to our newsletter.

Notable Comments and Reshares:

A.S.M. Monirujjaman  •  1st
Expert on Market Systems & Value Chain Development | Climate Change...

Kudos to you and the team for this fantastic achievement. Actually this is the beauty of market systems approach. Deep drive, in-depth research helps MSD practitioners to identify the root causes of problems, trigger point of change and change makers partners. Though it’s takes time but once followed the approach properly you will touch the result immediately.