

Innovative Approaches on Stakeholders Workshop for the Banana Chips Industry

Adapted from ACDI VOCA Document



December 2006

**Marian Boquiren • Ivan Idrovo
Chin Nobleza • Jonah Nobleza
Contact: mb@sdcasia.ph**

I. Introduction:

The stakeholders' workshop conducted for the banana chips industry, is a facilitated, participatory workshop, directed to polarize the overall direction of industry development and create a better understanding of the forces affecting each player. During the value chain analysis, various key players were identified from different areas. For the stakeholders workshops, the key players perceived to have some potential to upgrade, or push others to upgrade, otherwise known as stakeholders, were invited. For the banana chips industry, the participants generally fall into the following categories: farmers, traders, first-fry operators, processors/exporters, and government and service providers.

The workshops will be used to achieve the following objectives:

1. validation of the results of the value chain analysis
2. formulation of a competitiveness vision
3. identification and prioritization of key constraints and opportunities
4. drafting the industry action plan

II. Overall Framework:

The banana chips industry is very fragmented and there is a low-level of trust between players, i.e. farmers and traders, traders and processors, farmers and processors. And aside from the flow of cash and commodity, there is little or no other interaction between these players.

Before a joint stakeholders workshop can be effectively facilitated, breakaway stakeholders workshops, specifically for each player, has to be conducted to extract critical information from each of them without being influenced by other players. The information derived during each breakaway workshop is in fact similar to the information that will be gathered during the joint stakeholders workshop. The difference is on the absence of synthesizing activities, like the action planning, that will finalize or process their outputs, as this will be done during the joint stakeholders workshop. The breakaway sessions will also provide an opportunity to sensitize each of the players on the need to build good relations with the other players for the industry to move forward.

The joint stakeholders workshop, creates a venue for all players to internalize the forces affecting all of them, and look for ways how to address the concerns collectively as an industry.

III. The Stakeholders Workshops

A. Breakaway Stakeholders Workshops

The Breakaway Stakeholders Workshops is designed so the specific group is insulated from any external influence from other players. The information gathered will reflect the real general sentiments of the stakeholders since they feel they can easily confide relevant information and opinions without fear of reprisal from other players. Their outputs will be used to validate each others outputs and will be used as takeoff points for the Joint Stakeholders Workshop.

The specific objectives of the Breakaway Stakeholders Workshops are to:

- describe a more competitive banana chips industry
- identify constraints and opportunities that have the greatest impact on the industry

1. Paint Me a Picture

Doing stakeholders workshops the first time, it is important to build trust between the facilitators and the participants, and among the participants. The facilitators start with a description of the Program and Objectives and an overview of the Value Chain, starting with the Value Chain Map. It is required that everybody, facilitators and stakeholders included, get to know everybody - who they are, and what their roles in the value chain are. For government,

providers, and processors/exporters, who are used to structured sessions, they can easily paint a picture of their backgrounds, and their working environments. For farmers, traders, and first - fry operators, they can elaborate more successfully if they literally “paint” a picture of themselves relative to their position in the value chain.

This less formal activity also prepared the participants mentally and emotionally for the workshops, in lieu of the usual Ice Breaker.

Steps

- a. Each participant is given a poster paper and pen and they draw a symbol representing himself/herself, in relation to the banana chips or cardava industry.
- b. The participants identify other industry players: farmers, traders, first - fry operations, processors, exporters, government or other providers, they have business relations with, and draw them around his personal symbol.
- c. The participants indicate the status, or their personal satisfaction levels, of these relations with the other players, using the following keys:

- ☺ very happy
- ☹ indifferent
- ☹ very unhappy

- d. The participants then make a 1 minute oral reporting to further elaborate or emphasize certain points of his drawings, or answer questions or clarifications.
- e. The drawings are kept for documentation and future reference.

2. Describing the “Competitiveness Vision of the Banana Chips Industry” *How would the industry look like if it were more competitive?*

Before the formal workshops began, the facilitator gave a presentation to orient or review the participants on the 5 elements of the value chain that are considered for intervention:

- End Markets
- Inter-firm cooperation
- Support Markets
- Firm-level Upgrading
- Enabling Environment

This part of the workshop “Competitiveness Vision of the Banana Chips Industry,” let the participants define the criteria for a more competitive industry. They will not be required to come up with the competitive vision as this will be finalized during the Joint Stakeholders Workshop.

The specific criteria for the competitiveness vision will be based on the following Competitiveness Criteria and Focus Questions:

Competitiveness Criteria

- Efficiency
- Product differentiation
- Taking advantage of new demand or markets

Focus Questions:

- *What are the characteristics of success of this industry?*
- *How can this industry compete more efficiently in the global/local markets?*
- *What end-market characteristics can be a competitive advantage of the industry?*

Steps

- a. Group the participants into 4's or 5's. Separating those coming from the same organization or geographical region. Each group will pick a leader and a scribe. The leader will facilitate group discussion and the scribe will jot down their discussions.
- b. The facilitators will provide poster papers for the groups.
- c. Each group will come up with phrases or keywords answering the focus questions - *How would the industry look like if it were more competitive?*
- d. The group will report on their outputs and elaborate on it further for 2 - 3 minutes.
- e. Group similar keywords/phrases together, noting which descriptions commonly surfaced.
- f. Keep the accomplished worksheets, including relevant additions made during the reporting.

The criteria the stakeholders will generate should not be limited on their area of operation, but should be industry wide.

3. Getting to the Root

The 3rd and last part of the workshop involves the identification of main constraints and opportunities faced by the specific stakeholders.

The stakeholders need to identify the major constraints that prevent them from getting bigger incomes, from taking advantage of given opportunities, from making the industry more competitive.

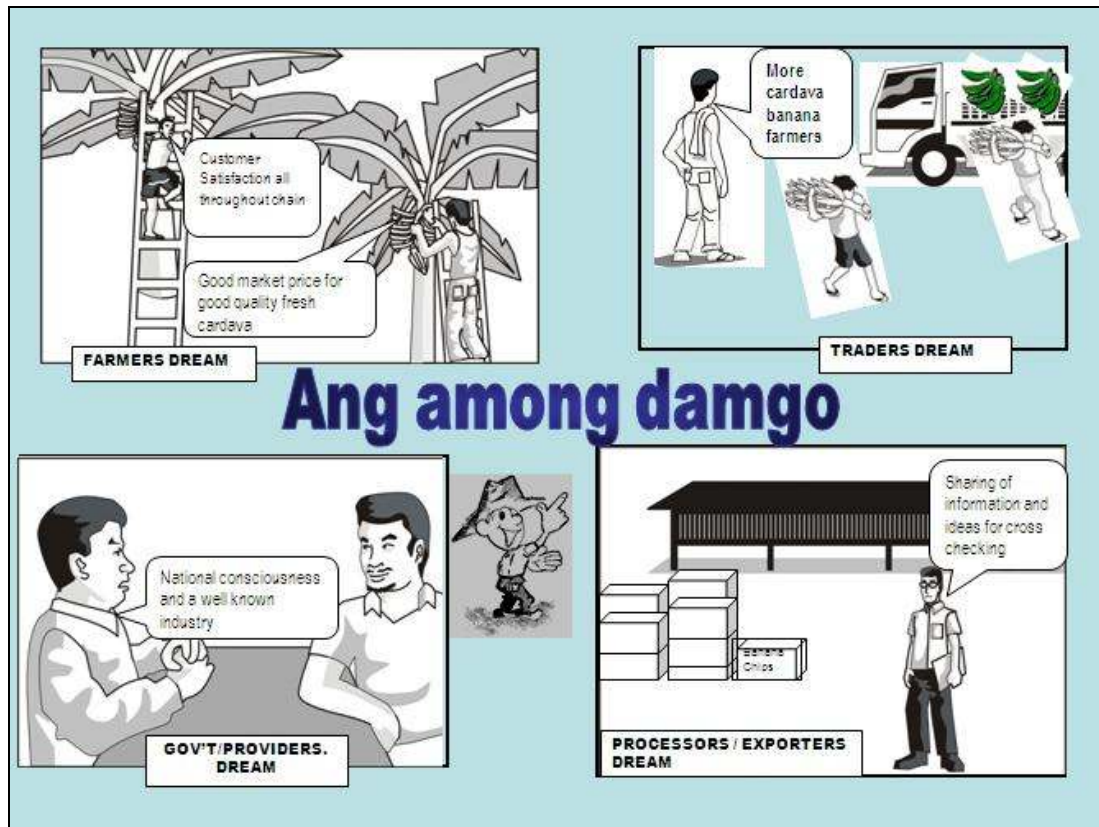
Steps

- a. Previous groupings may be used, separating those coming from the same organization or geographical region. To encourage equal participation, a new leader and scribe may be selected.
- b. A sufficient number of meta cards are passed on to the groups. One color for constraints; a different color for opportunities.
- c. Members write down main constraints faced by the industry and corresponding opportunities they want to tap. Each meta card should contain only 1 constraint or 1 opportunity.
- d. The members present their meta cards and ideas to the group with a brief elaboration.
- e. Similar ideas are grouped together and they are posted in full view of all participants. The leader will give a brief 2-3 minute run down of the constraints and opportunities.
- f. The same is done for the other groups.
- g. An observation is made on the constraints and opportunities that commonly surface.

B. Joint Stakeholders Workshop

The Breakaway Stakeholders Workshops conducted among farmers, traders, first-fry operators, processors/exporters, and government and service providers, provided an opportunity to validate the results of the value chain study.

The outputs were packaged into 2-3 frame comics. The storylines and illustrations conveyed powerful messages about existing concerns of each player, the nature of existing value chain relationships, and the implications of one's actions on the other players and on the industry as a whole. The comics were anecdotal, injected with slight humor, with the intention to veer away readers/participants from focusing on personalities and personal mindsets, but rather on the issues affecting the industry as a whole. With the comics, it was easy to present that the players are experiencing related or similar concerns, thus, they can be resolved collectively as an industry.



At the end of the workshop, the following objectives are to be achieved:

- Formulation of a shared competitiveness vision
- Prioritization of top constraints and opportunities → identification of the causes and effects
- Drafting of the action plan

The participants were distributed into 5 different groups as listed below. For the entire duration of the workshop, they internalized and played their assigned roles. Ex. Banana growers belonging to the Processor/Exporter group, accomplished the assigned tasks in the workshop, consistent with their perception of a typical processor/exporter. At least one "real" representative, was assigned to his/her "real" group, to provide some "real" insights. Ex. One processor/exporter was assigned to the Processor/exporter group, while the rest were distributed among the other groups.

This unique mixed grouping and role playing, focuses on the key player represented and limits personal mindsets to dominate group discussions. And while the outputs are real sentiments of the key players represented, with at least 1 "real" stakeholder embedded in the group, the group discussions among the members led to a more wholesome output shared by the entire industry.

Groupings According to Role

1. Growers/Farmers
2. Trader
3. 1st Fry Operator
4. Processor/Exporter
5. Service Provider/Government

Materials Needed:

1. Card Deck: Ace, King, Queen, Jack, 10,9,8,7,6,5,4,3,2
2. Markers
3. Poster Papers



The figure above shows the card deck distributed to each group bearing the different symbols for easy identification.

After the groupings were finalized, each group were given their corresponding card decks.

Activity #1

Competitiveness Vision of the Industry: Show and Tell Your Aces



Focus Question: *What ACE can you potentially contribute to make the whole banana chips more competitive in the local and global market?*

1. SHOW AND TELL YOUR ACES

What ACE can you potentially contribute to make the whole banana chips more competitive in the local and global market?

Top 3 Conditions for the banana chips industry to effectively and efficiently compete

1.
2.
3.

Promoting equitable benefits for all players

Steps

- a. Based on the groupings ~ role assignments, the group writes on the Ace Card what they, can potentially contribute the banana chips industry more competitive in the local and global market.
- b. Focus Question: What are the top three conditions necessary for the banana chips industry to effectively and efficiently compete in the local and global markets parallel to promoting equitable benefits for all players?
- c. The 3 conditions are prioritized and the #1 condition (top priority) is written on the King Card, 2nd on the Queen, and the 3rd on the Jack Card.
- d. Each group is given a short time to present their outputs.



Synthesis:

- a. Aces: The aces are the shared elements of competitiveness as identified by the key players. The different contributions of each group/player will be used to build the industry's competitiveness.
- b. King, Queen, and Jack: These cards represent the conditions for equitable growth of the industry. Similarities on the group outputs are highlighted. The participants are then asked to provide additional comments or reactions.

Activity #2

Prioritization Of Constraints And Opportunities

PRIORITIZATION OF CONSTRAINTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

BananaACE
Banana Agrarian Competitiveness Enhancement

USAID SDC Asia

The next activity tasks the participants to identify the constraints that prevent them from becoming more competitive, or from taking advantage of opportunities like more lucrative markets, better prices, bigger incomes.

It has 2 parts: I. Prioritization of Constraints; and II. Prioritization of Opportunities. On the first part, the underlying causes of the top constraint are derived, and the corresponding effects on the industry are also noted. For the 2nd part, the top opportunity for the industry is identified, and the corresponding potential effects on the industry players and the industry as a whole, are also noted.

Part I. Prioritization of Constraints

PLAY CARDS: TOP PRIORITY CONSTRAINTS

5

1.

3

3.

4

2.

2

RESERVE CARD

Steps

- a. Each group, according to their assigned roles, identifies top constraints (at least three) that limit their competitiveness.
- b. The following focus questions are used:
 - Of all the constraints, which has the biggest impact on the industry’s competitiveness?
 - How did this constraint affect certain players or the industry as a whole?
 - How do these constraints prevent the industry from achieving those indicated in the Group’s Aces, Kings, Queens, and Jacks?
- c. The constraints are prioritized, and the top constraint is written on the 5 card, the 2nd constraint is written on the 4 card, the 3rd on the 3 card. The 2 card is held as a reserve.
- d. A poster paper, with the following blank working table, is distributed to the groups.
- e. Each group picks their 5 card with the top priority constraint, and proceeds to complete the table on the poster paper.
- f. The groups identify the underlying causes of the top constraint.
- g. The corresponding effects on the key player they are representing and effects on the entire banana chips industry are also identified.
- h. Facilitators keep a close watch and guide the groups if necessary, in determining the appropriate underlying causes and corresponding effects.

TOP PRIORITY CONSTRAINT:

Top Priority Constraint:		
CAUSES	EFFECTS	
	PLAYER	BANANA CHIPS INDUSTRY
1.		
2.		
3.		

Part II. Prioritization of Opportunities

PLAY CARDS: TOP PRIORITY OPPORTUNITIES

The graphic displays three play cards with human figures: Card 10 (10 figures), Card 8 (8 figures), and Card 9 (9 figures). Next to them are three numbered circles: 1 (brown), 2 (blue), and 3 (green). A separate green circle is labeled 'RESERVE CARD'. The text 'CARD 6 AND 7' is also visible in the center.

Steps

- a. Each group, according to their assigned roles, identifies the top 3 opportunities they think are necessary to further develop the industry.
- b. The opportunities are prioritized, and the top opportunity is written on the 10 card, the 2nd opportunity is written on the 9 card, the 3rd on the 8 card. Cards 6 & 7 are held as reserves.
- c. A poster paper, with the following blank working table, is distributed to the groups.
- d. Each group picks their 10 card with the top priority opportunity, and proceeds to complete the table on the poster paper.
- e. The probable effects on the key player they are representing and effects on the entire banana chips industry are also identified.
- f. Each group is given a short time to present their outputs.
- g. A number of participants are given a chance to validate or react to the workshop outputs.

EFFECTS	
PLAYER	BANANA CHIPS INDUSTRY
1.	
2.	

Synthesis:

- Based on the group outputs, 3 top constraints and 2 top opportunities are selected.
- The major consideration in choosing them would be: *“Which among them will have the highest degree of impact to the achievement of the competitiveness vision?”*

Activity #3

Harnessing the Powers and Capabilities of the Value Chain Players (Action Planning)

ACTION PLANNING

This activity allows the stakeholders to directly participate in an industry action planning, and provide the program some inputs that will be considered in the design of the implementation plan.

Steps

- a. Each group is assigned 1 of the 3 Top Constraints and 2 Top Opportunities selected from the previous activity.
- b. A poster paper with the following blank working table is distributed to each group.



- c. The following focus questions are used to complete the table:
1. *What can I do to address the constraints and opportunities?*
 2. *Who among the value chain players can assist in addressing the constraints and opportunities? Who can make it work?*
 3. *What can I offer to people who can assist me?*
 4. *What incentives can I offer for positive change to take place?*
- d. Each group is given a short time to present their outputs.
- e. A number of participants are given a chance to validate or react to the workshop outputs.