

ADVANCED TRAINING ON MARKET SYSTEMS DEVELOPMENT CONTENT

WHY THIS COURSE?

This course sets out to address two key challenges facing the market systems development community:

1. **Limited leadership development opportunities.** While there are many introductory courses – including DevLearn’s own MSD and MEL courses, which have trained over 2,000 people – there are few avenues for building leadership capacity. After taking an introductory course, professionals often lack the opportunities to continue advancing their skills and careers in MSD.
2. **Challenges in applying theory in practice.** Many people leave introductory courses with a solid grasp of MSD tools, frameworks, and theories but struggle to apply them effectively in the unpredictable, real-world market context. This gap between theory and practice can hinder progress in creating systemic change.

Our course takes a radically different approach, providing an immersive, scenario-based learning environment that helps participants build practical skills in managing MSD projects and preparing for senior roles. By admitting participants with existing MSD knowledge and experience, the course enables a deep dive into practical problem-solving. Participants will learn how to develop business models, negotiate with partners, and respond to unexpected challenges.

TARGET GROUP

This Advanced Course is designed for participants with significant experience (e.g. three years) of MSD implementation, ideally supplemented by prior training in MSD. We are particularly looking for participants who:

- **Understand basic MSD concepts:** Participants should be familiar with MSD concepts and frameworks, such as market analysis, the market donut, the will-skill matrix, and negotiation strategies. The course will build upon these foundational ideas and focus on their practical application.
- **Have practical MSD experience:** Participants should be able to share their experiences, including successes, failures, and challenges. We want individuals who can contribute meaningfully to group discussions and help create a collaborative learning environment.

We understand that everyone’s experience is unique, so welcome applications even if the exact criteria are not met.

COURSE CONTENT

Day	Topic	Learning Objectives
Monday	Strategy development	<p>Design an overall strategy for an MSD programme, relevant for the country context and donor expectations, while addressing cross-cutting issues such as gender, environment, and conflict sensitivity.</p> <p>Develop targeted strategies for specific markets, identifying and prioritising constraints, considering inclusivity and environmental sustainability, and identifying opportunities for systemic change.</p>
Tuesday	Intervention design	<p>Design and evaluate intervention models by assessing the financial viability, feasibility and impact of different models and critically analysing their potential for creating systemic change.</p> <p>Engage and negotiate with stakeholders, learning how to interact with private sector, government, and target groups, to articulate programme offers, and negotiate effectively.</p>
Wednesday	Gender, conflict, and environment	<p>Design intervention strategies that incorporate gender equality and social inclusion (GESI), environmental considerations, and issues of conflict and displacement.</p> <p>Effectively communicate the importance of GESI and environmental sustainability to potential partners and stakeholders during negotiations.</p>
Thursday	Portfolio management	<p>Develop approaches for managing a portfolio of interventions, learning how to manage internal decision-making processes, engage partners in discussions about closing sectors, and managing budget constraints.</p> <p>Adapt programme strategies in response to changing market conditions, and demonstrate flexibility in decision-making to maintain alignment with MSD principles in the face of conflict or crises.</p>
Friday	Scale-up	<p>Understand and engage with different forms of investment finance, aimed at scaling up successful interventions.</p> <p>Develop scale-up strategies by applying frameworks such as AAER and 4E, engaging with market actors to explore opportunities, and integrating these frameworks into their overall programme strategies.</p>

Note: Course content is still being designed and is subject to change. We welcome input from participants to shape the course around their needs.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

The course uses an interactive, scenario-based approach to equip participants with practical skills in market systems development. Each day will include experience sharing, group discussions, and real-time problem-solving. Key activities include:

- **Scenario-Based Exercises:** Participants will be immersed in a simulated MSD programme, with the DevLearn team acting as market stakeholders. Participants will work in teams to tackle real-world challenges such as designing intervention models, negotiating with market actors, and adapting strategies as the context changes.
- **Peer learning:** Participants bring a vast range of experiences from across the world. The course will provide opportunities for sharing knowledge through group and plenary discussions.
- **Case Study Discussions:** Real-world case studies will highlight examples of successful (and unsuccessful) MSD interventions, focusing on inclusion and environmental sustainability.
- **Expert Presentations:** Facilitators will deliver presentations on advanced topics such as business modelling, access to finance, and programme strategies, providing participants with practical examples and new skills.
- **Reflective Debriefs and Feedback:** Each day will end with structured reflection sessions, where participants will discuss key takeaways from the day's activities, helping them internalize lessons and apply them to their own contexts.