

Workshop on Making Agricultural Markets ‘Deliver’
New Delhi, 10 April 2025

Agenda

10.00am Welcome

10.00 - 11:30am Session 1: Understanding Agricultural Markets

Framing Presentation (Mekhala Krishnamurthy, 10 mins)

Discussion moderated by T. Nandakumar (75 mins)

- What do we agree on and where do we disagree? What are the implications of our observations and assumptions? What are the stakes of our disagreements for both public and policy understanding of and action in agricultural markets?
- What is still missing from the account and narrative? What important changes are occurring in agricultural markets that are not fully evident or remain ignored?

(All participants to speak initially for 4-5 minutes followed by a discussion)

11:30am *Tea/Coffee Break*

11:45 – 1.00pm Session 2: Markets and Value Creation

- Our general understanding of value creation in markets focuses on private value creation via the production, processing, exchange/trade and distribution/retail of agricultural commodities. We therefore focus on the volume and share of value realisation/capture by different actors. How can we refine and measure this kind of value better as well as take into account the actual distribution of risks and their management among different actors (including intermediaries)?
- How should we approach the creation of *public value* and other kinds of non-monetary value (e.g., livelihood and employment), as well as account for social and environmental value, as well as the risks/adverse outcomes associated with agricultural markets and agro-commercial systems (including, agroecology and ecosystems, health and nutrition, quality of livelihood and human settlements etc.). Can these be measured and/or addressed only via regulatory approaches to market failure, and pricing/taxation or are there other approaches?

1.00pm *Lunch*

1:30 – 2:45pm Session 3: Governance and Regulation

- Government regulation of agricultural markets at different levels is important for both primary producers and consumers. But what should be the level, form and extent of regulation given the structure, organisation and functioning of diverse agricultural markets (local, state, national, international)? How does one move to a stable/predictable regulatory environment that is not prone to systemic adhocism yet is necessarily agile and adaptive?
- Is there a better institutional framework for regulation and governance, given the contours and dynamics of federalism, and what capacities do we have and what do we need to build for effective implementation?
- Where is the market over-regulated and where is it under-regulated? What lessons should we learn from the experience of unregulated agricultural markets?

2:45 – 4.00pm Session 4: Strengthening the Terms of Engagement

- Even well-regulated markets (in terms of price discovery, weights and measures, settlement/counter-party risk, anti-trust and restrictive trade practices etc.), cannot effectively address the structural conditions that weaken the terms of engagement of diverse participants in agricultural markets. This is not only true for farmer-producers and for consumers (including farmers of course) but also for the myriad petty, small and medium enterprises (predominantly informal) who make and maintain diverse agricultural markets in India.
- Where and how can state, civil society, and private sector play a role in strengthening the terms of engagement of different participants in agricultural markets? What is the nature and extent of public investment and intervention needed to support improvements in information, infrastructure (physical and digital) and institutions (especially collectives)? What is working, what needs re-thinking and reform, and what vital elements remain ignored or invisible and require support and intervention? For example, is information asymmetry still a major challenge, in what ways, and what should be done about it?

4:00pm **Summary and Next Steps**

4.30pm Tea

Note:

In sessions 2, 3 & 4: *We will request 4 participants to make brief remarks to kick start each discussion. All participants are encouraged to contribute in all sessions.*