

Daily Briefing

Context is key - Know what I mean?



As we seek to understand the creation of sustainable systems, understanding the complex contexts in which we work is vital.

The systems that we design and in which we operate are complex, says facilitator Richard Bawden. "This is due to interactions in the systems and between the systems themselves, as whole entities." The environments that systems operate in add to this complexity.

History shows that when one part of any system changes, interactions between its parts change in unpredictable ways. Experience also shows that knowledge and judgments about improvement and betterment are nowhere near what we would like. They depend on the context in which we operate under any given circumstance.

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AfricaWorks giving hope to farmers and local communities



Tinashe

Working at the core of economic development in Mozambique, Tinashe Chitambira is making a difference in the lives of rural farmers and

tise. Tinashe is attending this workshop with colleague and agricultural specialist Antonio Inguane.

A faith-based organization, AfricaWorks began in January. Since, it has grown a customer base of more 3,300 and is enabling economic growth throughout the country.

Microfinance is one of AfricaWorks core deliverables.

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communities.

The co-founder of AfricaWorks, Tinashe aids small farmers by providing technical support, agricultural loans and exper-



TECHNO SERVE

Soluções Empresariais para a Pobreza Rural

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Sustainability with a conscience: The impacts of cashew production

The average business model may fail to consider the social implications of development, production and growth on local levels. In the cashew industry in Mozambique, that level of consciousness is part of the plan.



Brad Paul

Brad Paul is a consultant contracted by Technoserve to analyze the social and economic impact of cashew production in local communities. Technoserve has been involved in cashew production for 10 years, but sees the need to know more to do more for local communities beyond enabling their growth and stimulat-

ing the development of local and individual incomes.

"Typically analyses often exclude the impacts of production on the local workforce, culture and society," says Brad. "Examining aspects of production from a holistic perspective is important to understanding development as subjective betterment that can be created by industry, policy-makers and NGOs."

Part analyst, part story-teller, Brad also believes in the importance of telling peoples' stories so that they can see their role in making history.

"This type of research and understanding can have far-reaching impacts upon local settings through the empowerment of local peoples, and the lessons learned provided to policy-makers, NGOs and the industry," says Brad.

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"Even THAT knowledge is ignored so often that the only thing we seem to learn from history is that we learn nothing from history," notes Bawden.

For this reason, we should look to the future as a source of learning; considering how the world might turn out if we do nothing to change the way we have behaved in the past or are behaving now.

Appreciating and applying con-

textually-informed, future-oriented knowledge can be revolutionary for some. It takes a certain level of discomfort that can run counter to our expectations of what people should be and what they should do.

"Unless we profoundly change our views of the world, and the ways by which we learn about it and our roles in it" says Bawden, "we won't accomplish anything different, significant or profoundly better."

AfricaWorks a player in Mozambique's economic growth, from page 1



AfricaWorks'
Antonio Inguane

Microfinance gives farmers resources to produce and sell a product, and payback their loans.

SME, or Small to Medium Enterprises, is another program that enables those in rural settings to develop sustainable coconut and poultry operations.

The program has generated jobs and income, and food for local communities. Technical support for crop and poultry production is another AfricaWorks service, helping farmers move their sales operations from local settings to the mainstream.

Tinashe calls upon more than 10 years experience working in agribusiness. His goal for AfricaWorks is to help his fellow Africans. "Giving something to small farmers, even something small, makes a difference," says Tinashe. "AfricaWorks is helping them engage with the mainstream and grow in new ways."

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See summaries and photos online



The Daily Briefings, presentations and photos from this week can be seen at: www.LocalAction-GlobalHealth.org.

The Website is the home for the human, animal, environment and disease convergence project at Michigan State University.

You will also receive a bi-weekly e-mail sharing updates and info on emerging infectious diseases and sustainability.