

Call for abstracts and papers – Special Issue

Advancing rural entrepreneurship through technical, business, and financial services

Deadline for abstract submission: 21st June, 2019 | Deadline for article submission: 31st July 2019

Over the past two decades authors in *Enterprise Development & Microfinance (EDM)* have written extensively about the design and implementation of microfinance and its use by the poor, whether to respond to shocks and changing contexts, invest in education, or advance other livelihood goals. While the debate on microfinance is far from over, it is true that discussions have concentrated more on managing, saving, borrowing, and moving money than building viable businesses. Successful involvement of the poor in business development, in many cases with a focus on rural small and medium enterprises (SMEs), requires us to address the demand for a range of services. In addition to financial services, the poor require affordable and reliable technical and business services for developing SMEs, from small-scale processing plants to multi-tiered agricultural cooperatives. The providers of technical, business and financial services vary in their coverage, delivery mechanisms, and cost recovery. They range from government agencies and NGOs to diverse types of private sector agents, and only in rare cases they interact directly to coordinate their service offer. There is an urgent need for looking into viable options for ensuring a complementary offer of services for developing SMEs and similar businesses, and for strengthening the capacity and willingness of the latter to employ such services.

This special edition will address some of the key issues for advancing rural entrepreneurship via improved services and provide an outlook for future research. This includes new insights into the varied needs of resource-poor actors for services on the demand side, and innovations in public-private partnerships to improve the quality and reach of business, technical, and financial services on the supply side. From the perspective of financial services, the recent growth in responsible finance schemes, including impact investing and social lending, suggests new opportunities for *EDM* to influence international practice through evidence on what works, and what doesn't, in different contexts. Innovations in the provision of finance for SMEs need to be paired with those occurring in the field of technical and business services, for example with regard to the use of modern information and communication technologies, blockchain and other forms of digitalization that increase trust and efficiency along value chains. In terms of stakeholders, we need multi-dimensional strategies involving government agencies, NGOs and private sector agents for a better, more integrated offer of services, under modalities that range from free or partial cost recovery to full-cost recovery. Addressing gaps and opportunities around service provision is critical also in light of renewed policy, research, and development interest and investment in agri-food systems, including the aim to increase scale and sustainability of interventions in value chains in which smallholders play a critical role.

We invite researchers and practitioners to share their insights and to document positive and negative experiences that stimulate reflection and learning among those concerned with service design and implementation and their outcomes and impact. This is an excellent opportunity for highlighting your work, as special issues usually lead to comparably higher citations. *EDM* has a global reach with strong connections to international and national organizations working in financial services, private sector and rural development. Articles may present both qualitative and quantitative data and analysis.

Among topics of particular interest for this issue are:

- Established finance for rural SMEs, investment options and needs of rural SMEs
- Emerging financing and investment schemes (e.g. green bonds, impact investments, social lending) and their implications for smallholders and SMEs
- Potential for public-private partnerships to improve service quality, complementarity and reach
- Digital data management systems to monitor and track production processes and transactions (blockchain and other forms of digitalization)
- Private sector provision of inputs at scale (e.g. seeds and fertilizers) and services to smallholders
- Innovation in insurance services for farmers and rural SMEs and related costs and benefits
- Role of cooperatives and producer associations in the provision of services to their members
- Novel delivery mechanisms and cost-recovery modalities

Please send a **300-400 word abstract** of your planned contribution to the issue editors below by **21 June, 2019**. We will notify authors by **28 June, 2019** and those who are invited to develop full papers are expected to submit those by **31 July 2019**. All submissions will go through peer review and *EDM* cannot guarantee that papers by authors invited to submit an article will be published. **The special issue will be published in the December 2019 edition of *EDM*.**

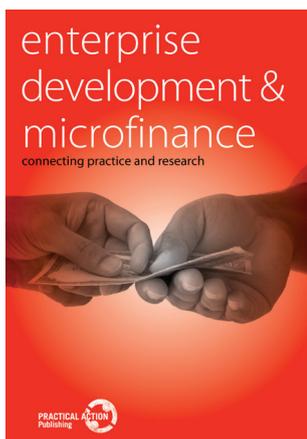
Special edition editors

Jason Donovan (CIMMYT) j.donovan@cgiar.org

Jon Hellin (CIMMYT) j.hellin@cgiar.org

Dietmar Stoian (Bioversity International) d.stoian@cgiar.org

John Belt (KIT) j.belt@kit.nl



Since 1990, *Enterprise Development & Microfinance (EDM)* has offered practice-based insights into the role of markets, enterprises and financial services in reducing poverty and stimulating economic development. This peer-reviewed journal, at the interface between research and practice, publishes papers written by researchers for the benefit of practice and those written by practitioners to inform research and policy. *EDM* encourages critical thinking on how market systems can be more inclusive and sustainable, with concrete implications for designing, implementing, and evaluating business support programmes. *EDM* is essential reading for practitioners, researchers, donors, policymakers, and finance specialists engaged in market-related activities involving poor people in the global South.

enterprise development & microfinance

Published: March, June, September, December

ISSN: 1755-1986 (online) 1755-1978 (print)

Editor

Jason Donovan – *International Maize and Wheat Improvement Centre (CIMMYT), Mexico*

Editorial Committee

Malcolm Harper – *Cranfield University, UK*
William Steel – *University of Ghana, Ghana*
Dietmar Stoian – *Bioversity International, France*

Editorial Advisory Board

Johan Bastiaensen – *University of Antwerp, Belgium*
John Belt – *Royal Tropical Institute (KIT), Netherlands*
Ben Bennett – *Natural Resources Institute (NRI), UK*
Maren Duvendack – *University of East Anglia, UK*
Thomas Dichter – *Consultant, USA*
Shaun Ferris – *Catholic Relief Services (CRS), USA*
Matthew S. Gamser – *Pacific Region, IFC*
Amos Gyau – *Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa, Ghana*
Jonathan Hellin – *CIMMYT, Mexico*
Joanna Ledgerwood – *Consultant, Canada*
Mark Lundy – *International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT), Columbia*
Imran Matin – *Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA), USA*
Alexandra Miehlbradt – *Consultant, New Zealand*
Alastair Orr – *Consultant, UK*
Nicole Pasricha – *Rainforest Alliance, Canada*
Smita Premchander – *Sampark, India*
Ruerd Ruben – *Wageningen University, The Netherlands*
Ariane Szafarz – *(ULB) and Centre for European Research in Microfinance (CERMi), Belgium*
Ben Taylor – *Springfield Centre, UK*

“One of the few places to link to real hands-on experience in the nitty-gritty of growing and financing small firms. A journal combining academic rigor with a strong practical dimension. One of the few I still take time to read cover to cover!”

Matthew Gamser, CEO, *SME Finance Forum, International Finance Corporation, Washington, DC*

“*EDM* provides accessible and practical research findings relevant for development practitioners. Successful development projects are informed by knowledge of what works and why, but operational staff rarely have the time or resources to undertake rigorous analysis. *EDM* brings together researchers and practitioners to increase the impact of interventions.”

Karen Brooks, Director *CGIAR research program Policies, Institutions and Markets, CGIAR, Washington, DC*

EDM is abstracted and indexed by: International Bibliography of the Social Sciences, Scopus, EBSCO, Genamics, CABI, and Meta.

Articles should be original contributions, between 4-6000 words in length, formatted to house style and not under consideration elsewhere. Full instructions for authors, including House Style guide can be found online at

www.practicalaction.org/edm-instructions-for-authors

All articles should be submitted via *EDM* online submission and peer review system www.edmgr.com/edm

Get the latest research delivered to your inbox

www.developmentbookshelf.com

EDM participates in the Practical Action Publishing open access programme, **Open Online**. Once accepted, authors can choose to publish open access in order to comply with funder mandates

www.practicalaction.org/open-online

Editorial contact edm@practicalaction.org.uk

Subscriptions contact publishinginfo@practicalaction.org.uk