

Towards an  
**EQUAL  
WORLD**

Vision 2030



Strategic Plan 2020-2025

# Our inspiring vision for 2030

## **Decent work for 500,000 women, men and youth in agri-food market systems**

MEDA's ambitious goal is to create or sustain decent work for a half million people in emerging economies by 2030. This plan was developed from provocative conversations grounded in research, stakeholder engagement, global analysis, and the values of MEDA.

The World Bank affirms that agricultural development is a powerful tool to stop extreme poverty, boost prosperity, and ensure food security for a projected 10 billion people by 2050. Growth in agriculture is two to four times more effective in boosting incomes when compared to similar sectors. For this reason, private sector solutions are essential to achieve a prosperous agri-food ecosystem.

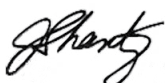
To achieve MEDA's goal, we will **focus on agri-food market systems**. We will pursue **systems level change**, by broadening our scope beyond immediate project-bound work to sustainable alliances that achieve impact at scale. MEDA will develop longer-term partnerships within countries, regions, and systems within which we work. From 2020 to 2025, MEDA will work to address the structures that trap people in poverty using a market systems approach and drawing on our areas of technical expertise. We will work to create an enduring foundation for incomes and community prosperity through decent work opportunities.

We will embrace a shared voice committed to empowering the Global South. This will be reflected in MEDA's communication, program development, implementation, evaluation, operations, philanthropy, and governance. Through **this shift**, we will continue to build conditions for self-reliance and economic freedom wherever we work.

The heart of our strategy is to see people and communities transcend poverty through respected work opportunities or by improving existing jobs. We will contribute to the elimination of poverty and advance equality by aligning with the UN Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Eight: *Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all*. Economic empowerment is essential for ending poverty and achieving the SDGs by 2030.

Our mandate of investing in rural populations and enabling inclusive and sustainable transformation of agri-food market systems is relevant and forward thinking. This Strategic Plan presents the goal, strategic priorities, and outcomes that will guide MEDA over the next decade. It will elevate our impact through strengthened program results, efficient processes, and evidence-driven actions.

MEDA's plan articulates our promise to serve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Drawing on our roots and expertise since 1953, our commitment to agility and innovation, we invite you to partner with MEDA in our bold new vision, **Towards an Equal World**. Our future is bright when we work together.



**Jenny Shantz**  
MEDA Board Chair



**Dr. Dorothy Nyambi**  
President & Chief Executive Officer





## Vision

That all people may unleash their God-given potential to earn a livelihood, provide for families and enrich communities.

## Mission

MEDA creates business solutions to poverty.

## Who we are

MEDA began as an association of Mennonite business people who believed they were called to be faithful in generously sharing their abilities and resources. Continuing in that Christian tradition, **MEDA welcomes all who share our values and want to join us in our mission.**



*MEDA's Strategic Plan aligns closely with these six UN Sustainable Development Goals.*

# MEDA's Strategic Goal: Decent work for 500,000 by 2030

## Trends in International Development:



### Changing role of INGOs\*

From implementor to  
convenor



### Innovation and flexibility

Decline of traditional  
INGO model



### Shift of power

Changing patterns of  
wealth and capacity



### Complex Environment

Climate change, shifts in  
funding, urbanization



### Models for Scale

New revenue streams and  
systemic-level impact

*\*International non-governmental organizations*

## 3 principles that guide MEDA's work:



### Agri-food market systems

Focusing MEDA's  
efforts on specific  
agri-food market systems  
in the Global South



### North-South equilibrium

MEDA commits to shared  
voice and power for our  
stakeholders in all aspects of  
work, with success defined  
based on local context



### Partnership for systems level impact

Pursuing and creating  
opportunities which  
contribute to the long-term  
strategy goal

# Strategic Pillars

MEDA has identified four strategic pillars to focus on over the next five years.

**P**rogramming:  
Focus on women and youth in agri-food market systems to create decent work.

**P**roof of Performance:  
Continue to put our clients first, ensuring that metrics help them make better decisions before sharing with other stakeholders.

**P**ositioning:  
Continue to learn from our successes and failures and share our learnings in innovative finance, agri-food market systems, and private sector engagement.

**P**rocesses:  
Develop long-term programming and partnerships in focus regions and make disciplined decisions.

Within these four pillars, MEDA has identified our goals and aspirations for the next five years. These priorities build on MEDA's strong history and deep expertise in this sector.





# P rogramming



## Sharper Focus

- Become a recognized leader in improving decent work in agri-food market systems.
- Gain expertise in high value crop market systems of focus countries.



## Systems Level Impact

- Conduct rigorous agri-food market systems assessments guide our work.
- Measure systems level change.
- Secure longer-term partnerships with donors and stakeholders.



## Alignment of Impact Investment

- Global staff, donors, partners, and clients share impact investing knowledge and convene stakeholders for system level impacts.
- Prioritize capital for agri-food market systems where we work.



## Resource Diversification

- Broaden our donor base.
- Motivate institutional donors to make longer-term commitments for systems level change.



# P

## roof of Performance



### Clear and Transparent Evidence Base

- Evidence and reporting grounded in a knowledge management and mobilization strategy.
- Partners, donors, and clients have confidence that we generate impact and accomplish our agri-food market systems goals.



### MEDA commits to the following cross-cutting themes:

- Anti-racism, gender equality and social inclusion
- Innovation and technology adoption
- Partnerships and contextual knowledge
- Environmental sustainability and climate action



# P ositioning



## Thought Leadership

- Share relevant and useful insights and create impact in agri-food market systems.
- Become sought after by platforms and publications for our acumen in Agronomics.



## Higher Corporate Visibility

- Engage new donors and partners to join agri-food market systems development.
- Influence agri-food policy.
- Strike partnerships that boost brand visibility.



## Embedded Innovation

- Capture improvements in impact, scale, and efficiency of client enterprises.
- Proactively engage Global South partners to pursue innovative, appropriate solutions to poverty.



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## rocesses



### Supportive Culture

- Create a culture embraced across the organization.
- Become an employer of choice featuring subject-matter experts.



### Disciplined Decision Making

- Advance our strategic priorities.



### Global Governance

- Meaningfully engage our diverse partners and clients from program design to implementation.
- Mandate accountable autonomy for local programs.
- Recruit a globally and demographically diverse Board of Directors.

# Key Terms



## Decent Work

Work that is productive and delivers a fair income, security in the workplace and social protection for families, better prospects for personal development and social integration, freedom for people to express their concerns, organize and participate in the decisions that affect their lives and equality of opportunity and treatment for all women and men.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Decent work: International Labour Organization



## Systems Change

A long-term approach seeking solutions with programs and projects that are transformational and sustainable. We involve partners in developing enduring benefits and outcomes. Using a multi-sector approach, we produce sustainable and resilient results.

A systems orientation improves agri-food market systems and its institutions to ensure millions of people achieve meaningful and sustained improvements.

## Agri-Food Market Systems

MEDA's work in agri-food market systems includes the producing, processing and marketing of food crops, livestock, poultry and aquaculture. Every aspect of this system is influenced by cultural, political and social forces. MEDA's approach is informed by addressing social norms, power relations, and systemic inequalities. We also strive to expand choices and opportunities for the participants in these systems. MEDA works with them to create culturally appropriate strategies to spur agri-food market systems change.



## North/South Shift

A paradigm change that seeks to decolonize and localize our programs by transferring power from the Global North (North America and Europe) to those in the Global South. In doing so, we build our work from the bottom up by drawing upon the expertise of those in the Global South to fix inequitable systems, strengthen local stakeholders, design and deliver programs with tangible, equitable, and sustainable outcomes. This shift will resound throughout MEDA, from governance, philanthropy, communications and narrative, to operations, programs, and evaluation. It will reflect one of MEDA's core values: respect.





*Creating business solutions to poverty*

[www.meda.org](http://www.meda.org)