

Mr. Derks is an expert at generating change in complex systems whether that system comprises a team, an organization, an industry sector, or a community. He has designed and led multi-million dollar programs to expand equitable opportunities and improve the performance of market systems. He is an experienced facilitator of in-person and virtual workshops, skilled at strengthening the capacity of collaborators to adaptively manage the iterative process of driving change in complex, messy situations. He also specializes in strategic planning, monitoring and evaluating systemic change, and building high-performance teams. He has lived and led initiatives in Africa, the Middles East, Asia, and the Americas. He is fluent in French and conversant in Spanish.

## Recent Experience

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### Founder and Director: Riverain Collaborations 2022 – present

Founded Riverain Collaborations to support and strengthen groups to be more efficient and effective in strategic planning and collaboration that enhances their resiliency and ability to influence outcomes.

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### Managing Partner: The Canopy Lab 2016 – 2022

Founded the Canopy Lab, a small business committed to promoting the application of systems thinking and complexity science to achieve durable, positive change in market systems: Within three years, led its growth from a single-owner business to a leadership team of three partners and multiple staff and consultants with over \$1 million in annual revenues.

Notable activities:

- For Habitat for Humanity’s Terwilliger Center for Innovation in Shelter, facilitated a 3-day strategic planning workshop for teams from India and the Philippines to identify priority opportunities to spur advancements in housing financing for vulnerable and poor population segments
- Facilitated an iterative, month-long strategic process for Heifer International’s coffee and cocoa teams in Ecuador, Honduras, Guatemala, Mexico, and Haiti to identify opportunities to disrupt the inequitable ways in which value and risk are apportioned in these market systems
- Facilitated, with Oxfam America, a three-month process to explore and prioritize innovative opportunities for its Food Systems team to transform national and global food systems over the next 10 years
- Researched and led workshops as part of an Outcome Harvesting activity designed to gauge the contribution and sustainability of program initiatives to digitize and streamline key business support systems of public institutions in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).
- Researched and led multi-stakeholder workshops on opportunities to streamline policies affecting production, processing, and trade of cashews in seven West African countries.
- Designed and assessed several tools to help intervention programs monitor and make sense of the trajectory of change in target market systems in Bangladesh
- Facilitated multi-day, virtual workshops for program staff in Iraq and eastern DRC in approaches to generating transformative change.

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### Market Systems Strategic Advisor: Independent Consultant 2015 – 2016

Helped senior staff of several international development organizations and programs engineer processes and tools to adaptively manage and monitor outcomes of systemic-change interventions.

Notable assignments:

- With TechnoServe International, helped senior management expand its portfolio of programs employing more adaptive management and systems-focused approaches: identified promising programs to lead the transition, facilitated workshops to introduce new practices, and provided follow-up support as staff integrated these approaches across program activities
- Assessed staff capacities and updated skills of a Cambodian team responsible for strengthening small-scale producers' ties to more reliable market opportunities
- Assisted the management team of a \$20 million DRC program test and roll-out an adaptive intervention process

Chief of Party, Tetra Tech, USAID Feed the Future Agriculture Inputs Activity, Uganda 2013 – 2014

Designed and led the start-up of this \$7.5 million, five-year program to transform the Ugandan agro-inputs sector into one able to reduce counterfeit products and provide responsive service to larger numbers of small-scale producers.

- Introduced and coached staff on behavior change approaches like leveraging role models, industry hot-lines, and community activism
- Deployed adaptive management practices to the design, review, and implementation of program activities
- Tested and developed a program monitoring system capable of detecting systemic shifts in key patterns of behavior among industry stakeholders

Chief of Party, Tetra Tech, USAID LEAD Project, Uganda 2011 – 2012

Led this \$30 million program in its final two years, shifting its strategic approach and successfully demonstrating to USAID the potential for adaptive management and facilitative interventions to achieve broader more durable results.

**Earlier Experience**

- Technical Director, ACDI/VOCA, USAID ADVANCE Project, Ghana (2010 – 2011): Led the organizational transition of a four-year, \$24 million program to team-based operations with more adaptive intervention design and implementation processes
- Value Chain Coordinator, ACDI/VOCA, Burkina Faso (2009 – 2010): As senior staff of the \$26 million program, coached and supervised managers responsible for the design and implementation of activities across agricultural and financial sectors of six West African countries
- Senior Manager, Action for Enterprise, USA (2005 – 2009): Facilitated over 20 workshops, in French and English, on program design and facilitative intervention strategies; led teams to assess market systems and design interventions across Africa, Asia and the Middle East
- Program Manager, Action for Enterprise, Mali (2002 – 2005): Led program to integrate small-scale shea nut producers into global supply chains
- Senior Associate, Associates for Global Change, USA (2001 – 2002): Led the design of a World Bank study of social and environmental policies governing extractive companies in developing countries
- Program Officer, EnterpriseWorks, USA (1998 – 2000): Headed a new division responsible for enlarging the organization's small-business programs and streamlining its business development processes
- Sales Manager, Oregon Trade Conference, USA (1997): Promoted a state-wide campaign to increase exports, secured advertising for the publication of a how-to guide to exporting

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- Human Rights Observer, Organization of American States, Haiti (1995 – 1996): Designed and implemented a civic education campaign that promoted electoral participation, constitutional rights, and civic responsibilities, conducted workshops with community organizations and leaders
- Program Manager, Ministry of Agriculture / U.S. Peace Corps, Rep. of Congo (1991 – 1993): Managed and helped design Peace Corps' debut assistance program: a country-wide initiative to introduce fish culture to rural farmers
- Regional Project Manager / Peace Corps Volunteer & Volunteer Leader, DR Congo (1987 – 1991): Initially provided fisheries extension service to rural farmers then supervised field agents across the region and fish station technicians

## **Education**

BA, Philosophy & French, Kalamazoo College, 1987

Postgraduate Diploma, Business Administration, University of Liverpool, 2010