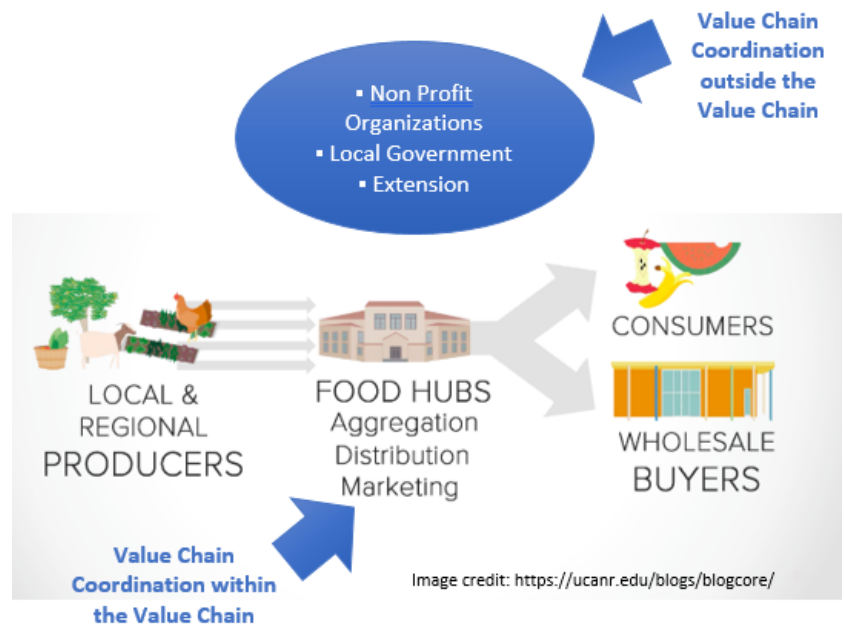**Value Chain Coordination Quicksheet**
*Roles of Value Chain Coordination*

This Quicksheet describes value chain coordination *as a set of roles that foster soft infrastructure development to build regional economies and communities*. Strong soft infrastructure, in the form of skills, competencies and relationships, provides the ability for individuals and organizations to acquire and utilize hard infrastructure in their communities.

*Who performs value chain coordination?*

An individual who performs value chain coordination roles may be considered a *Value Chain Coordination Professional* **(VCCP),** the entities in which the work of value chain coordination takes place, such as food hubs, local governments, or organizations may be considered *Value Chain Coordination Entities* **(VCCE).** Value chain coordination may be performed by one individual within an organization, or by several people in multiple organizations.

Different types of entities perform value chain coordination, including businesses, organizations and individuals. Sometimes businesses in the chain fulfill these roles, while other times external support actors, like governments or nonprofits, perform the work.



Value Chain Coordination outside the Value Chain

- Non Profit Organizations
- Local Government
- Extension

LOCAL & REGIONAL PRODUCERS

FOOD HUBS Aggregation Distribution Marketing

CONSUMERS

WHOLESALE BUYERS

Value Chain Coordination within the Value Chain

Image credit: https://ucanr.edu/blogs/blogcore/

Some businesses have a part of their operations directly in the value chain, such as aggregating or distributing products, while another arm of their entity focuses more on providing technical assistance, organizing convening events, conducting assessment and research or working on policy issues.

## Roles of Value Chain Coordination

Value chain coordination involves a series of roles, which are performed by certain entity types more often than others. Additionally, some roles of value chain coordination are *primary* roles, that is, the roles that directly support actors in the value chain such as producers, processors, distributors, buyers and consumers. The other type are *enabling* roles, which are roles that value chain coordinators perform to provide support and enable the VCCEs ability to provide the services and activities the primary roles. *Primary* roles include market matchmaking, providing technical assistance, organizing convening events and stakeholder meetings and innovating/catalyzing new ideas or projects. These roles are often the main foci of how value chain coordinator professionals orient and prioritize their work. These central activities are the services that they provide to direct actors in the value chain.

| Primary Roles | Entity Type | Outcomes |
|---|---|---|
| Market Matchmaking | *Businesses, Support Organizations* | *Business exchange matches between value chain stakeholders* |
| Providing Technical Assistance | *Businesses (often to their own vendors), Support Organizations (often within their respective region)* | *Appropriate and relevant technical assistance is provided to value chain stakeholders* |

| Organizing Convening Events and Stakeholder Meetings | *Primarily Support Organizations* | *Value chain and support actors are convened in various kinds of events and meetings. <u>Convenings foster environment for all other roles to take place</u>: Especially, technical assistance provision, market matchmaking, relationship building, and innovating/catalyzing new ideas, policy advocating, and resource prospecting.* |
|---|---|---|
| Innovating/ Catalyzing New Ideas | *Businesses, Support Organizations* | *Through catalyzing new ideas and operating novel business models (especially Hub entities), VCCPs create market niches that create competitive advantages against traditional supply chain competitions and may reduce risk and transaction costs for participating value chain actors.* |

***Enabling*** roles are just as essential to value chain coordination work. Enabling roles involve resource prospecting, advocating for policy, fostering relationships, research and assessment, and accountability keeper. Most VCC entities perform all roles, however sometimes entities specialize or take a specific approach to certain roles based on their organization type. External organizations, for example, tend to be engaged in the convening role, through hosting large, public tradeshow events or conferences open to producers, processors, buyers and sometimes end consumers. Businesses in the value chain may perform convening but often smaller meetings of stakeholders such as current or potential buyers or suppliers. All VCCs perform matchmaking and technical assistance, but businesses tend to work with buyers and suppliers whose product they are moving in their operations, while external orgs tend work in a geographic proximity, for example serving all buyers and suppliers in a region.

| Enabling Roles | Entity Type | Outcomes |
|---|---|---|
| Resource Prospecting | *Businesses, Support Organizations* | *Securing resources such as financial capital to support either direct actors in the value chain, primary roles, or a VCCP's own operations/entity* |
| Advocating for Policy | *Businesses, Support Organizations* | *Keeping current and participating in policy discussions to enable a more supportive environment for value chain actors to be successful. Examples may include reducing regulatory barriers or supporting legislation that promote new market development.* |
| Fostering and Maintaining Relationships | *Businesses (vendor/buyer focus), Support Organizations (broader food system focus)* | *Fostering and maintaining relationships with diverse stakeholders allows the VCCP to stay current and connected to relevant resources among support ecosystem actors and opportunities within the value chain.* |
| Research and Assessment | *Businesses, Support Organizations* | *Examples including feasibility studies and market evaluation studies; this role enables VCCs to make informed decisions about effectively planning interventions and programming around specific geographic and target areas of need* |
| Accountability Keeper | *Businesses (vendors/buyers primarily), Support Organizations* | *Enables greater communication and accountability among value chain actors. VCCPs follow up and hold value chain actors accountable to agreements regarding sales, standards, values, and procedures. Sometimes they may serve in a role to mediate disputes between parties in disagreement.* |

See VCC Quicksheets on **Cross Cutting Metrics** and **Evaluating Convening Events with Network Analysis** for information on how to measure and evaluate the work of Value Chain Coordination. Additionally, you may refer to the Quicksheet, **Considerations for Funding Soft Infrastructure,** for more on how VCC roles contribute to development outcomes.