IN A NUTSHELL: WHY SHOULD I DO THIS TRAINING?

A systemic approach to development has been increasingly recognised as a strategy to address the challenges of sustainability and scale of impact faced by development interventions. Adopting a systemic approach implies a change in mindset, intervention design, and management for implementers of the programmes. But it also has significant implications for how budgets are allocated, programmes are designed, how programmes are tendered, results are measured, and performance is managed. Funders have a critical role in the success of a programme that adopts a systemic approach and this course helps them to play this role in the most effective way possible.

KEY QUESTIONS FOR FUNDERS

- What kind of implementation arrangement works best to implement this approach?
- What do I look for in a good implementer at an organisational and individual level?
- How do I hold an implementer accountable if I don’t know what they’re doing, where, and when?
- How do I know where to push an implementer on results or on financials?
- How do I measure results if everything’s so flexible?
- How do you facilitate adaptive management from a donor perspective?
- How do you enable adaptive budgeting?
- How do I communicate what the programme does to internal and external stakeholders?
- When can I reasonably expect to see results?
- What should a programme be spending money on?
- Can this approach be used to target specific groups and result in inclusive development?
- What can I do to help the programme succeed with my level of resources of time and budget?

So, if this approach can lead to improved development outcomes, how am I, as a funder, supposed to do my job better to make sure it happens?

This course is intended to provide the answers - from the evidence to make the case for a systemic approach to the practicalities of implementation arrangements and logframes.
WHO IS THE COURSE FOR?

• For donors who take the course - whatever your role in a donor agency, the course will help you to design, manage or support more effective MSD programmes leading to larger scale more sustainable impact. Even if you’re not in a position to commission MSD programmes, this course can help you to other types of programming towards improving their impact.

• For implementers who support their funders to take the course - a more supportive enabling environment to allow you to implement programme more effectively.

The course is aimed at anyone involved in designing, procuring, managing or advising a market systems development programme from a donor perspective. Past participants have included FCDO, Sida, DFAT, ADA, SDC, Gatsby Africa, JICA, the World Bank, ILO, USAID and many more.

REVIEWS:

Over 100 donors from 15 organisations have already taken the course and this is what they said:

"The most engaging and interactive course I've ever had the pleasure to take"

"The mixture of delivery styles is continuously engaging"

"Everyone who is or wants to get involved in MSD should take this course"

COURSE CURRICULUM

The curriculum has been designed to provide participants with the skills they need to do their job better. That includes tailored coverage of some topics to ensure a common and basic understanding, with an in-depth focus on others that are more suited to a funder’s role. The course is split into three key units:

• Rapid understanding of what MSD is and how to do it, so you know what to expect from implementers.

• Programme design - a clear process to understand parameters for programme design and the implications of the decisions made at this stage.

• Finding and selecting implementing partners - covering a wide range of different sourcing, partnership and procurement mechanisms.

• Managing and monitoring programme performance - including formal results measurement frameworks and contracts as well as informal tactics to ensure your programme delivers.

• Communicating MSD to different audiences - to help you make the case for pursuing a more sustainable approach to development.

• In addition to the core content, supplementary demand-driven sessions on recent courses have included a systems approach to impact investment, MSD in humanitarian settings, and how to evaluate systemic change.

The programme also uses additional units to cover further learning; communicating MSD; course work and; a Q&A clinic.

PEDAGOGICAL APPROACH

This online training platform is designed to be engaging and interactive. It uses a mixture of delivery methods including self-guided lessons, complex games, course work, peer review sessions, live workshops, and lectures.
The course will run across six weeks and you will be part of a cohort with peers from around the world. The majority of the material is flexible and can be covered at your own pace. However, to maximise the interaction, there will be a few key live sessions of 1-2 hours where interaction is necessary.

**FOLLOW-UP SUPPORT AND MENTORSHIP**

Training programmes are all very well, but they can often overwhelm and by the time you get back to your office, the practical steps you can take to improve your performance often seem unclear. We’ve dealt with this in two ways i) tailoring the curriculum to be more relevant to your job function rather than something abstract and ii) offering **unique and free follow up support** to ensure that you can operationalise the learning from the course. This will likely consist of online meetings, document review or email exchange to ensure that capacity building works.

**APPLICATION:**

The application form is now live and the **deadline for application is 17th September 2021** and places are limited. Invoices will be sent as soon as you're accepted onto the course and the **deadline for invoice payment is 1st October 2021**. The course fee is **$750** and includes embedded consulting services from the Agora team to help you operationalise the learning after the course finishes. The course will begin on **11th October 2021** with the release of the first batch of materials, but you can start at any time in the following weeks. The course will end on **4th December 2021**, although you will retain access to the course materials for one year after completing the course.

**APPLY HERE**

For more information please email training@agoraglobal.org. Please circulate within your organisations.

**AGORA GLOBAL**

Agora Global is a consulting, training and research social enterprise intended to deliver systemic change for inclusive development. Agora’s experts are world leaders in the design, implementation, management, and evaluation of market systems development programmes in low and middle-income countries. Over many years, Agora’s experts have sought to improve development implementation towards more sustainable outcomes by improving the way development is done. Agora’s expertise covers a wide range of geographies, sectors, and development objectives, working on international projects implemented by NGOs, consultancies and private foundations funded by a wide range of donors, including bilateral donors such as such as Sida, DFID, SDC, and DFAT, multilateral agencies such as the ILO and World Bank, and philanthropic donors such as the Gatsby Foundation. This broad experience in market systems development combined with consistency, independence and focus on integrity and clarity is what sets Agora apart.