

Introduction to the MSD Competency Framework

BEAM Exchange

October 2019



Explainer: About this presentation

This presentation introduces the BEAM MSD Competency Framework. We suggest it as an early step in engaging project teams and organisations in using the framework. It is intended to be presented to MSD practitioners, managers and advisers from the same organisation.

This is a public resource that can be adapted to suit organisational needs. If you have questions about any of the content, or are looking for support in preparing to present this, please contact mike.klassen@beamexchange.org



Agenda

1. Introduce the MSD competency framework
2. Show how it can be used
3. Invitation to test and pilot it
4. Feedback, Q&A, discussion



What is the MSD competency framework?

A sector-wide framework to coordinate the learning & development of MSD practitioners

To help...

- *staff* build skills and knowledge
- *HR & managers* support, hire and assess staff
- *trainers & coaches* develop resources

The goal is to build consistency in the sector, and give MSD approaches credibility with donors and public



Reminder of purpose of framework.

- MSD being practiced for 10-20 years, without a common definition of “who is MSD practitioner” -- you know a agronomist is an agronomist as they have specific qualifications and experience that can be measured. we don't have that for MSD... leading to confusion
- Relationship-based development, therefore staff is everything - but how to know who to hire, how to train?
- can mention 'reinventing the wheel'

Other organisations are starting to use it...

- Check out the July 2019 webinar to showcase key learnings + good practice
 - **MercyCorps:** Redesigning hiring processes to be more immersive, scenario-based
 - **IDE:** Restructuring job descriptions and performance frameworks to have more technical MSD content
 - **Swisscontact:** Adding structured approach to mentoring; integrating into project inception phases
 - **Gatsby Africa:** Linking BEAM and Gatsby competency framework to provide wider access to learning resources

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- Webinar link: <https://beamexchange.org/community/webinar/competency-framework-practical-insights/>
- framework was created in 2018 through extensive analysis of what skills and capacities MSD practitioners value. Interviews and focus groups with team leaders and staff in a wide variety of projects. we then organised and consolidated the information
- From 2019, BEAM is working closely with willing organisations to test out using it in the field before promoting it more broadly
- hiring process - testing for specific competencies, JD's. management - who to have on your team (mix of different skills)

... and we want you to be a part of it

- Use / test the framework
- Suggest improvements
- Share best practices
 - Publicity & visibility for your program!

How ? - coming up...

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- in small or big ways
- we will help you do this, work with you closely
- We can help you share the learnings in future webinars, which are exciting promotional opportunities for your project or program as being on the leading edge



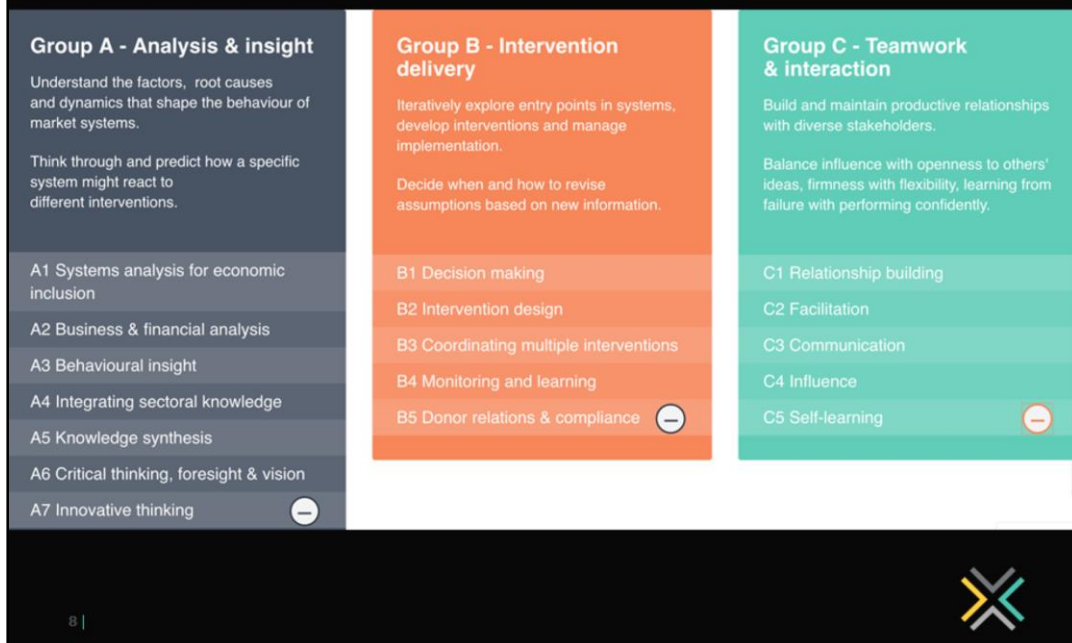
Let's walk through the framework...

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- a few slides, then we'll do a live demo
- may be familiar to anyone who has seen the video clip

17 competencies. Divided in 3 groups.



- Discuss the logic of the 3 groups - shorthand “Thinking” - “Decision Making” - “Working with People”
- “most of the key skills that people taking a market systems approach need ... but all of these skills don’t need to be found in one person! not looking for a super-practitioner. instead, this can help teams see what areas they are missing, or help individuals build skills in certain areas they may be weaker at”

6 ways to teach.

● Teaching and learning modes

An exploration of the most common modes of teaching and learning that support practitioners to acquire knowledge, skills and attitudes. Some modes of learning are more relevant to certain types of competency - as indicated by the box colours.

Each page has a summary of the teaching mode, guidance for team leaders and trainers, and examples of how to use this mode for developing specific competencies.

Content
delivery

Research
assignments

Facilitated
discussion

Case studies

Scenarios &
role plays

Field
practice

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- you can click on competencies, but you can also browse the framework by methods of teaching
- some skills, for example, are better taught through case study and discussion. some are better role-played, for example interacting with a market actor - this needs practice, not presentation
- see the colour coding - roughly each of these teaching modes map to the competency groups - “Thinking” - “Decision Making” - “Working with People”
- clicking on the teaching mode gives trainers, coaches guidance on how to teach...

Give a once sentence example of each so they come to life a bit. Talk about mapping the colour coding back to the 3 groups of competencies so that is a bit clearer.

3 ways to assess.

● Assessment modes

Assessing competency is important for recruitment, performance appraisal and continued professional development

These pages describe distinct approaches to evaluating individuals. They include a summary of the evaluation mode, guidance for assessors, and examples tailored to specific competencies.

Traditional interview questions

Presentation of case analysis

Direct observation of practice



- how to see if a staff member has good grasp of certain competencies
- more useful for hiring and performance evaluations
- certain things you can ask, certain things you must observe (e.g. interaction)

Live Demo

<https://beamexchange.org/msd-competency/>

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Rather than necessarily using slides to show all of it... do a couple of click-through processes. Get into the nitty gritty a little bit.

- emphasise the interrelated nature of the framework, how the same information shows up in different places
- emphasise that not all fields are useful for all people -- HR/hiring may want the "previous experiences" section and interview questions, while trainers or skills development may want the resources and teaching guidance (do some "i am an HR... i am a staff... i am a trainer..." exercises)

Framework users

HR & managers:

- Add technical depth and structure to hiring processes using assessment modes.
- Develop teams with a balanced mix of competencies.

Field-based practitioners:

- Self-assess & develop capabilities.
- Design individualised learning plans.

Trainers, coaches & educational institutions:

- Develop shared resources & teaching methodologies.



- The framework was developed for 3 different user groups - each might use it differently.
- HR & Managers: Concerned with capacity of staff, strength of teams, getting the right people and developing them.
- Practitioners: Actually 'doing MSD' - a key competency underpinning is C5 - "Self-Learning" - reflectivity and seeking input/feedback. Can do this individually (take initiative) but best with support and challenge from management.
- Trainers: push and pull. Contribute examples, refine the 'teaching modes'

Use Case 1: Scenario-Based Interviews

- **Problem:** How to get the most value out of a single interview for a mission-critical MSD position?
- **Approach:**
 - From 4-page Job Description -> 3-5 key competencies
 - Apply “Presentation of Case Analysis” guidance
 - Assess against competency statements
- **Results:**
 - More engaging, dynamic interview process
 - More holistic decision-making
 - Great fit

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PRIMARY USE: Hiring Manager

REAL LIFE: A MercyCorps Country Office

- **Problem/Need:** How to get the most value out of a single interview for a mission-critical MSD position?
- **Approach:**
 1. Re-assess existing Job Description using competencies
 2. Prioritise 3-4 most important competencies
 3. Use **Presentation of Case Analysis** guidance for those competencies to develop an interview scenario
 4. Send to candidates, and after interview assess against competency definitions.
- **Results:** More engaging, dynamic interview process. Team able to assess multiple competencies (across 3 groups) and make a better informed decision about hiring.

Use Case 2: Strengths-Based Teams

- **Problem:** How to align team members to leverage their strengths and compensate for weaknesses as a team
- **Approach:**
 1. Self-assess competency gaps as a project team
 2. Apply “Facilitated Discussion” guidance in regular meetings
 3. Follow-up independent learning & strategic hiring
- **Results:**
 - Clearer team-level understanding of assets;
 - Collective buy-in to learning and development

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KEY USER: Manager/Sub-team leader (could be head of M&E for larger project)
QUASI-HYPOTHETICAL EXAMPLE - In discussion with DAI

- **Problem:** How to align team members to leverage their strengths and compensate for weaknesses as a team
- **Approach:**
 1. Organise workshop for 360 assessments by team members and team leader: top/bottom 5 competencies
 2. As a group, analyse team-level data to prioritise topics
 3. Use **Facilitated Discussion** guidance to drive weekly/monthly technical learning integrated with ongoing management
 4. Optional:
 - a. Individual practitioners can use knowledge resources
 - b. Team leaders can consider strategic hiring to fill gaps
- **Results:** Clearer team-level understanding of assets; collective buy-in to learning and development

Use Case 3: Addressing Crucial Capacity Gaps in MSD Practitioners

- **Problem/Need:** Systemic shortage of knowledge and skill related to business models and financial analysis
- **Approach:**
 1. Document case studies of business models in MSD
 2. Link to “A2 - Business and financial analysis”
 3. Apply **Case Studies** teaching guidance to build courses
- **Results:**
 - Knowledge resources widely accessible
 - Faster learning by practitioners

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KEY USER: Entire organisation

REAL LIFE: ILO's “The Lab” - strategic investment in sector capacity for MSD and ‘good work’

- **Problem/Need:** Systemic shortage of knowledge and skill related to business models and financial analysis
- **Approach:**
 1. Conduct original research to develop contextual case studies of business models in MSD programs.
 2. Publish links to case studies on the relevant page on the BEAM website (e.g. **A2 - Business and financial analysis**)
 3. Use teaching & learning guidance on **Case Studies** to build active learning modules around the case studies
 4. Partner with training course facilitators to roll-out material to MSD practitioners
- **Results:** Full package of knowledge resources + training approaches widely available and put into practice in courses

Many other uses in the pipeline...

- **Develop “profiles” of key roles in an MSD program:** e.g. M&E officer vs. Intervention Manager vs. Team Leader
- **Align individual performance review & development plans:** Create incentives for individuals to drive their own learning and development
- **Donor procurement - assess key personnel based on competencies:** Shift from “experience + credentials” to “competence leading MSD programs”

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BRIEF HERE.

- Main point: the three are just illustrative.
- These are all things we are discussing with different organisations.

What's Next?

Tell us you're interested!

Test the framework

Share learnings

Follow-up discussion on what specific ways your organisation can use the framework

We will support you over the next 3-6 months

Webinar presentations to your community, and on BEAM

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- We are keen to identify champions. Your attendance at this webinar (or your willingness to watch right until the end) is a good proxy!
- As you go on that journey, we are here to answer questions and to capture your feedback.
- Once we have something to show for the efforts, invited to share that learning - initially internally, later with the wider BEAM community (alongside other organisations).

Possibilities for Uptake

- Framework can be adopted and experimented with at different levels...
 - Individual project/program
 - Country/regional office
 - Entire organisation
- ... and in different ways
 - Running a workshop or training
 - Hiring staff in one specific program
 - Integrating with existing structures (e.g. mentorship model, online courses)



- So what might “uptake” look like? Well it can be at various levels, and it can take different forms.
- We think that project level application is crucial to ‘the rubber meeting the road’ but recognise that much organisational innovation is one-off if not supported by, and visible to, higher levels of organisations.

Questions?



Open Discussion 1:

Training and recruitment:

Looking at current practices, what new ways of doing things do you see?



Open Discussion 2:

Which competencies do you think are the most important in the inception/start-up phase vs. the implementation phase?

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NOTE: After we show the question, switch to screen sharing of the main competency framework. People need to look at it, as big of a screen as possible. Encourage people to click on competencies to look at definitions. Catch assumptions.

Some ideas to start the discussion:

- A1 - (Used to be 3 separate competencies) - systems thinking is at the core. Some programs outsource this too much.
- A6 - Critical thinking, foresight and vision. A1 + A6 is like Peter Senge's "rubber band" creating tension between present state and future reality. A6 often missing.
- B5 - Get this right early. Bring donor along. Might be one or two key people - Team Leader, but also Intervention Managers.
- C1 - Relationship building - with market actors and with donor.

Closing Thought:

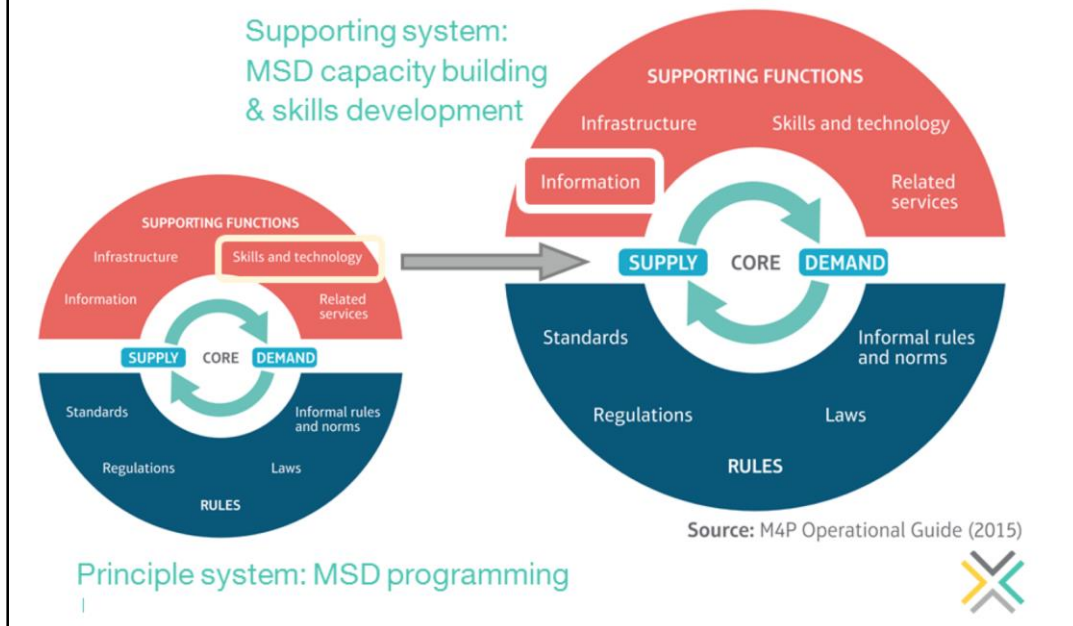
Which competencies do you see being highly valued in your organisation?



Additional Slides




- Defining the problem: failures in the market for MSD skills development



First visual: only the original donut

- If we think about the market for MSD programmes, where the core market is for provision of MSD programs (demand = donors; supply = bidding contractors/implementers), then we all know intuitively there are challenges and issues in this market.
- **First animation: (circle skills & technology)**
- Among other things, we know that a crucial failing supporting function are the skills and capacity for understanding and implementing this approach. This is what underpinned the M4P Hub and the BEAM Exchange.
- **Second animation: Interconnected market for skills/capacity**
- Now Demand = Implementing organisations; Supply = Individuals ... donors more like the standards & regulations. Within this secondary market, we see that information about the skills available, and what is important as being a major failure. This initiative fills that niche.




Root cause #2:

Weak information:
Lack of consensus about what capacity building processes are required to shift individuals and organisations to higher performance levels

Intervention by BEAM:
Compile and curate an inventory of resources...
...to help trainers and other capacity builders, design, deliver and assess their services.

Access to resources via the BEAM website.



Picking up on the analysis from the previous slide, a reminder of some of the past work done in this space. Picture of the front page of the report by Debora and Lucho: Analysis of the capacity building market for MSD...

From the executive summary: Root Cause #2: Lack of consensus (Weak information) about what capacity building processes are required. This work we are sharing with you today represents one of the strands of initiative undertaken by BEAM in the past year and a half since this report was published.

• Our process

Interviews with 16 respondent from 20 programmes:

- 4 team leaders
- 5 donor advisers
- 7 technical advisers from programme contractors

Feedback / iteration

- from other team leaders, training providers, BEAM staff

Products / outputs:

- Paper: "Building high-performing teams in MSD"
- Competency Framework: Online platform



Fairly straightforward.

Might want (or not) to differentiate:

- a) Core process of information gathering - the heavy lifting, ear to the ground
- b) Secondary process of synthesis, refinement and presentation – to get to today

Two products – emphasising that which is being launched at the BEAM/DCED Seminar.
[May want to mention the donor guidelines brief?]

• Current status

Competency Framework (today's presentation):

- 17 individual competencies: What is the competency?
- 6 teaching & learning modes: How to teach it?
- 3 assessment modes: How to assess it?

Web platform live

- Dynamic functionality to allow different users to engage:
 - Practitioners, Trainers/coaches, Team leaders
- Plans for community engagement to fully populate content



The point of this slide is to simply give a high level status update, and let people know what is coming.