MSC Step 1

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Hello. And today we're going to be talking about getting started. So the first step is about defining the purpose and raising interest. So there are three elements to this. I'll I'll go through.

The first one is actually about making sure is about making sure you've got the purpose clear. The second one is about champions and raising interest. And the third point I want to make is about thinking about what's the right entry point for you.

So purpose. So I guess it's really important to make sure that MSC is even the right purpose for you. There are lots of different monitoring and evaluation tools around and MSC isn't actually automatically going to be the right one for you. So think about why you really want to do it. So a common reason to do MSC is that you wanted something to complement the quantitative monitoring framework. So in the Osi Tanata example that we talked about earlier and the examples that we saw for them they were collecting numbers. They were collecting numbers about income generation and they were also looking at how many people were attending their training but they weren't really seeing any of the impact. In fact, they actually thought they were failing because they hadn't achieved income generation. So for them it was really important to try and understand what was going on for the people in the communities. And MSC revealed the impact of the program on the actual people on the ground. So that's a common reason to complement a more quantitative framework. So that's the first thing is to get clear on purpose. Why do you want to do it?

The second step is about raising interest. So what I've found is it's really helpful to try and find champions. People are really excited about MSC, you are going to go out there and hustle up some interest and encourage people to collect the stories and follow up. If you don't have those people it's really quite a big job. But the good news is that a lot of people do sort of semi fall in love with MSC. It has a little bit of magic. So I don't know how you spot those people in lots of different ways. I guess it might be the first storytellers or people who get excited by the concept but when you spot them make sure you try and bring them into the process of getting started I guess.

Then there's the matter of what's the right entry point for you. Where do you start? So I guess two most common ways to begin with MSC are one is might be an evaluation that's actually been conducted and some MSC stories might be collected as part of that. So that's how I met and that's how Osi Tanata actually started.

So I was doing an external evaluation of Osi Tanata and I put I was the external evaluator in this case Iactually collected some MSC stories to kick it off. But then after they'd seen the first round of stories they began to collect the storieand they've decided to get some training done. Well I think it's an opportunity when s themselves and so forth. It went on from there. But the first stories were actually collected as part of the evaluation and that's not uncommon.

But the second probably main entry point for MSC is to do it through some training. So somebody got excited about it already you do training not just to tell people what MSC is but actually have a crack at it straight away in the training course. So if you have a two day training course after you've introduced MSC and how to look at some examples stories have a go and getting the participants to collect a story actually from each other in the training course and then select the most significant one during the training course and you get some immediate feedback, and you might spot who's getting really excited at the same point and they're probably at your champions.

So then the three purposes I wanted to show points I wanted to go through when thinking about defining purpose and raising interest. So setting your purpose. Number One. Number Two identifying champions and through thinking about the right entry point.

Another point I wanted to make a final point is that it doesn't really matter where you start with MSC whether it's from training or starting with a small project and scaling up from there or bouncing off from an evaluation that's using MSC. It doesn't matter where you start because MSC has a natural self-improvement cycle. So how it works is let's say the first lot of stories you collect say you collect 10 stories maybe they're not very good actually because no one has done it before but there might be one story in there that's just a little bit better than all the others and guess what, that's likely to be the one that's selected. And the reasons why it's been selected are often to do with it tells the whole story captures there's enough detail in it.

So at the beginning of the MSC process selection is often about the quality or the content of the stories and as you get a bit better and it starts to move more in towards the values and the actual which which of these three great stories which one is closer to what we're trying to achieve.

But at the beginning you got 10 pretty average stories select the best one all learn about a bit more about them the next round. I guarantee you stories will be better so don't worry too much about where you start. Okay so that's the end of this session and I look forward to seeing you in the next session.