

## Curriculum Vitae: Mike Klassen

Mike is a market systems development consultant and higher education researcher with experience in capacity building, complex qualitative research and knowledge translation. Starting with direct coaching of market facilitation project teams with EWB Canada in 2010, he has developed a portfolio of capacity building work in MSD, recently leading the sector-wide MSD Competency Framework and the MSD Procurement and Contracting Clinics for the BEAM Exchange. Alongside his consulting, he is finishing a PhD in Higher Education focused on cross-national comparative analyses of skills systems in professional and vocational education. Currently, he is working to integrate theories, methods and systems approaches into development programs focused on education, skills and employment.

### Personal Details

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Nationality:	Canadian
Qualifications	PhD Higher Education, University of Toronto, 2022 (expected) MA Higher Education, University of Toronto, 2018 Graduate Diploma Social Innovation, University of Waterloo, 2014 BAsC Engineering Science, University of Toronto, 2010
Language Skills	English (mother tongue), French (basic)
Academic Affiliations	Editorial Committee, European Journal of Engineering Education

### Career History

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<b>2018-Present</b>	Principal Consultant, Mike Klassen Consulting, Global
<b>2021-Present</b>	Research Assistant, Centre on Skills, Knowledge and Organisational Performance, University of Oxford, UK
<b>2014-2018</b>	Assistant Director, Institute for Leadership Education in Engineering, University of Toronto, Canada
<b>2013-2014</b>	Senior Analyst, Success Markets Inc., Washington DC
<b>2011-2013</b>	Venture Leader & Portfolio Manager, EWB Canada, Ghana/Uganda
<b>2010-2011</b>	Technical Leader, ADVANCE project, ACIDI-VOCA, Ghana

### Relevant Experience

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#### Consulting

##### **GLOBAL – Consultant supporting internal learning on MSD and skills development, Swisscontact/Springfield**

Led process to draw together leading projects in vocational education and skills development to reflect on how they are integrated systems thinking and sustainability into their design and implementation. Liaised with senior technical leaders in MSD and skills; interviewed 15 project managers/directors and reviewed extensive project design documents. Facilitated workshop and laid foundation for learning agenda including adding examples and tools of skills development to a toolkit for systemic approaches. Lead author for a forthcoming chapter for NORRAG edited volume on systems approaches in education. *[July 2020 - present]*

**GLOBAL – Clinics methodology advisor for Monitoring Evaluation and Learning virtual clinics – Market Systems and Partnerships / DAI**

Supporting the design and rollout of a methodology for peer learning and knowledge capture by project-level MEL managers. Drawing on the lessons from prior knowledge clinics, adapting to the context of a specific role/function.

**GLOBAL – MSD thought leader on internal assessment of MSD strategy and approach, Technoserve/Canopy Lab**

Providing technical inputs and review on an assessment of the changing external landscape of MSD funding and implementation, and development of tailored toolkits and organizational strategies for accelerating Technoserve's adoption of a systemic approach.

*[Dec 2021 – Apr 2022]*

**GLOBAL/CANADA – Lead consultant on Skills for Employment portfolio review, WUSC/Springfield**

Led the review of five skills for employment projects seeing to take a systemic approach, in close collaboration with WUSC senior technical advisors. Analysed the organizational systems and supports for systems thinking and provided recommendations to strengthen the portfolio. *[Sept 2021 – Jan 2022]*

**GLOBAL/AFRICA - Consultant supporting program design, implementation and reflection/scale-up for engineering ecosystems change in Africa, IDRC Canada**

Worked closely with IDRC, a small donor agency focused on research in development to design call for proposals for systems change in engineering ecosystems in Africa. Interviewed experts on capacity building, engineering labour markets, and higher education in the context of Central and West Africa. Proposed systemic change interventions via funding mechanisms that were adopted by IDRC in its Calls for Proposals which attracted an unexpectedly high number of submissions, five of which were funded in 2018. Organized and facilitated 3-day launch workshop in Ghana in 2018 with leading academics, policymakers, and professional engineers. Organized and facilitated international experts throughout 2019 to present key ideas to project leaders, stimulating cross-project learning, discussions and future collaborations. In 2021/2022, supported projects to reflect on key learnings and articulate targeted policy briefs to influence national stakeholders. Organized final learning session with organizations working on engineering in Africa, skills development and market systems development to reflect on the state of practice. *[2017 - 2022]*

**GLOBAL/USA – Adaptive management advisor to internal project on operational efficiencies for adaptive management, ACDI/VOCA**

Worked closely with internal cross-departmental working group to assess the alignment between ACDI/VOCA's operational systems and processes and projects taking a systems approach, including strong adaptive management elements. In-depth interviews with 30 leaders from across head office and field projects, and provided recommendations for organizational change initiatives to align efforts and overcome challenges. *[Sept-Dec 2021]*

**GLOBAL – Consultant supporting revitalization of Participatory MSD approach, Practical Action**

Worked closely with senior leaders for markets systems within Practical Action to review and redesign a flexible toolkit of resources, tools, case studies and applied guidance for Participatory MSD (PMSD). Supported 6 project teams to test tools and write up case studies and helped set conditions for an internal community of practice on market systems with exceptional uptake in the initial months. *[July-Dec 2020]*

**GLOBAL - Lead facilitator for MSD procurement and contracting clinics, BEAM Exchange**

Led the design, recruitment and facilitation of new initiative to investigate the skewed incentives for procurement and contracting of MSD programs. Worked with 20 senior sector leaders from donor, implementer and consulting organizations in four groups to identify key topics, drive meetings forward and generate key action-oriented outputs. *[Jan – Oct 2020]*

**INDONESIA – Consultant supporting business model development for private midwife quality scheme, MarketShare Associates/DAI, Jalin project**

Worked with Chief of Party and Technical Leader to design a process for engaging the Indonesian Midwives Association to redevelop business model for franchise model of certifying private midwives. Adapted tools; hired local consultant; led SoW. *[Feb – Dec 2020]*

**INDONESIA – Consultant leading global scan of market systems for health, MarketShare Associates/DAI, Jalin project**

Led assignment to gather examples of good practice in applying MSD in health systems. Conducted 12 interviews with leading practitioners from donors, implementers and policy organizations. Synthesized findings into recommendations for program strategy. *[Oct 2018]*

**GLOBAL – Technical inputs on toolkit for market systems for WUSC-Uniterra program, via MarketShare Associates**

Provided technical inputs on a comprehensive toolkit for inclusive market systems to be used by the multi-country Uniterra program, implemented by WUSC and CECI. Created and wrote example of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ practice to illustrate the key principles of market facilitation (such as scale, root causes, sustainability, focus on women and youth). Ran a dynamic experiential workshop on market facilitation for Uniterra staff and stakeholders at the WUSC/CECI International Forum in Ottawa in Jan 2016. *[2015-2016]*

**GLOBAL – Author of short case studies on market systems programs, BEAM Exchange**

Wrote, edited and published 14 case studies of market systems programmes in ‘snapshot’ form to make the approach accessible to new audiences. Consulted with field staff, HQ staff, and a wide range of program documents (strategies, evaluations, annual reports) to identify strong examples of market systems. Worked closely with team of key stakeholders at the BEAM Exchange to design a ‘template’ for the structure of the case studies that was flexible but clear. *[2014]*

**UGANDA – Senior consultant supporting embedded consultants on Tetra Tech Agriculture Inputs Project**

Provided coaching and backstopping to lead consultant developing the change management strategy and staff competency framework for newly awarded project. Gave feedback on drafts of ToRs for embedded consultants, helped strategize on approach to change within project team, including USAID relationships and exit strategy from project. *[Nov 2012 – June 2013]*

**KENYA – Senior consultant designing partnership with Kenya Markets Trust MAP Programme**

Worked closely with Technical Director over a six-month period to understand the need and opportunity for EWB presence on our first DFID funded M4P programme. Performed an abbreviated organizational diagnostic based on semi-structured interviews with key programme staff, approved decision to go after a major partnership. Handed over the partnership development to upcoming EWB leader and mentored him through the process of developing the specific ToRs for embedded consultants. *[Oct 2012 – June 2013]*

**UGANDA – Senior consultant leading partnership with Mercy Corps Uganda – SUSTAIN Project**

Led initial conversations with Chief of Party on the potential for EWB support to newly-awarded large scale programme including M4P, conflict and governance components. Handed over leadership of the partnership to upcoming leader and mentored him through the process of scoping and recruiting for the assignment, building trust with key actors. Provided feedback and input on the design and facilitation of staff training and orientation workshops. *[Sept 2012 – June 2013]*

**UGANDA – Senior consultant for large multi-element capacity building partnership with Tetra Tech ARD – LEAD Project (USAID/Uganda)**

Worked with Chief of Party to develop intensive partnership with 7 EWB consultants for one year to leverage opportunity to prove facilitation and advance USAID's CLA agenda. Provided technical and change management support to 2 consultants who conducted a full organizational diagnostic of the project's capacity for facilitation. Participated in the presentation of these results to USAID/Uganda Economic Growth staff. Hired and recruited two long-term embedded consultants to (1) build tactical capacity in front line staff and leverage incentives for tacit knowledge sharing; (2) developing a responsive results monitoring system that employs key elements of DCED Standard while integrating M&E staff with core strategies. Provided feedback and guidance to the two core consultants throughout their development of change interventions and continual project performance testing. *[Feb 2012 – June 2013]*

**UGANDA – Senior consultant supporting Mercy Corps Uganda – RAIN Project (USDA/Uganda)**

Worked with Country Director and Economic Development Advisor to test out a partnership to demonstrate EWB's value proposition to an M4P project. Designed ToR for one fulltime EWB consultant to support a small, start-up project in Northern Uganda, and coached consultant throughout the process from diagnostic to interventions, which included results chain development, team restructuring and hypothesis testing. *[June 2012 – Mar 2013]*

**GHANA – Senior consultant for ACIDI-VOCA ADVANCE Project (USAID/Ghana)**

Maintained senior level partnership for 2+ years with Technical Director, Chief of Party and Technical Leaders to improve implementation of value chain approach. Designed and approved ToRs for nearly 10 EWB consultants covering a wide range of different functions – refining strategies, testing interventions, building internal communication systems, developing management capacity, etc. Ended partnership after significant negative influence from donor on project (re)design, consistent reinforcement of a static, targets-driven culture, and the erosion of incentives for facilitation, despite strong capacity developed over a long period of investment. *[Nov 2010 – July 2012]*

**GHANA – Senior consultant exploring partnership with MEDA Ghana – Northern Ghana Food Security Project (CIDA/Ghana)**

Leveraged international relationships to develop a test ToR for an EWB consultant to support project design in using design thinking tools to gather better insight on markets. Provided extensive feedback and technical review on the market analyses for soybean and groundnut subsectors in Northern Ghana. Held firm on EWB's value proposition in key meeting with international managers– ultimately decided to abandon partnership due to lack of buy-in from in-country manager. *[Apr – June 2012]*

**GHANA – Senior consultant supporting short-term consultant in IFDC Ghana – Farmer to Market, AVC Mentorship Project (AGRA/Ghana)**

Worked directly to influence the Country Director of IFDC to take a facilitative approach, redesign key failing projects, and invest in staff capacity, with limited overall success. Designed ToRs for 2 short-term assignments: (1) real time monitoring feedback on the internal business dynamics in target firms (maize and soya aggregators); (2) change management for internal learning during the staffing and start-up phase of new project. *[Aug 2011 – Dec 2011]*

## Research

### **UNITED KINGDOM: Research assistant on green skills project at Oxford, Edge Foundation**

Led scoping review of green skills and jobs in the construction sector in England. Analyzing different perspectives and conceptions drawn from industry, policymakers, educators and researchers. Worked with interdisciplinary team to plan and deliver stakeholder workshops focused on industry and policy actors. *[Aug 2021 – present]*

### **GLOBAL: Consultant researcher supporting EcoVentures International, Fintrac and USAID**

Worked with team of MSD experts, economists and policy experts to ground new framework on Inclusive & Entrepreneurial Market Systems in interdisciplinary academic literature from economics, sociology, social psychology and anthropology. Identified key approaches to understanding the formal and informal institutions that shape entrepreneurial market systems. Developed a new framework for analysing 3 levels of institutions: regulative (formal), normative (informal) and cultural-cognitive (informal) in order to shape market systems investments by USAID missions. *[Jan-Aug 2020]*

### **UK/SINGAPORE/AUSTRALIA/SOUTH AFRICA: Lead researcher on multi-country comparative analysis of quality assurance systems for professional education [PhD thesis]**

Interviewed 80+ stakeholders from private sector, professions and universities in four countries. Developed a theoretically-grounded comparative case study of the political and organizational dynamics affecting implementation of system for accrediting degrees; analysed impacts on technical and soft skill emphasis in curriculum. *[Sept 2018 – present]*

### **KOSOVO: Writing case study of private TVET models for ILO The Lab**

Identified non-traditional MSD business model in the TVET sector in Kosovo, implemented by Helvetas. Interviewed program manager and key technical staff, reviewed program documentation and wrote structured case study that break down the business model, narrative of program strategy and intervention, key lessons learned. Organized webinar through BEAM Exchange to present report findings, linked to MSD Competency Framework. *[Apr-June 2019]*

### **CANADA: Researcher on various projects at the Institute for Leadership Education in Engineering - Various Projects**

Designed multiple research projects in companies and universities on leadership and innovation, which led to multiple award-winning publications. Combined survey, interview and focus group data, and comparative organizational case studies. Accessed un-tapped national data set on graduate career paths, presented findings at national conference to key stakeholders including deans, and leaders of professional bodies. *[2014-2018]*

### **GLOBAL: Facilitator of practitioner-led research linking MSD practitioners and academic experts, BEAM Exchange**

Developed and implemented facilitated process for connecting market systems practitioner with relevant academic experts to better link theory to practice. Supported and led writing of short practitioner briefs to document learning process and summarize key insights relevant to wider body of practitioners. *[Jan–May 2017]*

### **GLOBAL – Research on M&E For Systemic Change, MarketShare Associates/USAID**

Researching, analysing and vetting more than 15 different tools, methodologies and approaches to measuring systemic change to determine their viability to be applied in agriculture and market development projects. *[2014-2015]*

## **Training & Capacity Development**

### **GLOBAL: Facilitator and project lead, MSD Team Leader Competencies, BEAM Exchange**

Proposed, recruited and facilitated a cross-organizational task force of donors, implementers and consultants to explore and articulate the competencies of MSD Team Leaders. Phase 1 focuses on gathering and synthesizing diverse perspectives on the core competencies. Phase 2 will engage further working groups to dive into organizational implications including hiring criteria and processes, pipelines for future team leaders, and programs to develop and strengthen leadership. *[Oct 2021-present]*

### **GLOBAL: Facilitator, Learning group on organizational applications of MSD competency frameworks, BEAM Exchange**

Organized and facilitated a cross-organizational learning group consisting of Palladium/PRISMA, ILO and Gatsby Africa to share experiences and insights on applying an MSD competency framework at the organizational level. Deep dive into HR implications of a competency approach – recruitment, hiring, role scoping, performance evaluation, certification, etc. Future plans to capture/write-up insights in the form of a guide/paper for wider dissemination. *[Sept 201 – present]*

### **GLOBAL: Lead author of MSD Competency Framework, BEAM Exchange**

Designed, tested and launched a new competency framework for market systems development to guide design of training and capacity building across the sector. Synthesized hundreds of relevant resources and organized into a dynamic, web-based portal for supporting learning and development of MSD practitioners & trainers. Developed partnerships with a range of leading MSD organizations to pilot the MSD Framework with head office and field teams. Presented findings and learning through internal webinars, public webinars, and regular updates to the DCED MSD working group. *[2017-2019]*

### **CANADA: Leading complex multi-stakeholder training workshops on leadership research, Institute for Leadership Education in Engineering, University of Toronto**

Designed, developed and facilitated six separate one-day conferences for 70+ participants from academia and industry focused on leadership and skill development of engineering workforce. Integrated cutting-edge educational research with practical exercises; led facilitation team. *[2016-2018]*

### **CANADA: Launched and grew national community of learning on skills for innovation & leadership: National Initiative on Capacity Building and Knowledge Creation**

Spearheaded a new national community of learning on skill development for innovation, leadership and entrepreneurship in engineering education. Leveraged a new systems change platform “The Engineering Change Lab” to generate funding and buy-in from government agencies, private sector and 15 universities across the country. Led the organization and technical program design of the first 3 conferences. *[2016-2018]*

### **GLOBAL: Facilitator for market systems practitioner learning groups, SEEP Network**

Interviewed 15-20 keen market systems practitioners from all over the world to participate in facilitated learning groups to progress on common challenges. Built relationships with individuals, understood their contextual challenges, and facilitated productive group conversations to move forward a common learning agenda across 4 groups. Topics range from ‘gender norms in market systems’ to ‘business models to reach the last mile’ to ‘financial products for rural poor’. *[Mar – Sept 2016]*

## Publications

### **Market Systems Development**

Lead Author, MSD Procurement Paper Series, BEAM Exchange  
<https://beamexchange.org/resources/1397/> [2020]

Co-Author & Architect, MSD Competency Framework, BEAM Exchange  
<https://beamexchange.org/msd-competency/> [2019]

Co-Author, Social Norms in Market Systems Development, BEAM Exchange  
[https://beamexchange.org/uploads/filer\\_public/71/b0/71b0911d-4c6c-441b-8690-1d6d83834028/pll\\_social\\_norms\\_2017.pdf](https://beamexchange.org/uploads/filer_public/71/b0/71b0911d-4c6c-441b-8690-1d6d83834028/pll_social_norms_2017.pdf) [2017]

Author, Market Systems Snapshots in Action, BEAM Exchange  
<https://beamexchange.org/practice/snapshots/> [2015]

Co-Author, Institutional Diagnostic for Facilitation – Revised M4P Operational Guide

Co-Author, Market Facilitation in Practice: Case Studies for Implementers –USAID Microlinks  
<http://microlinks.kdid.org/library/market-facilitation-practice-case-studies-implementers> [2011]

### **Skills Development & Higher Education**

Klassen M., Rothboeck, S., & Buckley, A. (in press). Adapting inclusive systems development (ISD) to vocational education and training (VET) and skills development. In NORRAG special issue *Systems Approaches to Education*. NORRAG.

Klassen M., Jesiek B., Zheng L, & Case, J.M. (in press). Institutionalizing Engineering Education Research: Comparing Australia, China, and the United States. In Christensen, S.H. (Ed.), *Engineering, Social Sciences and Humanities: Has Their Conversation Come of Age?* Springer.

Klassen, M., & Case, J. M. (2022). Productive tensions? Analyzing the arguments made about the field of engineering education research. *Journal of Engineering Education*, 111(1), 214–231.  
<https://doi.org/10.1002/jee.20440>

Klassen, M., Reeve, D., Evans, G. J., Rottmann, C., Sheridan, P. K., & Simpson, A. (2020). Engineering: Moving Leadership From the Periphery to the Core of an Intensely Technical Curriculum. *New Directions for Student Leadership*, 2020(165), 113–124.

Klassen, M., & Sá, C. (2020). Do global norms matter? The new logics of engineering accreditation in Canadian universities. *Higher Education*, 79(1), 159–174.

Klassen, M., & Donald, J. (2020). Developing a Taxonomy to Compare Engineering Leadership Curricula Across Canadian Universities. *Canadian Journal of Science, Mathematics and Technology Education*, 1–16.

Klassen, M., & Wallace, W. (2019). *Engineering ecosystems: A conceptual framework for research and training in Sub-Saharan Africa*. Proceedings of the African Engineering Education Association. Lagos, Nigeria.

Klassen, M. & Case, J. (2019). *Legitimizing Engineering Education Research: A View from Sociology of Knowledge*. Proceedings of the Research in Engineering Education Network Symposium. Cape Town, South Africa.

Klassen, M. (2019). *Recontextualizing Fields in Vocational and Professional Education*. Presented at the Journal of Vocational Education and Training Conference. Oxford, UK.

Klassen, M. (2019). *Extending Bernstein's pedagogic device to higher education and the professions*. Presented at the Cambridge Symposium on Knowledge in Education. Cambridge, UK.

Klassen, M. (2018). *The academization of engineering education in the United States and the United Kingdom: A neo-institutional perspective*. Presented at the Society for Research in Higher Education Annual Conference. Newport, Wales.

Donald, J. & Klassen, M. (2018) *Comparing engineering leadership curricula in Canada and the United States: The role of external and internal influences*. Proceedings of the Frontiers in Education Conference, San Jose, CA.

Klassen, M. (2018). *The politics of professional accreditation: A neopluralist analysis of outcomes-based accreditation in Canada and the United Kingdom*. Presented at the European Conference on Educational Research. Bolzano, Italy.

Klassen, M. & Sa, C. (2018) *Do global norms matter? The new logics of engineering accreditation in Canadian universities*. Presented at the Consortium of Higher Education Researchers conference. Moscow, Russia.

Klassen, M. and Donald, J. (2018). *Using an Academic Plan Model to Analyze Canadian Engineering Leadership Curriculum*. Presented at the Canadian Engineering Education Association Annual Conference, Vancouver, BC.

Klassen, M., Kovalchuk, S., Reeve, D. and Sacks, R. (2017). *Leading from the Bottom Up: Leadership Conceptions and Practices Among Early Career Engineers*. Proceedings of the American Society of Engineering Education Annual Conference & Exposition. Columbus, OH.

Klassen, M. (2017). *Reinterpreting Quality Assurance in Higher Education: Using Organization Theory to Look Inside the Black Box of Professional Accreditation*. Presented at the Association for the Study of Higher Education, Houston, TX.

Klassen, M. (2017). *The Great Licensure Assumption: Erosion of Closure in the Canadian Engineering Profession*. Proceedings of the International Conference on Researching Work and Learning. Grahamstown, South Africa.

Klassen, M. (2017). *Engineering accreditation in Canada: The battleground for changes to the professional knowledge base*. Presented at the Journal of Vocational Education and Training (JVET) Conference, Oxford, UK.

Kovalchuk, S., Klassen, M., Reeve, D. and Sacks, R. (2017). *Transitioning from University to the Workplace: The Role of Curricular and Co-Curricular Activities*. Proceedings of the American Society of Engineering Education Annual Conference & Exposition. Columbus, OH.



Rottmann, C., Reeve, D., Sacks, R., & Klassen, M. (2016). An inter-subjective analysis of engineering leadership across organizational locations: Implications for higher education. *Canadian Journal of Higher Education*, 46(4), 146.

Klassen, M., Rottmann, C., Reeve, D., Simpson, A., Sacks, R. and Huynh, A. (2016). *Charting the landscape of engineering leadership education in North American universities*. Proceedings of the American Society of Engineering Education Annual Conference & Exposition. New Orleans, LA.