

Impact Measurement – Terms & Definitions



Context

Social impact is the that happens as a result of an action, an activity, a project, a program or a policy. It can affect individuals, organisations, communities, or the environment It can be positive or negative. It can also be intended or unintended.

There are certain terms and definitions that you need to understand as you start on your journey towards measuring your social impact:

Term	Definition
Activity	Action or effort undertaken intended to create change for beneficiaries (people, communities, or entities) or the planet.
Beneficiary	People, organisations or entities intended to experience change as a result of the activity. Beneficiaries are often called key stakeholders.
Data	Information collected for reference or analysis
Distance travelled	Extent, degree, or intensity a beneficiary or stakeholder experiences progress towards outcome or group of outcomes.
Domains	Broad areas where change will take place
Evaluation	Systematic process to judge the merit, worth or significance of a project, initiative, or program. Involves examination of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and impact of activities in the light of specified objectives.
Impact	Total sum or effect of change caused by organisation, program or activity.
Impact measurement	How an organisation demonstrates the results of their work.
Intended impact	Statement of future impact that program or activity intends to create.
Indicators	Ways of knowing an outcome is occurring or has occurred
Logic model	demonstrates the linkage between your activities and the outcomes that occur as a result
Measure	Data sought to test whether outcome is occurring and extent it is occurring. It can be qualitative or quantitative
Modality	How activity is delivered to bring about intended change.
Monitoring	Continuous assessment of programs based on early detailed information on the progress or delay of the ongoing assessed activities. Frequently used when talking about 'monitoring and evaluation'.

Outcome	Change that occurs for stakeholders from activity. Can be positive or negative, intended, or unintended, direct or indirect, long-term or short-term, social or environmental. Should be described as what will be seen if the desired change has occurred
Outcomes framework	Tool that outlines what will be measured and by whom. Enables change to be tracked and managed.
Output	Quantities associated with an activity (e.g. number of people who took part in a program).
Policy framework	Desired result policy makers wish to achieve.
Results	Outputs, outcomes, or impact of activities.
Social Value	Social and environmental wellbeing of people, communities, or places. Can be expressed in monetary terms.
Stakeholder	People, organisations, or entities that experience change as a result of the activity being analysed or contribute to change taking place.
Theory of Change	Starting point of measuring impact. Outlining how activities undertaken will lead to change. Explains how stakeholders are impacted by an activity, program or initiative.