Measuring Social Impact

A *very brief* guide to Social Value, Social Accounting and Audit and other tools Part I

Helen Vines, VINESWORKS and Social Audit Network

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SAN
social audit network
Social accounting and audit for the community sector

20 YIL
TÜSEV
Türkiye Üçüncü Sektör Vakfı
Third Sector Foundation of Turkey

After this morning you will:

❖ Gain an understanding of:
  ◎ social value, social impact and what the terms mean
  ◎ the difference between outputs and outcomes
  ◎ Social Accounting and Auditing as a social impact measurement framework
  ◎ the principles that underpin social accounting and auditing
❖ Identify the steps involved in social accounting and auditing
❖ Recognise some of the challenges and benefits of undertaking impact measurement in your organisation
❖ Know where to find further tools and resources for impact measurement
❖ Identify the issues to be considered when setting up social accounting or another impact framework for your organisation.
❖ Plan your next steps in social impact measurement.

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About me:

❖ Helen Vines, VINESWORKS

- 20+years experience of community development and social enterprise
- Set up and run social enterprise for over 13 years
- Social enterprise business adviser, trainer, facilitator and evaluator
- Done social impact measurement (social acccounting x 3 times)
- Social auditor and social accounting trainer (10 yrs+)
  - Help social enterprises set up bespoke impact measurement systems, for training and facilitation in social impact measurement, particularly around social accounting and auditing and CES Outcomes.

- SAN South West Regional Co-ordinator, and founder director and Company Secretary of SAN
- CES Outcomes Champion and PQASSO (Quality Standards) Mentor

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What is *social value* and what is *social impact*?

❖ In small groups of 3 or 4, discuss these questions and write down your thoughts.

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There is no universal definition of "social value".

Social Enterprise UK describe it thus:

"It involves looking beyond the price of each individual contract and looking at what the collective benefit to a community is when a public body chooses to award a contract.

Social value asks the question: *"If £1 is spent on the delivery of services, can that same £1 be used, to also produce a wider benefit to the community".*

In other words, what are the additional benefits to the community, be they social, economic or environmental, which can come from this procurement process over and above the direct purchasing of the services?

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"social value refers to wider non-financial impacts of programmes, organisations and interventions, including the wellbeing of individuals and communities, social capital and the environment. These are typically described as 'soft' outcomes, mainly because they are difficult to quantify and measure."

Measuring Social Value, Demos

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"additional benefit to the community from a commissioning/procurement process over and above the direct purchasing of goods, services and outcomes."

The Social Value Commissioning Project conducted by North West NHS

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social impact

- ❖ A common way to think about social impact, from a social impact measurement point of view, is to consider it as *the change that happens for people as a result of an action or activity*.

- ❖ "Understanding *the effects on various people that happen as a result of an action, activity, project, programme or policy*.

- ❖ The 'impact' of this action or activity can be *positive or negative*, and can be *intended or unintended*, or a combination of all of these. An activity can have immediate and direct impact on certain people, but it can also have a more far reaching effect on people, organisations, institutions and entities which are not directly engaging with it. They might not even know they are being affected at all, but the 'impact' of the action might be very significant to them.

  (www.socialimpactscotland.org.uk)

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A UK context

❖ Decrease in grants and grant culture for Third Sector

❖ Increase in commissioning for services from Third Sector

❖ Increase in social investment from those seeking a financial *and* social return

❖ Social Value Act 2012

❖ Inspiring Impact programme of co-ordinated research around measuring impact in Third Sector

❖ A move (from funders) away from outputs to outcomes.

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Monitoring and evaluating?

❖ **Monitoring -** collecting information that will help you answer questions about your project.

❖ **Evaluation** - using monitoring and other information you collect to make judgements about your project, to "*prove and improve*"

❖ **Proving** is about demonstrating that *change* is actually taking place; through data gathering, analysis, evaluation and reporting

❖ **Improving** refers to a continuous process of *learning and growth*, to support the social mission and also to sustain and grow the business; through monitoring, making recommendations and acting on them.

"Seems like a lot of work on top of what we already do to keep this business going, why should we bother?"

"We know it works, we'll keep on doing what we've always done, it'll be fine…"

What would your response be?

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Measuring our performance – why bother?

❖ **Making good decisions and plan services** - *understanding the links between the things that you plan to do and how they* **create change** *for individuals, families and communities (both intended and unintended)*

❖ **Motivation for staff and users** - *it can be very motivating for staff to see evidence of the outcomes of their work. It can also be encouraging for service users to see their own progress*

❖ **Getting people involved** - *helps in gathering information and keeps you on track*

❖ **Being open and accountable** - *earning and building trust through regular and transparent reporting, providing information to stakeholders, including funders, commissioners and investors*

❖ **Building a brand and reaching customers** - *a brand that speaks to the values of customers*

❖ **Winning business** - *let them know that you have something more to offer and that what you do makes a difference, your unique contribution*

❖ *Five Lamps perspective*

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Some jargon

Mission or Overall Aim: Why an organisation or project exists and the broad effect that it wants to have. A summary of the overall difference it wants to make.

Specific Aims: Particular changes or differences the project or organisation plans to bring about for its users

Objectives: describe the planned areas of service delivery by which you are going to achieve your aims

Outcomes: are the significant changes that directly result from your activities.

Indicator: Well defined piece of information (clue) which shows whether something is happening.

Impact: Broader or longer-term effects of a project's or organisation's outputs, outcomes and activities.

"outcomes" and "impact" are often used interchangeably

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outputs, outcomes

❖**Outputs:** Products, services or facilities that result from an organisation's or project's activities.

◎eg. number of books sold, number of events held, tonnes of waste recycled, etc

❖**Outcomes:** are the *significant changes that directly result* from your activities (for the client)

◎eg. clients have new skills, patients eat more healthily, clients gain employment, etc

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The Into Work Project

Aims	Outcomes
1. To improve clients' employment-related skills	❖ Clients have better interview skills ❖ Clients have better job-searching skills ❖ Clients can produce high-quality CVs
2. To enable clients to find and sustain employment	❖ Clients take up volunteering opportunities ❖ Clients find work ❖ Clients remain in work for six months or more

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outcome areas

Individuals
Families
Communities
Environment
Policy

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individual outcomes

	Example outcomes
Health	❖ Elderly people suffer less depression
Behaviour	❖ Young people become more involved in volunteering
Attitude	❖ Unemployed people become more motivated to find work
Knowledge/skills	❖ Teenagers increase their knowledge of contraception ❖ Refugee women increase their English language skills
Circumstance	❖ Homeless people find somewhere permanent to live
Relationship	❖ People with mental health problems widen their social networks

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outcomes in other areas

	Example outcomes
Families	Parents develop better relationships with their children
Communities	Local people become more involved in community projects
Environment	Less rubbish dumped on local housing estates
Policy	Local authority introduces new cycle lanes

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Your stakeholders – any person or organisation who affects the work of your organisation (+/-)

different perspectives on outcomes

Case examples: advice service

Funders:
- Clients maximise income
- Worse harm prevented
- Pressure on statutory services reduced

Clients:
- Somewhere better to live
- More money
- More knowledge of benefits

Workers:
- Clients solve own problems
- Clients understand their entitlements

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