Assessing the impact of volunteers

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Outline of session

• Why and what?
• How?
  ❖ A framework for assessing impact
  ❖ Tools
  ❖ Using the findings
Why?

- Funders
- Organisation
- Volunteers
- Service users
- Public, community and other stakeholders

Evidence
Learn and improve
Accountability
Motivate and inspire
What do we mean by impacts?

• The difference that volunteering makes
• Distinction between the ‘work you do’ and the ‘difference it makes’
• The ‘difference you make’ includes outcomes and impact
• Outcomes – the intermediary changes, benefits and other effects that result from a programme or project
• Impacts - the broad or long-term effects of the programme or project
Volunteering Impact Assessment Toolkit

Guidance and tools to help you assess the impact of volunteering on:

- Your volunteers
- Your organisation
- Service users
- Wider community
Toolkit Framework

- Who does volunteering make a difference to?
- How are they affected?
- Provides a range of tools to assess the impacts of volunteering
Who?

A whole range of stakeholders – exactly who will be different for each organisation, but can be broadly grouped into:

– Volunteers
– Organisations
– Service users / beneficiaries
– Wider community
### How?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Human capital</strong></th>
<th>Personal development, skills and well-being</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Confidence and self esteem</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Vocational skills</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Economic capital</strong></th>
<th>The economic benefits and costs of volunteering</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Increased earning power</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Financial costs through being out of pocket</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Social capital</strong></th>
<th>Social relationships, networks and trusts developed</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Increased contacts and networks</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Increased involvement in local activities</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Cultural capital</strong></th>
<th>Development of cultural identity and understanding</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Increased sense of community</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Increased understanding of other cultures</td>
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Tools

• Adaptable tools and templates - questionnaires, focus group/interview topic guides, volunteer diaries
• Structured around the four capitals plus questions on experiences/satisfaction
• Designed to consider positive and negative impacts
• Plus case studies and additional resources
8. Listed below are some of the ways that people gain personally from being a volunteer. Have any of the following increased or decreased for you? Please tick the box that applies to you.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>F</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increased greatly</td>
<td>Increased</td>
<td>Stayed the same</td>
<td>Decreased</td>
<td>Decreased greatly</td>
<td>Not relevant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a) My personal development (e.g., confidence, self-esteem, self-management)
   - [ ]
   - [ ]
   - [ ]
   - [ ]
   - [ ]
   - [ ]

b) My skills (e.g., from teamwork through to computer skills)
   - [ ]
   - [ ]
   - [ ]
   - [ ]
   - [ ]
   - [ ]

c) My general health and well-being
   - [ ]
   - [ ]
   - [ ]
   - [ ]
   - [ ]
   - [ ]
Supplementary questionnaire

5. People can gain personally from volunteering in a variety of ways. Tick the box that indicates whether the following have increased or decreased for you as a result of your volunteering.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>a) Personal development</th>
<th>A Increased greatly</th>
<th>B Increased</th>
<th>C Stayed the same</th>
<th>D Decreased</th>
<th>E Decreased greatly</th>
<th>F Not relevant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i) My confidence in my own abilities</td>
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<tr>
<td>ii) My sense of self-esteem</td>
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<td>iii) My sense that I am making a useful contribution</td>
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<td>iv) My awareness of the effects of my actions on others</td>
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<td>v) My sense of motivation</td>
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<tr>
<td>vi) My willingness to try new things</td>
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<tr>
<td>vii) The sense that I have things to look forward to in my life</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Key principles

• Plan! Identify what you are trying to achieve/use your theory of change
• Involve others and work together
• Be realistic and proportionate
• Use and adapt available tools and frameworks
• Learn from the findings
How can orgs use the findings?

• To help develop and improve their volunteering programme
• To provide evidence of impact to existing funders
• To develop funding applications and attract new funding
• To raise the profile of volunteering internally and externally
• To raise the profile of the organisation
• To recruit volunteers
Imperial Volunteer Centre (Imperial College)

- Used the toolkit to identify the outcomes of volunteering for student volunteers
- Adapted the toolkit questionnaire for volunteers
- Communicated findings via:
  - Presentations to senior staff
  - Poster presentation at education day
  - Report on website
  - Workshop at annual conference
  - Short article for in-house staff magazine

- Helped provide evidence on positive outcomes and helped secure permanent funding

Churches Conservation Trust

- Used the toolkit in their study of nine case study churches
- 28 page glossy report
  - sent to all volunteers
  - sent to partner orgs
  - presented to MPs
  - grant applications
Further info and support

To buy the toolkit

www.ncvo.org.uk/practical-support/publications
£42 NCVO members
£60 non-NCVO members

Training

www.ncvo.org.uk/training-and-events
July 11th - Assessing the impact of your volunteers (London)