



creating change by supporting change

# Understanding and Quantifying your value

Robert Foster, Red Ochre

[robert@redochre.org.uk](mailto:robert@redochre.org.uk)

# Exercise: Assess your metrics

How do you know whether your current metrics (performance, financial, environmental, social) are the right ones for your NGO?

**Consider your metrics and rate them as follows:**

- 1 = No value in this goal
- 2 = Some help on this goal
- 3 = Quite helpful on this goal
- 4 = Extremely valuable on this goal

**How well do your performance metrics:**

- ☐ Translate your strategy into concrete action?
- ☐ Align departments behind common goals
- ☐ Fully reflect what stakeholders care about?
- ☐ Provide leverage (scale) to create change?
- ☐ Balance leading and lagging indicators?
- ☐ Balance strategic and operational indicators?
- ☐ Enhance your ability to compete in the future?
- ☐ Drive improvements?
- ☐ Include internal and external benchmarks?

**Total your scores**

Score	Narrative
1-17	Not adequate, although there may be possible easy and effective changes
18-27	Good, but room for improvement
27-36	Among the best social performance management systems in your area of interest

**Meta questions**

- Do you review your metrics on a regular basis?
- Do you do this independent of, or with, your strategic planning process?
- Why do you use performance and social performance measures?

# Agenda

- What is SIM and why is it important?
- Problems with tools and processes
- A real world approach that works
- Good and poor examples of SIM reporting
- OK. What next?



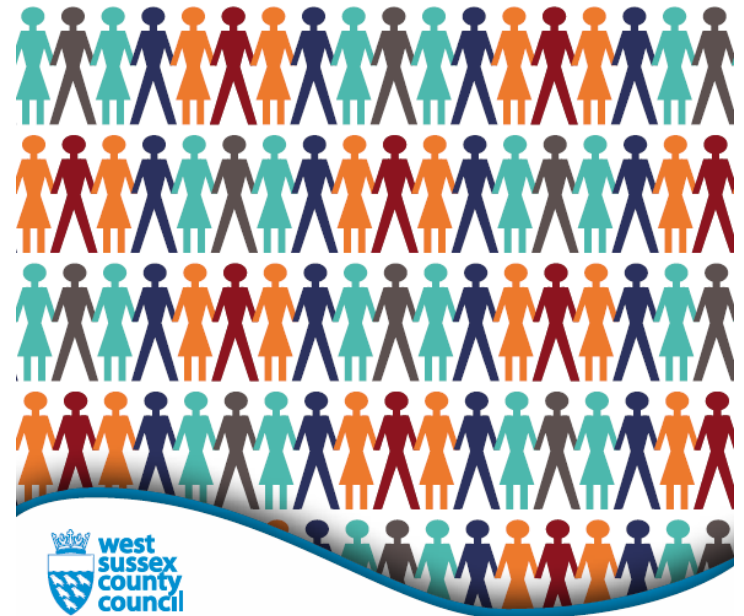
# Follow-up

- Notes of this session
- Handouts and exercise templates
- A copy of the Social Impact Measurement (SIM) Guide, written by Red Ochre for WSCC et al



## **The SIM Handbook**

West Sussex County Council's  
guide to social impact measurement



# Basics: What is SIM?

- Impact: the positive change an organisation makes (or *plans to make*) to people, society, economy or environment
- Evaluation / Measurement: Anything that helps you to better understand the impact your organisation is having



Q: Why is SIM important?

Quality

Efficiency

Volunteers

Media

Effectiveness

Proof Value Results

Impact

Awareness



# ... Because ...

- Develop a robust evidence base to support better decision making processes
- Understand and communicate the complexity of the transformation of services and 'change processes'
- Manage supply chain – contracts and performance management
- To adequately resource and manage large scale public service delivery (SIBs)
- Quantify, control and communicate the benefits your intervention brings to your clients
- To prove your case to funders and other stakeholders
- To support investment decisions

# Caveat: Social Impact vs. Social Value

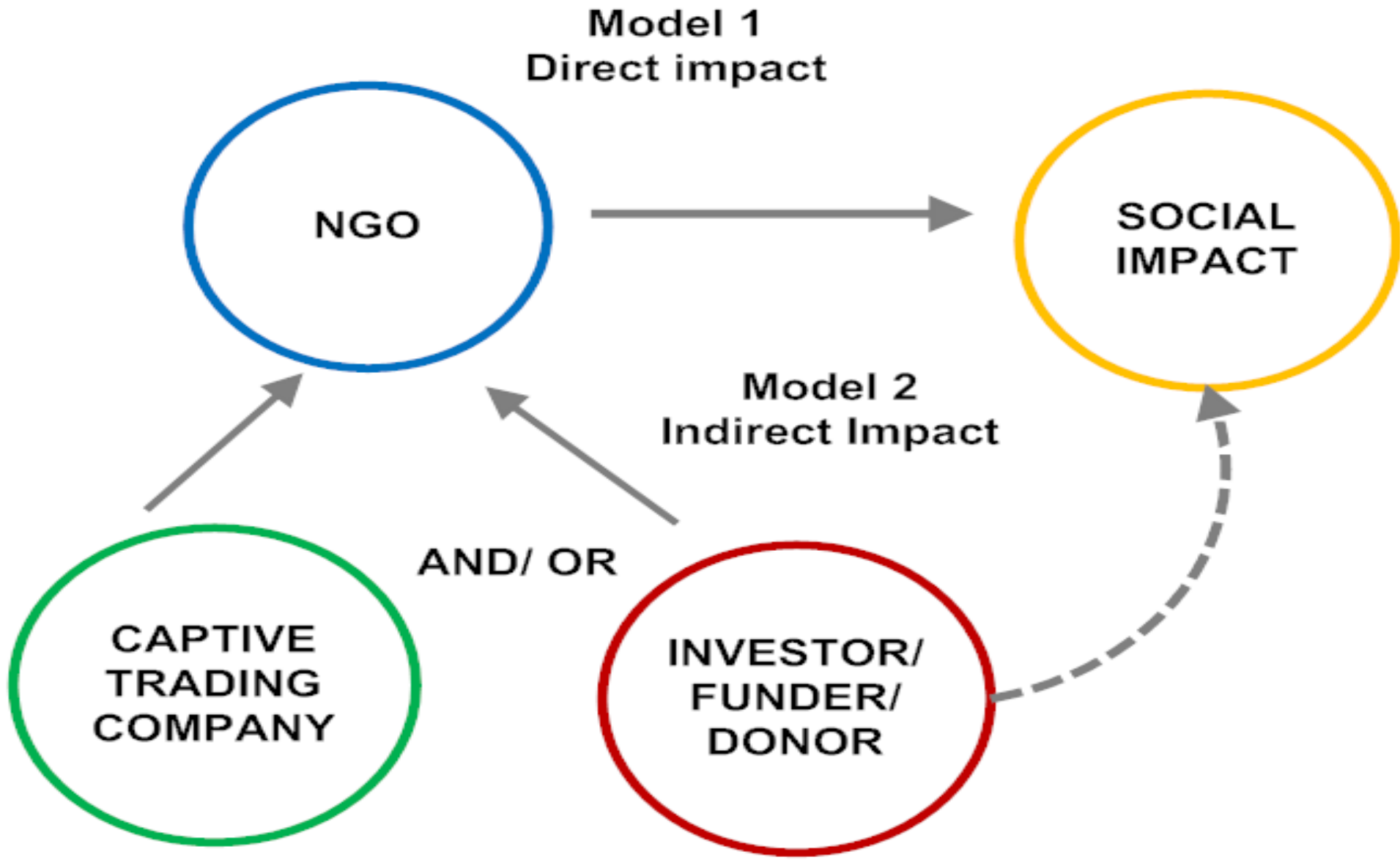
- Social impact  $\neq$  Social Value (necessarily)
- Public Service (Social Value) Act 2012
  - All public bodies in England and Wales are required to *consider* how the services they commission and procure might improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of the area
- Social value = “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 this context social value can be (mis)interpreted as *added financial value*



# Formal or informal approaches

- Robust and large data studies (quantitative) give your theory of change credibility
- Stories about people (qualitative) touch the humanity of your funders, the media and your stakeholders
  - Lives touched, a type of personalised case study of your impact on a person
  - Story telling, *but “anecdote” is not the plural of datum!*
  - Look back move forward

# SIM 101: Impact models



# Caveat: Practical constraints



Professional  
background



Training  
of analyst



Financial  
Resources

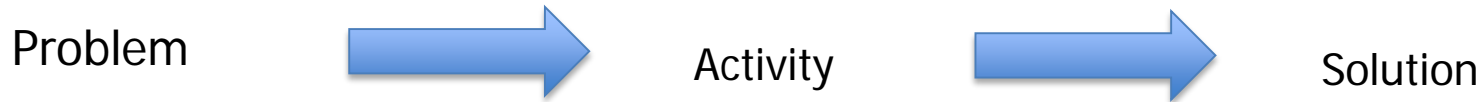


Age of the  
program

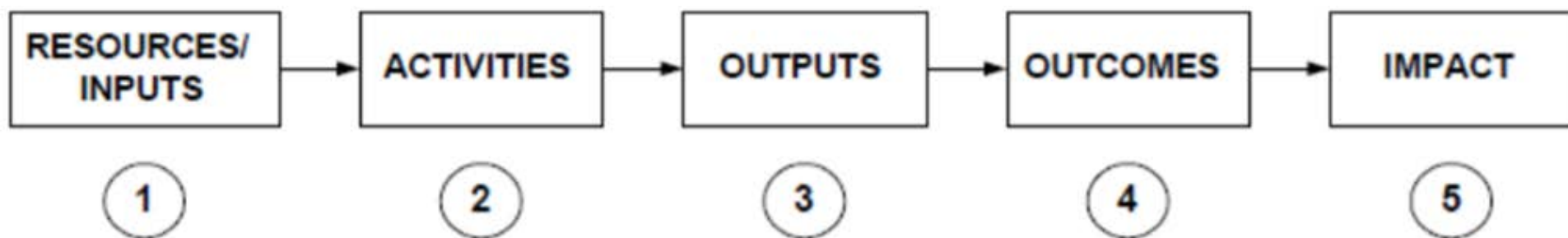
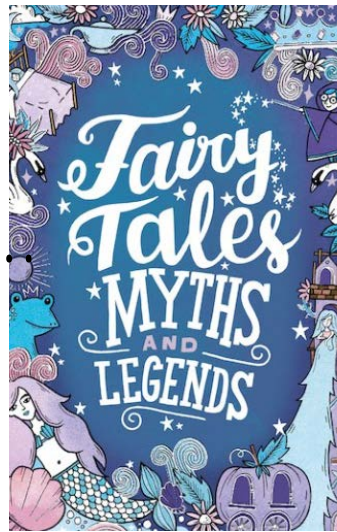


Complexity of the  
program's theory of  
change

# Hypotheses, Pilots and Theory of Change



but ..



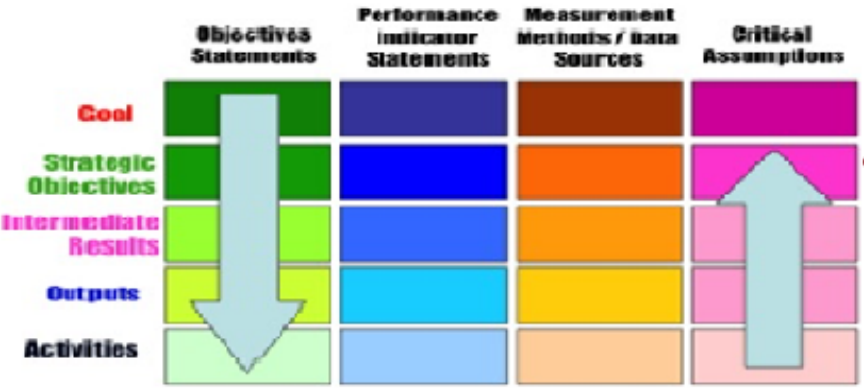


Standard Model

Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes	Impacts
The resources that you need to manage the project. For example, time, money, staff, other assets (such as a building), a clear vision and shared direction etc.	The things that you do to effect some sort of change in people, the community, or the environment. For example, providing a service, a programme, or a good to people.	The direct results and beneficiaries. Usually outputs show that certain people receive something, learn something, or take part in something as a result of what you do or how you do it. For example, newly vaccinated beings, the number of people involved, or the number of hours of training delivered etc.	Larger term change. Describe why that output is important, in terms of the implications for, and the effect it has on, a local area or a group of people. This is the theory that you will be testing - the link between what you do and the things you care passionately about.	When thinking about planning, impacts are the big picture change you are trying to create or the changes in the wider world that the work you are doing is contributing to. For example, this could be in terms of your vision for change in people's lives, a community, the environment or the local economy.
Why is that important?	Why is that important?	Why is that important?	Why is that important?	Why is that important?
How do you know?	How do you know?	How do you know?	How do you know?	How do you know?

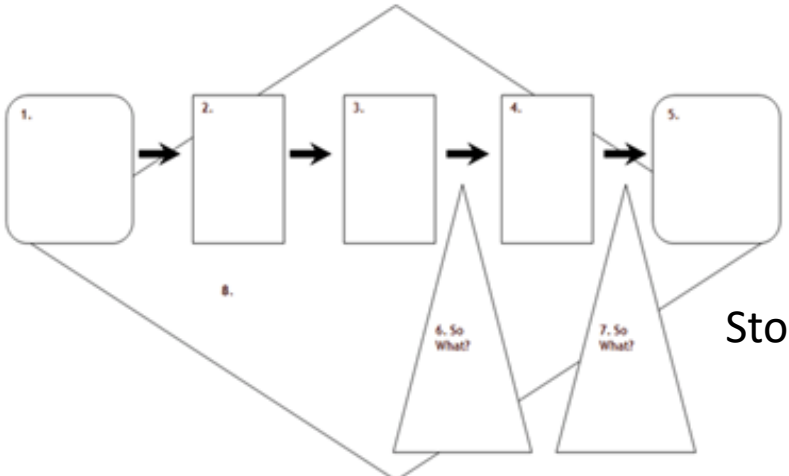
Impact Map

Add Risk and Assumptions



Log Frame

Add co-design



Storyboard

# A word on controls, comparisons & benchmarking

Internally	Historical performance		
Externally	Nationally / Internationally	Vs. best practice / exemplars	Control/ baseline
	Similar demographics	With interventions (other “providers”)	Without interventions
	In similar areas	With interventions	Without interventions



# Q: Problems?

- Generic problems with measurement and reporting
- Specific problems you have experienced with measurement and reporting

## ... maybe?

- Resource / management overheads
- Attribution vs. contribution
- Deadweight and over-claiming
- Lock-in (Q: How many methodologies in use?)
- Mis-reading / mis-representing the top line
- Recording the wrong things
- Efficiency vs. effectiveness

# ... and what about these?

- Direct vs. indirect measures
- Quantitative vs. qualitative
- Objective (absolute) vs. subjective (relative)
- Dunning–Kruger effect
- Reporting unforeseen consequences
- Same message for different stakeholders
- Your analysis: Does causation equal correlation?

# Solutions

- Always refer back to fundamentals
- Your visions and mission (and values!)
- Align to your strategy and implementation
  - Decide what is important to your organisation
  - Ask “How do I know?”
  - Source information
  - Analyse the information and draw conclusions
  - Communicate that insight

# Definitions 1

Inputs	Resources that contribute to a programme or activity, including income, staff, volunteers and equipment
Outputs	Countable units; they are the direct products of a programme or organisation's activities
Outcomes	The benefits or changes for intended beneficiaries e.g. behavioural changes for individuals or structural changes for society or institutions
Impact	All changes resulting from an activity, project, or organisation. It includes intended as well as unintended effects, negative as well as positive, and long-term as well as short-term.
Evaluative (Summative)	Happens at the end of a project Learning helps thinking for future projects and policy
Forecast (Formative)	Happens throughout a project Learning helps change current programme, and interpretation of policy

# Definitions 2

Deadweight	A measure of the amount of outcome that would have happened even if the activity had not taken place
Attribution	An assessment of how much of a project outcome was caused by the <b>contribution</b> of you, or other organisations or people
Discounting	Calculating how much future costs and benefits will be at today's prices
Displacement	... of activities > to or from areas or organisations ... of outcomes > to areas or groups e.g. Crime or homeless people



# Overview of the process

- 0: What is important for you to measure?
- 1: Source data
  - Critical success factors
  - Performance indicators
  - Mechanisms
  - Frequency
- 2: Analyse findings
  - Organise
  - Reflect
  - Analyse
- 3: Communicate conclusions
  - Summative > prove (sales, marketing, fundraising, commissioning, procurement etc.)
  - Formative > improve (efficiency, effectiveness, CI etc.)

# Decide what is important

- Organisational objectives are “given” to you
- Drawn directly from business or development plan
- Experienced a need or problem
- Observed a need or problem
  - How?
- Modelled a need or problem
  - How?

# Storyboard: The process

- Get your stakeholders together
- Work through the following questions and answers in a conversation with your stakeholders
- Build your storyboard from the information that flows
- You should have a narrative that suggests
  - What is important
  - Potential key messages
  - What to measure

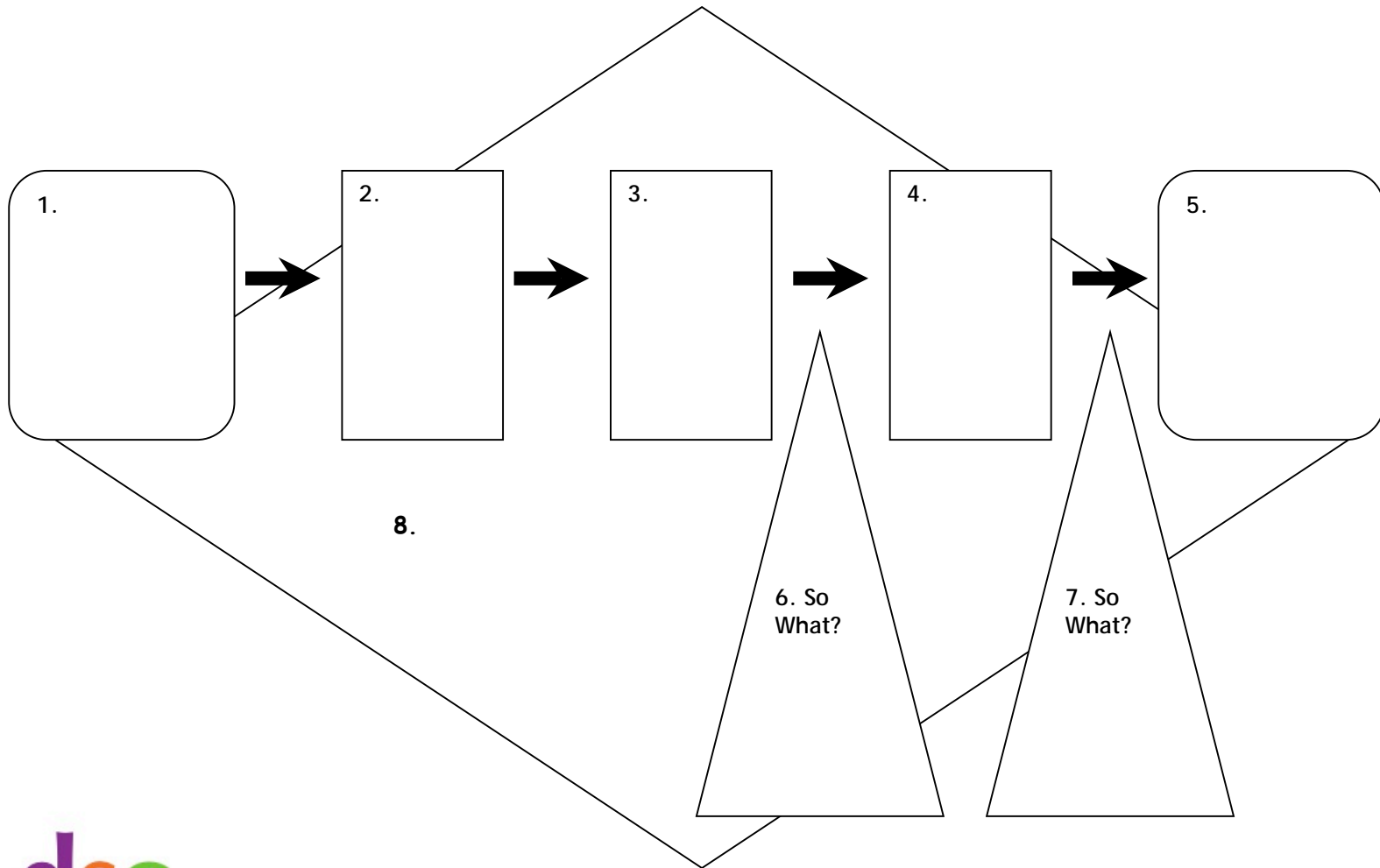
# Storyboard: Questions 1-5

- Q1. Describe the world in which you are working in terms of the local or wider need that your project is addressing.
- Q2. What are you planning to do as part of this project?
- Q3. What effects do you expect to see straight away?
- Q4. What effects and changes do you expect to see in the future?
- Q5. Where possible, describe the long-term changes for people, the environment or the economy that:
  - Your project will contribute to
  - Your project will be wholly responsible for

# Storyboard: Questions 6-8

- Q6. For every immediate effect you identified in 3 above, ask 'So what?' or 'Why is that important?' (Try and describe precisely how each of the immediate effects will lead to the changes in the future.)
- Q7. For every effect and change you identified in 4 above, ask 'So what?' or 'Why is that important?' (Try and describe how the changes will lead to the long-term changes for people, the environment or the economy.)
- Q8. What barriers do you foresee that could prevent any of this happening?

# Firstly, what should you measure?





# Now for steps one to three

## **Step One: Source your impact**

*Who do we talk to and about what?*

*How do we talk to them?*

*What information do we want to collect?*

*How do we collect it?*

## **Step Two: Analyse your impact**

*What is the key information reflecting my impact?*

*What are we going to do with the information we have?*

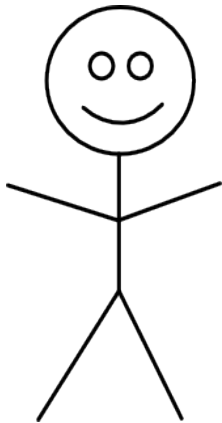
*Which is the most accurate and appropriate way to analyze the data?*

## **Step Three: Use and communicate your impact**

*What do you want to communicate? All findings / some findings*

*To who and for what purpose?*

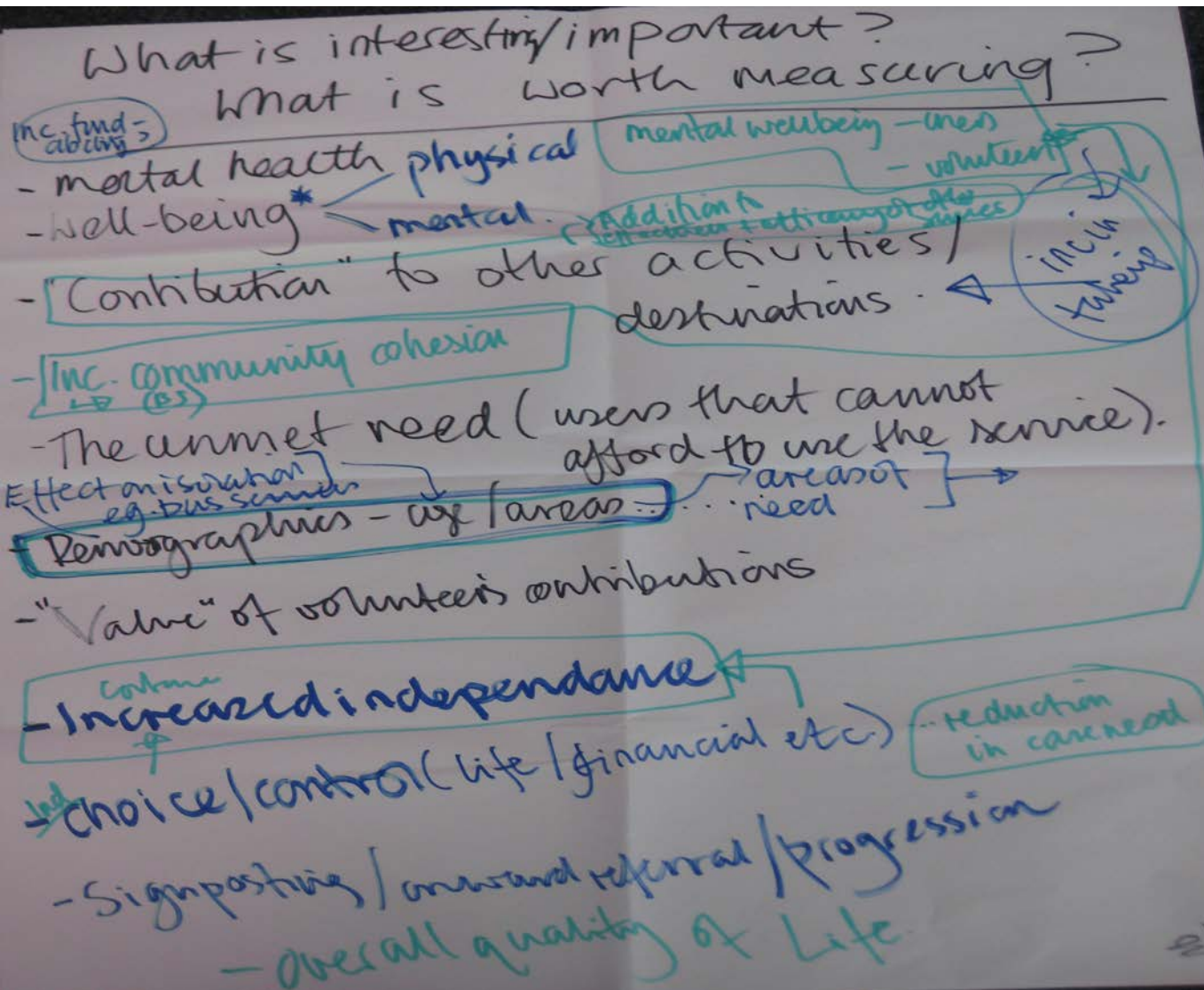
*Through which channel? What form do they need to know it?*



# Hopefully ...

- By now you should have a much clearer understanding of:
  - The need or pain in society you address
  - The way you do this (the process and activities you undertake, your theory of change)
  - What is important or interesting to you?
    - **What outcomes and impacts are key?**
  - How do you know you have achieved these?
    - **What are appropriate indicators?**

# What next? Indicators



- What is of interest?
- What do we want to measure?
- Why do we want to measure this?

Then

- How do we measure?
- When do we measure?
- What do we compare with?
- What does this tell us?
- Prove or disprove?

# Outcomes and indicators 1

- West Sussex CC have worked with commissioners and providers to begin to identify important impacts and outcomes relevant to them
- Here are *example* outcomes areas and *indicative* indicators to help you with your working

Outcomes and impact you want to see. These are five outcomes areas that WSCC has identified as important	How do you know you have achieved these outcomes? E.g.
Increased or maintained physical health	A person's rating of their physical health  Improvement of condition that was present upon referral or entry to the organisation e.g. how frequently has the person experienced chest pains, nausea, numbness etc.?
Increased psychological well-being	Person's rating of their quality of life  Change in how frequently the person feel depressed, anxious etc.

# Outcomes and indicators 2

Outcomes and impact you want to see. These are five outcomes areas that WSCC has identified as important	How do you know you have achieved these outcomes? E.g.
Financial security	<p>People feel able to spend money on the things that matter to them</p> <p>People spend a lower proportion of income on essentials items than previously</p>
Social interaction – personal relationships	<p>Number of times the person has met socially with friends, relatives or colleagues in the last month / quarter / year etc.</p> <p>Extent to which people think there are people in their life that really care about them</p>
Social interaction – community	<p>Person feels they can influence decisions in the area they live in</p> <p>Person feels they are able to help other people/contribute to the community</p>

# Direct vs. indirect measures

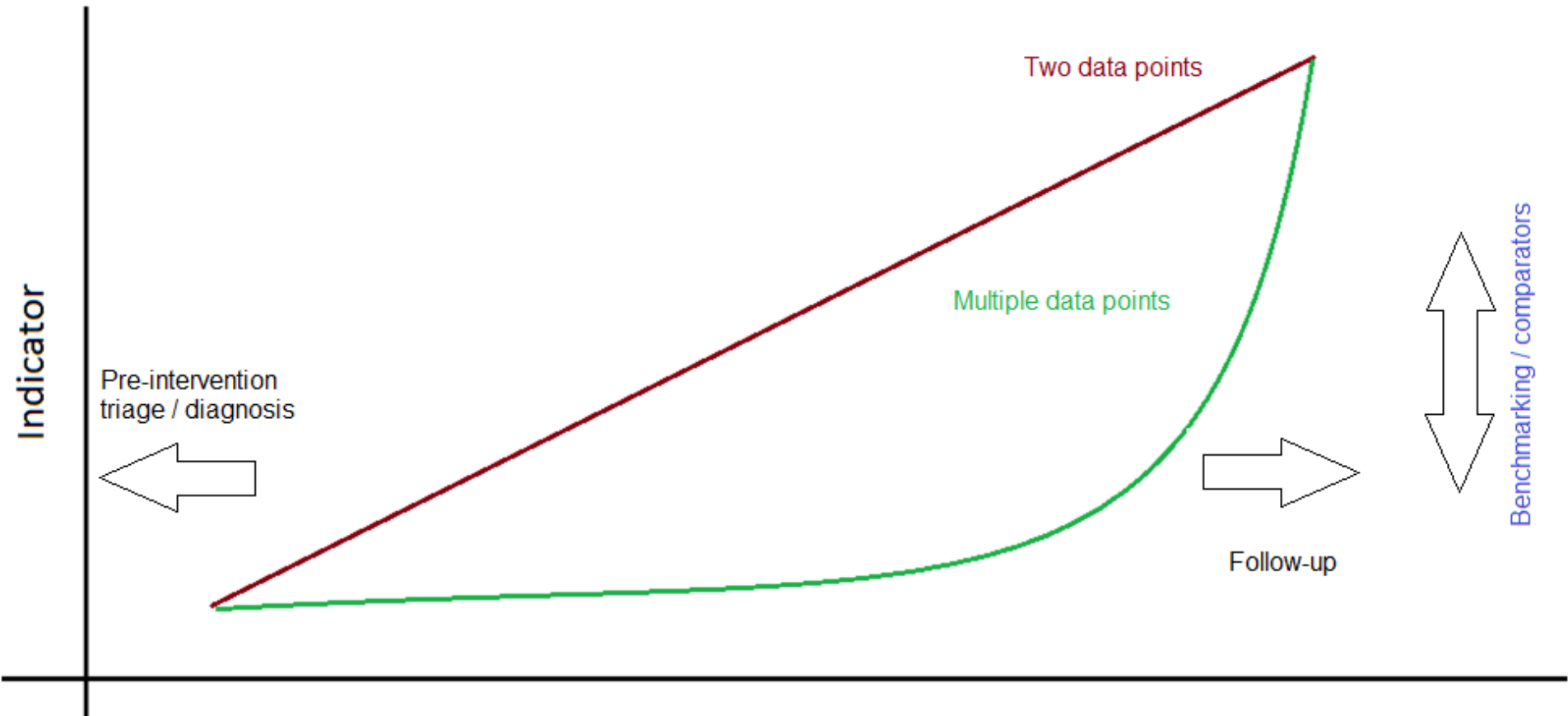
- Scenario: an employment project helps unemployed people get work
  - What is the positive change that has happened?
  - How do measure this change?
    - Directly?
    - Indirectly?
  - Who is interested in this message?
    - What language to use when communicating this change?



# Direct vs. indirect measures

- Scenario: An ASD project needs to measure how it is helping its users
  - What challenges will they experience?
  - What might they want to measure?
  - How might they measure this?
    - Directly?
    - Indirectly?

# Sampling frequencies



# Practical Impact Map

Input	Activities	Output	Outcome	Impact
Indicators				
Sampling mechanisms				
Sampling frequency				
Resource allocation				

# Step 1: Source your impact



# Step 1: Source your impact data



## Impact you feel

- Ask yourself, 'what needs do we really address?'
- Or 'what long term changes are created by our organisation?' and actively listen...
- What do you feel or what thoughts arise?
- These can be of immediate help and provide the basis for the start of your measuring impact work and keep you on track.

**Tip: Use it as a basis for further measurement.**

# Step 1: Source your impact data

## Impact you're told

Ask yourself what data is already out there?

- Internet / academic search
- Existing conversations you have with your stakeholders
- What do you already have? For example, phone call logs or event participant numbers, monitoring data for funders, case study interview transcripts or a mind map you drew in a meeting.

**Tip: Do you already talk to beneficiaries or customers about your service or product? You can add to what you are already doing, by including extra questions.**



# Step 1: Source your impact data



## Impact that you research

By asking good questions and gathering fuller information, you are getting a more open-ended, clearer picture.

- What question do you want to answer or what is your hypothesis? E.g.
  - What difference does our service make to the lives of our users?
  - Who you will need to approach to get the information that you need?
- What methods will you use? E.g.
  - Interviews – (what sort?)
  - Questionnaires / surveys

And...

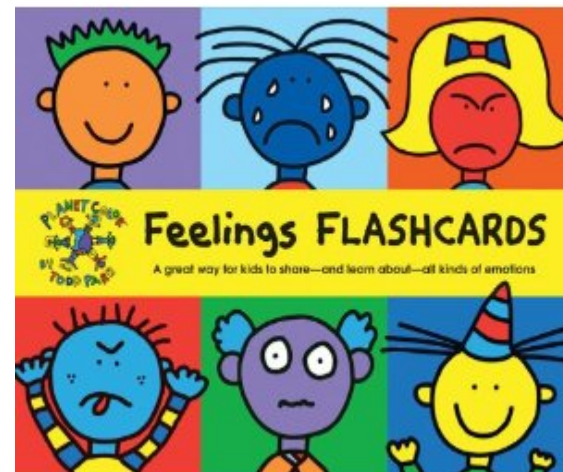
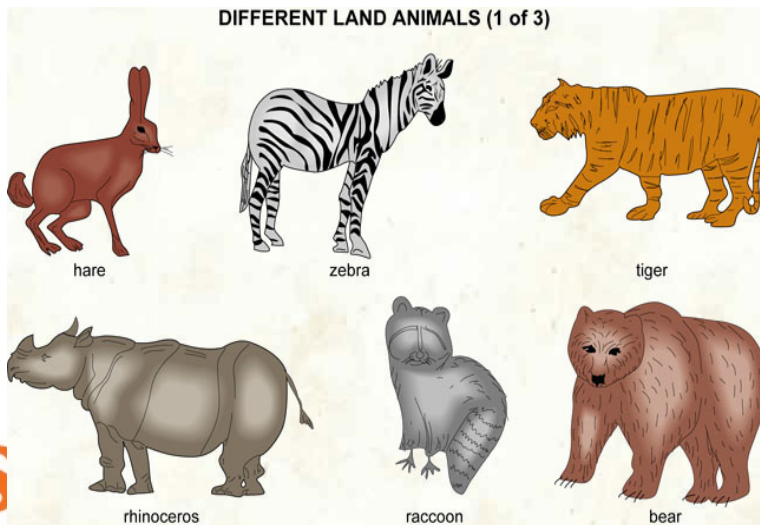


# Other data collection mechanisms

- Registration forms with profile data
- Attendance record and logs (paper registers, online - eventbrite)
- Feedback forms
- Minutes of meetings
- Postcards
- Questions in pub quizzes
- Idea walls
- External/third party evaluation
- Focus groups
- Camera / photos
- Participant observation
- Thought experiment
- Mood board
- Flip cameras
- Visual journals
- Look back move forward  
[www.proveit.org.uk/project\\_reflection.html](http://www.proveit.org.uk/project_reflection.html)
- Outcomes stars  
[www.outcomesstar.org.uk](http://www.outcomesstar.org.uk)
- Online survey  
E.g. [www.surveymonkey.com](http://www.surveymonkey.com)
- Online polls
- Online open text box / wiki
- Storytelling
- Dictaphone – record interviews or record quotes
- Suggestion box / piece of card
- Phone interviews
- Combine – e.g. an event to evaluate, discuss and talk, then capture photos / quotes

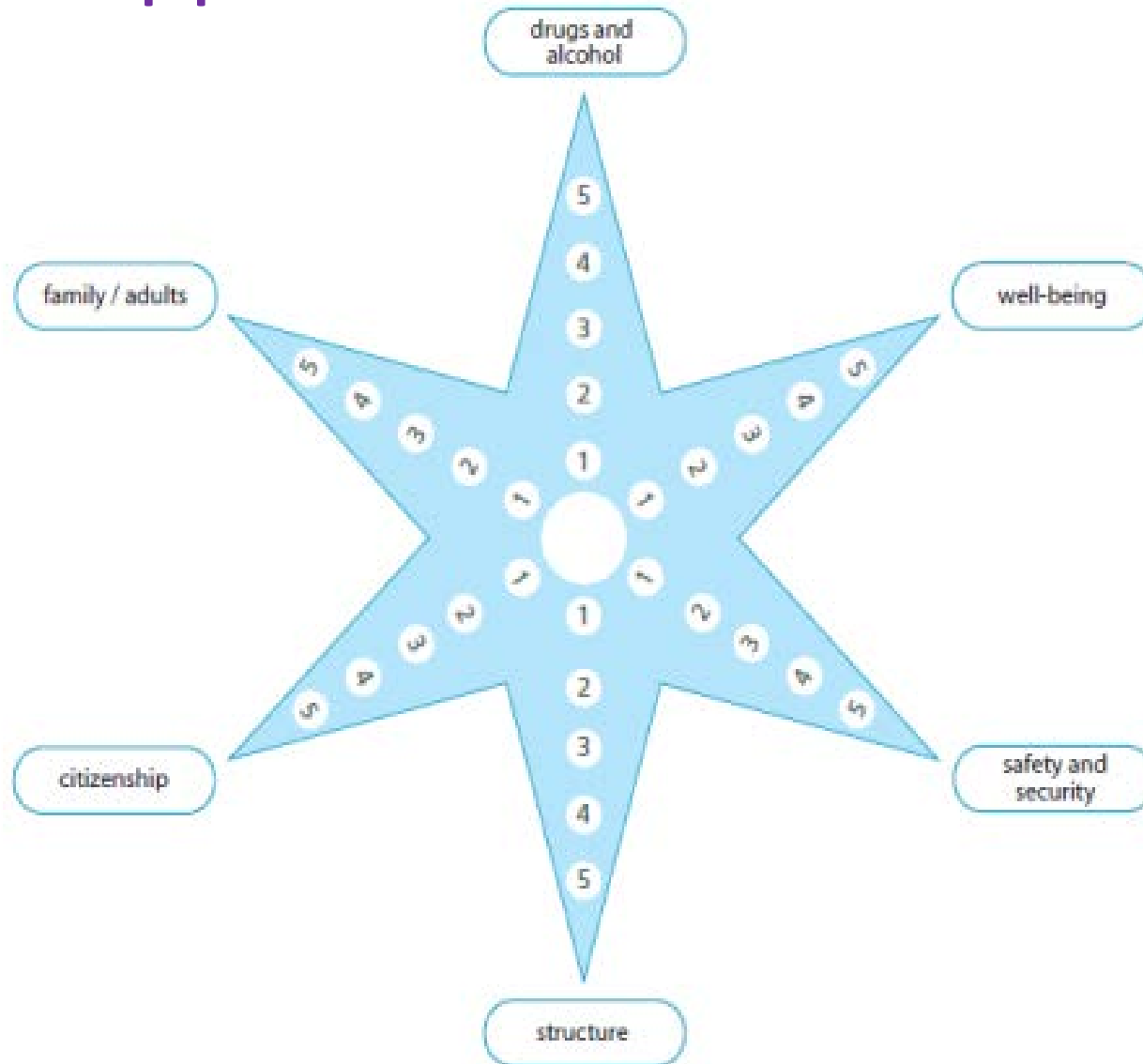


# Other data collection for children



METHOD[M1]	WHAT IS IT?	WHAT DOES IT DO?	MORE INFORMATION
<b>Outcomes Stars</b>	The Outcomes Star™ measures progress for service users receiving support in order to maximise independence or achieve other goals. There are different versions of the Star for different sectors (e.g. homelessness, substance misuse, mental health and young people).	Using the mental health tool as an example, outcome areas include trust, hope, identity and self-esteem; which could be seen as being more difficult to measure. The process is repeated at regular intervals, depending on the project's requirements.	<a href="http://www.outcomesstar.org.uk">www.outcomesstar.org.uk</a>
<b>New Philanthropy Capital Wellbeing Questionnaire</b>	NPC have developed a questionnaire which has been developed to measure levels of wellbeing. The questionnaire has been created in parallel with the Children's society and is being piloted with five other charities.	Use of the questionnaire involves observing children's levels of wellbeing and how it changes over time. Additionally, the tool allows for exploration of how intervention can affect different aspects of a child's wellbeing. It is stated on the website that it has been developed for the third sector to use for small cost.	<a href="http://www.philanthropycapital.org">www.philanthropycapital.org</a>
<b>Social Accounting and Audit</b>	Social accounting is the process of collecting information about the activities an organisation carries out which affect its stakeholders. These activities may be intended 'outputs' or just the day to day internal operations.	Social accounting has been developed with an external, quality-assured audit process so that an organisation's claims can be credible (proved) and used to demonstrate organisational development (improvement).	<a href="http://www.socialauditnetwork.org.uk">www.socialauditnetwork.org.uk</a>
<b>Look Back Move Forward (LBMF)</b>	Look Back Move Forward (LBMF) is a simple participative project evaluation and learning tool. The tool guides a two-hour self-facilitated workshop that focuses on an interactive poster.	LBMF gives participants the opportunity to reflect on a project they have worked on together from a number of different perspectives, as well as to compare and learn from each other's experiences. The finished poster provides a visual record of the participant's views on the project, which can be used for discussion and learning.	<a href="http://www.lm3online.org">www.lm3online.org</a> <a href="http://www.nef-consulting.co.uk/en/page_149.html">www.nef-consulting.co.uk/en/page_149.html</a>
<b>Social Return on Investment (SROI)</b>	SROI is an approach to understanding and managing the impacts of a project, organisation or policy. It is based on stakeholders and puts financial value on the important impacts identified by stakeholders that do not have market values.	SROI seeks to include the values of people that are often excluded from markets in the same terms as used in markets, that is money, in order to give people a voice in resource allocation decisions. SROI is a framework to structure thinking and understanding.	<a href="http://www.thesroinetwork.org">www.thesroinetwork.org</a>

# Other approaches: Teen Outcomes Star



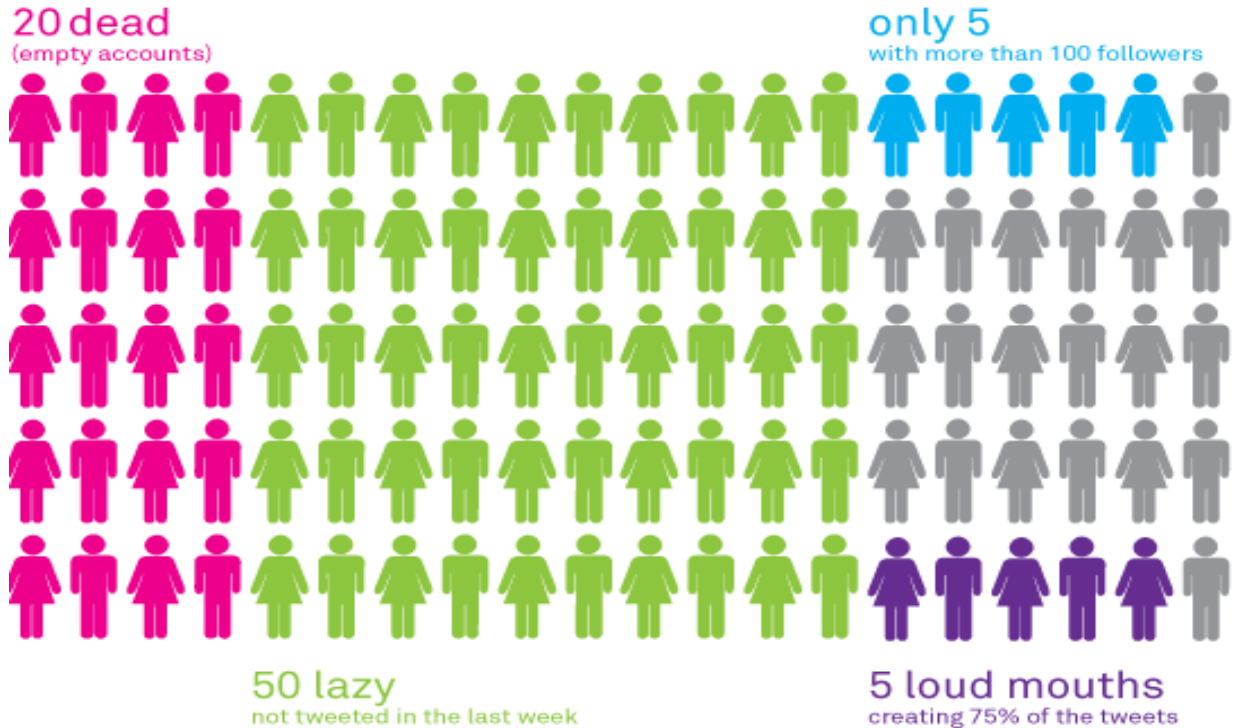
# Step 2: Analyse your impact

## A quick process for analysing

- Organise, consider or analyse data for themes or patterns
- Reflect on data
- Theorise or draw conclusions

# www.informationisbeautiful.net

Let's Not Get Too Excited...  
if the Twitter community was 100 people...



# Information can be beautiful: VCW Youth Volunteering Project

“We asked our partner organisations how they support volunteers. Here’s what they said”:





# Step 2: Analyse your impact

## Organise, consider or analyse data for themes or patterns

- Begin by reviewing the data you've collected for themes and patterns.
- Consider the social and beneficiary impact, environmental impact, financial metrics, and other aspects of your project or organisation.
- Do you have evaluation questions or a question that you are trying to answer in your work?

Periodic Table of Elements

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Wikipedia Properties Orbitals Isotopes Mass Names Electrons Wide

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18

1 H Helium  
2 He  
3 Li Beryllium  
4 Be  
5 B Boron  
6 C Carbon  
7 N Nitrogen  
8 O Oxygen  
9 F Fluorine  
10 Ne Neon  
11 Na Sodium  
12 Mg Magnesium  
13 Al Aluminium  
14 Si Silicon  
15 P Phosphorus  
16 S Sulfur  
17 Cl Chlorine  
18 Ar Argon  
19 K Potassium  
20 Ca Calcium  
21 Sc Scandium  
22 Ti Titanium  
23 V Vanadium  
24 Cr Chromium  
25 Mn Manganese  
26 Fe Iron  
27 Co Cobalt  
28 Ni Nickel  
29 Cu Copper  
30 Zn Zinc  
31 Ga Gallium  
32 Ge Germanium  
33 As Arsenic  
34 Se Selenium  
35 Br Bromine  
36 Kr Krypton  
37 Rb Rubidium  
38 Sr Strontium  
39 Y Yttrium  
40 Zr Zirconium  
41 Nb Niobium  
42 Mo Molybdenum  
43 Tc Technetium  
44 Ru Ruthenium  
45 Rh Rhodium  
46 Pd Palladium  
47 Ag Silver  
48 Cd Cadmium  
49 In Indium  
50 Sn Tin  
51 Sb Antimony  
52 Te Tellurium  
53 I Iodine  
54 Xe Xenon  
55 Cs Cesium  
56 Ba Barium  
57 La Lanthanum  
58 Ce Cerium  
59 Pr Praseodymium  
60 Nd Neodymium  
61 Pm Promethium  
62 Sm Samarium  
63 Eu Europium  
64 Gd Gadolinium  
65 Tb Terbium  
66 Dy Dysprosium  
67 Ho Holmium  
68 Er Erbium  
69 Tm Thulium  
70 Yb Ytterbium  
71 Lu Lutetium  
72 Hf Hafnium  
73 Ta Tantalum  
74 W Tungsten  
75 Re Rhenium  
76 Os Osmium  
77 Ir Iridium  
78 Pt Platinum  
79 Au Gold  
80 Hg Mercury  
81 Tl Thallium  
82 Pb Lead  
83 Bi Bismuth  
84 Po Polonium  
85 At Astatine  
86 Rn Radon  
87 Fr Francium  
88 Ra Radium  
89 Ac Actinium  
90 Th Thorium  
91 Pa Protactinium  
92 U Uranium  
93 Np Neptunium  
94 Pu Plutonium  
95 Am Americium  
96 Cm Curium  
97 Bk Berkelium  
98 Cf Californium  
99 Es Einsteinium  
100 Fm Fermium  
101 Md Mendelevium  
102 No Nobelium  
103 Lr Lawrencium

Search  
# or Name

Table.com

“Ready? Sure?”

Whatever the situation or secret moment, enjoy everything a lot.  
Feel able to absolutely care. Expect nothing else. Keep making love.  
Family and friends matter. The world is life, fun and energy.  
Maybe hard. Or easy. Taking exactly enough is best.  
Help and talk to others. Change your mind  
and a better mood comes along...”

Meta-horoscope made from most common words in 4,000 star sign predictions

David McCandless - InformationIsBeautiful.net - data: [bit.ly/horoscoped](http://bit.ly/horoscoped)



## Caveat: Indicators ...

- Direct vs. indirect measures
- Quantitative vs. qualitative
- Objective (absolute) vs. subjective (relative)
- Dunning–Kruger effect
- Reporting unforeseen consequences
- Same message for different stakeholders
- Your analysis: Does causation equal correlation?

In the 1990s, diesels accounted for just 10% of the car fleet. By 2012, this had expanded to 50% as the government encouraged motorists to switch to the fuel to cut CO2 emissions.

This succeeded in cutting carbon but at a huge price. Diesels produced 15% less CO2 than petrol cars but four times more nitrogen dioxide (NO2) and 22 times more particulates, leading to a rapid uptick in air pollution that the government is still trying to get to grips with.

# Step 3: Use and communicate your impact

## **Proving and improving, sharing and learning**

- What you have achieved – your impacts.
- How you did it.
- What you have learnt / challenges / what went wrong.
- Internally and externally
- Learn and take action on the things that matter.

## **Tip: Serious evaluation report checklist**

- Vision / mission
- Problem or need – context.
- Overview and activities
- Outputs
- Outcomes / impact
- Performance: summing up achievements / overall evaluation

# Communicating your impact

Haringey Advisory Group on Alcohol  
ANNUAL REPORT 2008

## Haga

STORIES, ADVICE & MORE

**SUDOKU CHALLENGE**  
Turn to page 14 to play!

Your problems answered!  
**ASK GAIL** page 15

I'm so glad I made  
**THAT FIRST CALL**

**cosmic**  
Super support for  
you and your family

**Sober, and...  
QUALIFIED!**

**CYCLING TO SOBRIETY**  
Service users cover 1000k

## Services for children

The Refugee Council provides the only service to which all children who arrive alone in the UK are referred. For twenty years the Children's Section has been a one stop shop for these children, supporting them through making their asylum claim, and with homework clubs, maths and English classes, therapeutic services and social activities.

■ Our My View project supported **187** children through one to one counselling, therapeutic creative work and group activities.

■ We provided **249** children who arrived at our new reception centre in Dover with a hot shower, clean clothes and a warm meal.

*"I came in contact with the Refugee Council Children's Section on my first day in the country. I received utter kindness and care. I was only 15 years old. I will never forget the support I received. I have now graduated from university and am working as a nurse. Thank you to the Refugee Council for saving my life."*

Young girl supported by our Trafficked Girls' Project



Children across the UK send messages of welcome to refugee children

**In 2015-16, we helped 3,658 children. This is an increase of 66% from the previous year.**

Many of the children we support have witnessed the killing of loved ones, some have been forced to become child soldiers, or have been trafficked and forced into domestic servitude, sexual exploitation or other forms of forced labour. Nearly all have undergone long, lonely and terrifying journeys. Many arrive traumatised and can be targeted by criminal gangs, or placed unlawfully into adult detention centres. Our Children's Section is there for all of these children.

### In 2015-16:

■ We supported **164** children who had been trafficked.

■ Our Age Disputes project is the only project in the UK with a focus on visiting children in detention to help them demonstrate their age and secure their release from detention.

■ We supported **292** separated children with maths and English classes, a busy programme of homework clubs, as well as drama, art, and music sessions.



A child supported by the Children's Section draws their traumatic journey

### Qasim's Story

My View is one of many of the Refugee Council services available to children like Qasim. Qasim fled Ethiopia alone. After a horrific journey he arrived in the UK. He was 16 years old, alone and traumatised – experiencing severe anxiety, insomnia and flashbacks.

He came to the Refugee Council for one to one therapy sessions. As a result, Qasim's sleep dramatically improved and he ended the sessions happier, calmer and more in control of his mental wellbeing.

Thanks to the support of the Refugee Council, Qasim is thrilled to be back in college. He is working hard to build a life for himself and is looking forward to the future.

8

## The impact of long-term youth voluntary service in Europe

voluntary service can positively impact understanding between regions and has the potential to contribute towards the integration of less advantaged young people.

Economic analyses are a promising way to get a feeling for the size of the impact which voluntary service can have. Preliminary analyses of EVS show that it probably does at the very least pay for itself in terms of the value of work done in relation to the cost of the program – and may produce substantial additional value.

The main methodological weakness of the studies taken together is that the vast majority are retrospective designs which are very subjective and give very weak evidence of impact. There are very few studies which use the kind of more valid designs which are standard in social science research, i.e. comparing changes amongst service volunteers with changes in non-volunteer groups, and/or comparing pre-service scores with post-service scores. This small collection of good studies is simply too modest to be able to provide really valid answers to questions about the impact of youth voluntary service in Europe. It also means that evidence for impact in the vast majority of studies is based on the highly subjective recollections of volunteers and program officers which certainly view programs through "rose-coloured spectacles."

Although the available evidence is very encouraging, the research conducted in Europe to date on the impact of voluntary service has had neither the methodological teeth nor the mandate to really test whether voluntary service works as advertised.

A range of recommendations for programming and for research are made at the end of this review, in particular:

- Stakeholders should be aware of the extraordinary impact and future potential of voluntary service as a toolbox for social change
- Voluntary service programs should be specific about the specific changes they are trying to bring about in their volunteers and beyond, and include specific, evidence-based components in their programs which are known to lead to those changes.
- Voluntary service in Europe has a tradition of crossing borders, and by doing so contributing to the intercultural development of volunteers and of communities. But the borders between EU member states are no longer challenging enough. Voluntary service should realign itself to the new hot borders: borders between the EU and states to its south and east; borders of potential and former conflict, for example in the Balkans; and borders inside states, for example inside mainstream and minority communities.
- Voluntary service needs to adopt a culture of evidence-based practice:
  - Stop wasting money on traditional evaluation approaches which provide at best anecdotal evidence of voluntary service impact
  - Develop approaches to assess the economic impact of voluntary service
  - Develop a Europe-wide impact measurement framework (questionnaires etc.) – simple, standard, freely available and widely applicable

# Ex: Communicate your impact

Message	Segment	Channel
What is the social impact you want to talk about?  What are your key messages?	Who wants to hear about your impact?  Who are appropriate stakeholders?  Who is your audience?	How will you get to your audience?  What mechanisms, activities or channels will you use?

# Your next actions

Current SIM&R needs	Current mechanisms (KPIs & methods)	Future SIM & R needs	Areas for development / exploration	Next actions

## Some useful links

- [www.nefconsulting.com/our-services/evaluation-impact-assessment/prove-and-improve-toolkits](http://www.nefconsulting.com/our-services/evaluation-impact-assessment/prove-and-improve-toolkits), Prove and Improve (taken into NEF) is a good summary of mainstream tools
- <https://impactsupport.org> Impact management programme (diagnostic)
- [www.redochre.org.uk/resources/publications-and-reports/](http://www.redochre.org.uk/resources/publications-and-reports/)
- [www.thinknpc.org/resource-hub](http://www.thinknpc.org/resource-hub) for useful resources
- [www.socialvalueuk.org/report-database](http://www.socialvalueuk.org/report-database) (formerly SROI Network) for reports
- [www.socialvaluehub.org.uk/resources](http://www.socialvaluehub.org.uk/resources) for useful resources, specifically focused on the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012



ANY  
QUESTIONS  
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