

IMPACT MEASUREMENT

An illustration featuring three green apples, each with a brown stem and a single green leaf. The apples are placed on two blue kitchen scales. The scale on the left holds one apple, while the scale on the right holds two apples. Each scale has a white circular dial with a black needle. The entire scene is set against a light blue background, which is framed by a larger, darker blue semi-circular border at the top.

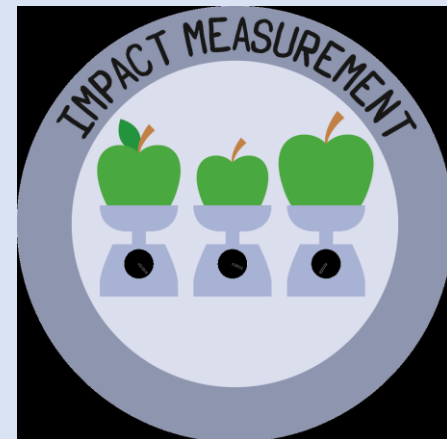
Impact Measurement for Small Charities

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This session will help you to...

- Evidence the need for and effectiveness of your organisation's work
- Change things as a result and better support your organisational sustainability
- Improve your reporting



Part 1. Understanding need

Needs change, situations change,
communities change.

If you want to be sustainable, so must you.



Exploring the need

- Identify the situation, problem or starting point*
- Review it over time
- Adapt your services in response

**If you work in an asset-based way, the 'need' might be an aspiration, not a 'problem'.*

Being realistic

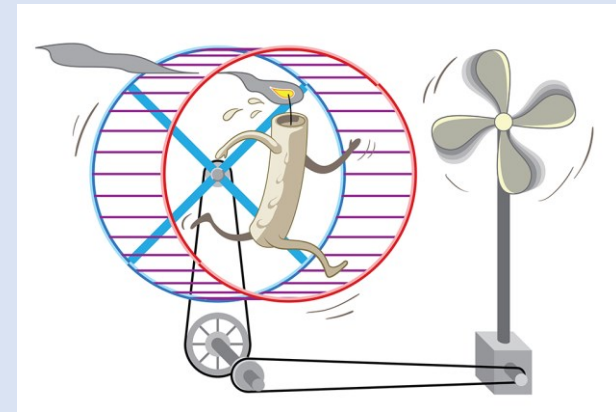
When it comes to impact (and measurement), you must be clear on:

- The needs *your* work can address directly
- The difference *your* work can make

e.g. a six-week healthy eating class is not likely to reduce obesity. But it could:

Increase confidence with cooking healthily

Improve ability to make informed choices



Funding & needs assessment

Funders & commissioners want convincing evidence of need

- In the short term, this informs which projects to fund.

Long term, *it's what they pay for:*

- Understanding what works
- Identifying emerging needs
- Adapting funding programmes to match.



Self assessment

Use the indicators
from the Lasting
Difference toolkit
to reflect on

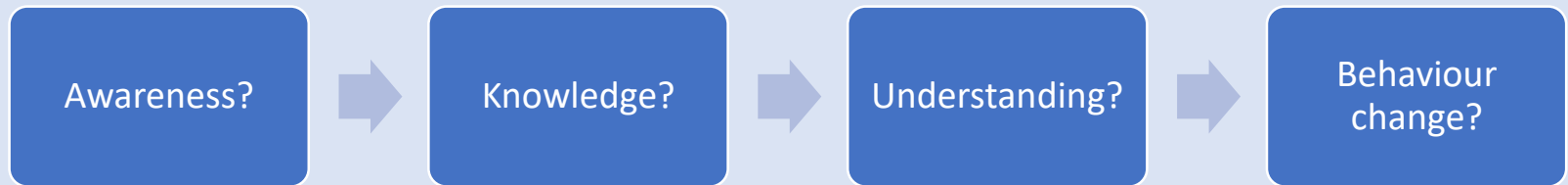
Part 1: Needs

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2. Understanding effectiveness - outcomes

- Long term change takes time, but you can evidence smaller changes along the way. For example...



- Focus less on 'attribution' and more on 'contribution' by setting realistic outcomes.
- Outcomes are the **change or difference** that 'come out' of **your work**.

Setting realistic outcomes

1. Start with the 'need':

- *What is the problem, need or situation that you are trying to address? Your outcomes should reflect that. For example:*

Need – There is a lack of good information for carers, so they are not well informed about their rights.

Outcomes:

- Better information for carers
- Carers are better informed about their rights

Setting realistic outcomes



2. *Identify* **Who is changing, what is changing and how is it changing?**

For example:

- Carers' (who) access to information and support (what) is improved (how).
- Carers (who) are better (how) informed about their rights (what).

Setting realistic outcomes

3. Ask **So what?**

For each of your current activities, ask
What comes out of it?

For example: The carers information service
produces an online benefits checker for carers

So what?

- So...Carers (who) are better (how) informed about their rights (what).



Understanding effectiveness - indicators

- Be clear on what you are trying to achieve and therefore measure:
 - 3-5 outcomes are usually right
- 2-3 indicators for each outcome will help avoid the most common evaluation pitfalls.
- To help set specific, measurable indicators ask *‘What would the outcome look like in practice?’*.

For example...



Understanding effectiveness - indicators

Indicators are your friends! They help you to plan, evaluate, make sense of data, and structure reports.

- They help you triangulate – gathering data from different sources.
- This reduces ‘evaluation fatigue’ - and strengthens the credibility of your evidence.

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Part 2: Effectiveness

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3. Learning from evaluation: improvement and sustainability

Your history defines you, but it shouldn't hold you back.

- Be clear about what you need to sustain:
 - Your mission, vision & values will rarely change.
 - Your outcomes may change every 3-5 years. (Because they reflect changing needs).

Analysis – making sense of information

- Short reports take longer to write.
- Save time by doing analysis first.
- Set aside time.
- Involve colleagues.
- For structure and brevity, ask yourself 'what', 'so what', 'what then?'.

For example...

Success...or failure?

What: 'This year we increased our social media following by 50%'.

So what: 'This is significantly more than our target of 25%, helping us to reach carers easily and affordably'.

What then: 'We will continue using social media in 2020 and measure how much it improves awareness of carers' rights'

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Part 3: Learning & improvement

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Be clear on the story you want to tell:

- What was the *need, context* or *starting point*?
- What happened along the way (including challenges)?
- What difference was made?
- What was learned?
- What will be done differently in future?

Self assessment

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Part 4: Reporting

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