

Measuring Social Impact



What is Social Impact?

- A common way to think about social impact, is to consider it as the change that happens to people as a result of an action or activity.
- All social enterprises need to evidence the impact that they are making, for several different reasons.
- Evaluation is often left to the last minute and receives limited attention, possibly because many social entrepreneurs act from the heart and are focused on the task in hand rather than the paperwork associated with measuring impact!

Why it is important to measure?

Meeting Organisational Goals

If an organisation does not measure its progress towards its social or environmental goal, how will it know it is succeeding? Social impact measurement is therefore an important management tool, helping to gauge effectiveness and progress.

Beneficiaries

An organisation which regularly measures its impact by consulting with its clients can adjust its methodologies to ensure maximum impact. The Client will benefit from an organisation which targets its resources effectively and efficiently.

Motivational for Employees and Volunteers

Without adequate feedback it is much harder for the teams involved in delivering a service or running an enterprise to maintain motivation and enthusiasm. Regular updates on the difference they are making can provide a huge incentive for continued commitment to their role.

Funders/Investors

- Whether an organisation raises finance through sales of products and services, loans, or public sector contracts, it has to be able to evidence its social or environmental impact to these stakeholders.
- Increasingly funders are asking for clear evidence of impact before proceeding with a funding application or contract tender, as well as requiring regular updates throughout the period of their involvement.
- Social impact measurement is however not an exact science. There are numerous methodologies.
- Social Enterprise NI holds a position on the Procurement Board to represent the sectors needs and to ensure there is a voice for the sector. This will also provide a platform to continually press for greater recognition of social value and impact.



Social Enterprise NI

EMPOWERING PROFIT WITH PURPOSE, INSPIRING LASTING IMPACT