SHARED MEASUREMENT

Rethinking Impact

GENEVIEVE MAITLAND HUDSON,
TRIS LUMLEY & BETHIA MCNEIL

A DISCUSSION PAPER

OSCA

OSCA is a consultancy specialising in three core areas: social impact measurement, organisational change and leadership development. Through these specialisms we aim to increase the positive social impact of our institutions. We believe that too many of our organisations, from government departments to corporations and charities are less capable than they could be at measuring and accounting for the impact they have on society, positive and negative. We support those organisations to improve how they work with people: staff, customers, clients and the general public, and to make better use of their data in analysing their impact.

NPC is a charity think tank and consultancy which occupies a unique position at the nexus between charities and funders, helping them achieve the greatest impact. This understanding of both sides of the funding equation is reflected in the variety of skills and knowledge of our people, and their backgrounds in charities and the public and private sector.

At NPC, we bring shared values and different skills to both charities and funders. By helping them use their resources more effectively, by inspiring through new thinking and by prioritising impact, we are transforming the sector.

CENTRE FOR YOUTH IMPACT is a centre for evidence, capacity building and practice development with a mission to increase the use of high quality evidence in the design, delivery, evaluation, funding and commissioning of youth work and services for young people. The Centre is a partnership initiative of the National Council for Voluntary Youth Services (NCVYS) and Project Oracle.

We want to develop the Centre as the youth sector's space where providers, funders, commissioners, policy makers and researchers come together to discuss, generate, validate and reflect on evidence of the impact that good youth work and services for young people have on their lives.

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WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO MEASURE SOCIAL IMPACT?

There is something approaching agreement in the wider social sector – political, charitable and business – that measuring social impact is a good idea. At a relatively high level of abstraction it's a good idea on which people of markedly different views can agree. At that level of abstraction social impact is the fairly neutral view that organisational endeavours of whatever kind (charitable and commercial), and some sorts of financial investment, should stimulate positive social outcomes and minimise negative ones. It is also the view that this should be considered important in a similar – if not quite the same – way as productivity and growth and, perhaps, sustainability. Measurement then provides the means of testing whether or not this good thing is happening.

That bit is – just about – fine. It all gets more complicated when you do two things:

1. Explore what you mean by positive social outcomes
2. Try and measure them

These are both hurdles that unfortunately come up pretty quickly following any initial agreement. Taking them in that order then:

1. WHAT ARE POSITIVE SOCIAL OUTCOMES?

This question is difficult to answer for one very good reason: philosophy. Questions of measurement in social programmes often fall into the philosophical trap of failing to distinguish between beliefs (deontology) and consequences (teleology). Certain sorts of issues are taken up: health inequalities, recidivism, teenage pregnancy or whatever, and presented as necessary problems to be tackled as part of social programmes. The immediate reason for choosing these problems for commissioners is often financial; they're costing somebody, usually the government (but sometimes also businesses, as for instance in the case of skills deficiencies), money.

For the third sector – and, let's be fair, sometimes also commissioners – it is not so much money as need that provides the immediate spur to action, within a given conception of the good.

A fundamental difficulty can arise if, at this stage, the background isn't properly explored and the definition of success set out. The reasons for tackling problems can be treated as somehow self-evident and compatible each with the others (on the grounds that they all cost money or are based on a visible need), but the theory within which this is the case is not fleshed out. This means that further down the line you inevitably hit all kinds of problems designing and applying methods for addressing these issues or sets of issues when policy-makers, funders, practitioners and business people who agree at an abstract level find that they disagree very strongly on the detail. They haven't signed up to the same vision of the good before being enrolled into some sort of joint venture together to achieve it.

The case of the impact measurement of youth work outlined in this report by Bethia McNeil provides a very clear example of this kind of tension. It shows a conflict between beliefs, in this case about adolescence and the social, cultural and psychological support to which those at this stage of life should have access, and consequences, the ends of this support. For many youth work practitioners an entirely appropriate end is the provision of high quality support, there is no further string of appropriate consequences incumbent on the young people who access the service. A commissioner would not tend to agree, and would wish to see a more concrete set of defined outcomes, such as higher rates of employment amongst 18-24 year olds. The first is working on deontological principles, the second on consequentialist outcomes. An unhelpful dialogue all too easily ensues.

2. HOW DO YOU MEASURE OUTCOMES?

Doing a good job of measurement is going to depend on which of these two things you are trying to measure. Put simply: belief-based practice is more readily measured by qualitative feedback systems and consequentialist outcomes more readily measured by 'objective' experimental and quasi-experimental studies.

This is for fairly straightforward reasons: belief-based support is openly evangelical. It is based on sharing, or coming to share, a vision of the good life as conceived – however loosely – by the programme organisers. Assessing satisfaction with the experience of support is therefore an entirely legitimate means of measuring its success. The ambitious end of this measurement uses coded forms of systematic storytelling, the less ambitious end falls back on short quotes from satisfied participants.

Those who advocate consequentialist outcomes by contrast may be neutral as to the views or satisfaction of participants in any given programme. What is important is a specific change that has a visible, empirical trace, rather than user preference satisfaction. This makes standardised measurement systems attractive to consequentialists. It is important to them to collect observable information, analyse it robustly and disseminate the findings in ways that optimize decision-making across competing budget heads.

The ambitious end of consequentialist measurement of social impact draws on medical paradigms and on the potential for global dissemination of outcome findings that comes from web-based technologies. This is understandable given the emphasis here on comparability. The less ambitious end is a hotchpotch of approaches that are more or less coherent and not necessarily comparable at all.

These kinds of distinctions between aims are important, not merely technical. They determine a great deal, or should determine a great deal, about a programme's use of measurement and our understanding of what that measurement can tell us. They should help us to think through what we want to know from shared measurement, and where standardised tools are most useful. This picks up on Tris Lumley's piece in this report. Shared outcomes will determine the take up of standardised tools for measurement. In addition to suggesting that those outcomes should be practical and useful to delivery organisations and defined from the ground up, it is of equal importance that they should not put undue strain on the belief systems that drive so much excellent programme delivery.

The greatest potential for comparability lies in consequentialist outcomes measurement. This merits far greater development. While promoting that approach, however, we need always to remember what it does not, and will never, tell us.

Genevieve Maitland Hudson

IMPACT – WHOSE GAME ARE WE PLAYING?

Impact.

It's the change we create, the difference between the world without us in it, and the world with. As charities, impact helps us understand our role, our value, our contribution – individually and collectively. It's the reason most of us do what we do – the desire to make a difference.

That's probably where consensus ends, and the politics of difference begins. Talking about impact is both personal and political. It's deeply rooted in our vision for the future, and the world we live in.

Exploring the impact of youth work – and youth services more generally – has been the most contentious, hotly debated and provocative area in which I've ever worked. But why? What is it about impact that provokes these responses?

There are a number of features of the impact and evidence debate that are critical in shaping the youth sector's relationship with it – and I'd suggest that changing this relationship with impact is vital, if we are to ever make progress in developing shared approaches.

1. The first feature of the impact debate is our current context. The youth sector faces a funding crisis, and has an insecure legislative base. We are seeing the large scale dismantling of local authority youth services, and the proliferation of new (and untested) models of delivery. We have significant (in some cases increasing to stifling) pressure on the voluntary sector, and a consequential divergence in focus and direction that means that talking about one 'youth sector' is up for debate. What does that mean any more?

   This disjunction with history creates a sense of insecurity. Financial uncertainty and changing policy priorities only exacerbate the feeling that the future of youth work is precarious. In this context of anxiety and uncertainty, the concept of impact has gained a foothold as a possible means of rebuilding confidence.

   In November 2013, Nick Hurd, the then Minister for Civil Society, said:

   "Money has flown out of the system in a big way. If you believe it is valuable it should be hard to cut. But it's too easy. How much is your value recognised? And how can the sector get better at measuring and demonstrating its value? I want to work with the sector to prove how good it is."

   Just last month, Rob Wilson, the current Minister for Civil Society, said that "evaluating the beneficial impact of youth services can help persuade authorities to spend more money on youth work".

   Could it really be that simple? There's a seductively compelling message in there – a shared understanding that youth work is valuable but that value is hidden; we need to show it (and we can help you do that). The recognition of value will turn the financial tide.

That message, though attractive, is false. It ignores the broader tensions and makes false promises about funding that is most unlikely to materialise in the current economic climate.

2. This brings us to a second feature of this debate: youth workers remain unconvinced.

From the polite to the less polite, from "unsure of relevance" to "certain that it's anathema and fatally undermining to youth work", this is a seriously contested space, with conflicting values.

There is no consensus, no agreement on how we might even define impact in youth work let alone measure it, or whose impact we're even talking about. That brings us back to the loss of historical confidence and professional standing. The youth sector is embattled, its funding dwindling, in that context "evidencing impact" can feel more like a threat than a promise. The relationship here is quite fraught, with many youth workers preferring not to engage with the impact agenda at all. This is not a matter of failing to define the rules of the game; it's opting out of the game altogether, since it's one they never asked to play.

3. The third feature of the debate is active resistance.

Impact is a hot topic. The suggestion is that effective articulation of impact can make organisations and their projects more sustainable, and can unlock funding, and favour. But for many, 'impact' is intimately connected to 'the market'. Impact itself becomes another commodity that is traded in the competition for increasingly scarce resources. It becomes a narrative for the reduction in services, and the move away from universal provision towards that which is targeted and outcomes-led. Impact in this understanding is not about evidence at all. It is purely and simply about competition.
That makes resistance to measurement a matter of political principle.

4. Even for those who are willing to consider the measurement of impact, there is a fourth feature: thinking about impact in youth services is hard.

There's no real agreement about what 'good' looks like when it comes to impact measurement, particularly when one introduces the concepts of proportionality, appropriateness and rigour. And far too often, the debate about impact is separate to the debate about quality.

There's no consensus on how to – or even if it's really possible to – measure impact on either the personal and the social, or benefits at a community level.

Much of the advice and support to providers conflates the evaluation of programmes with the evaluation of process.

Given these four features, we need to recognise that context for measurement in the youth sector, even more so that which is shared, is fraught and that much of the distrust is legitimate. The sense of historical discontinuity coupled with doubt from some and resistance from others sharpens the debate to cutting point. Those of us who are persuaded need to contend with those realities, understand our task and take note of the present limitations.

We need to recognise where the focus is now: on articulating impact – demonstrating, proving, defending. These have come to be the rules of the game. What we focus on far less often is understanding impact – is what I do making any difference? What is that difference and why does it matter? To whom? And why? And how can I best make that difference? And if I can't articulate that difference, should I go ahead and do it anyway?

Impact has become part of a defensive strategy, not a learning or development strategy. The incentives for sharing are weak and confused, and the process for getting all the 'players' aligned is unclear. This is the current relationship with impact – an externally imposed game that must be played, with an implicit threat and an as yet unrealised benefit, the existence of which everyone's beginning to doubt. So the impact agenda is managed away, rather than held close. Everything about the way that the youth sector, and youth work in particular, engages with impact is shaped by this relationship.

We don't currently have an answer about how to capture long-term impact, or how to address causation in a non-medical model – or even whether we should try to.

We don't know what scale of impact we should be looking for, or when it might become apparent.

There's significant disagreement on what constitutes evidence, particularly 'good' evidence.

And there's a risk here that we just look for the easiest way to tick the box, to meet the defensive requirements and give an appearance of playing the game. The monitoring of outcomes comes into its own here. Outcomes – though far from unquestioningly accepted – have become the softer side of impact for the youth sector, and have been the focus of a great deal of time and attention in the production of frameworks and self-assessment tools. The vast majority of impact 'measurement' practice in the youth sector can be reduced to young people completing in-house questionnaires at the end of projects confirming that they feel more confident now than they did when they arrived.

So, it's no surprise that the youth sector has a difficult relationship with impact. For some, this is a game that has to be played, but played with cynicism and self-interest. For others, this is an agenda to keep at arm's length, or even ignore – it is not part of the DNA of practice or organisational culture. For others, this is an assault on youth work and youth services that needs to be confronted and resisted.

If this relationship continues, we risk never really understanding the impact of youth work and youth services today. We may become expert PR people, highly skilled fundraisers – some of us already are. We're likely to become utterly cynical about the value of evidence and impact. We'll contribute to an industry that can do quite a bit for the profile of individual organisations but less for youth work as collective practice. Fundamentally, we'll do little to advance our understanding about what makes a difference in the lives of young people and why, and critically – how, we can do more of it. If we are committed to sharing the lessons of measurement, this is the first one we need to articulate, then we need to start doing a lot better.

Bethia Mcneil

IMPACT – REMEMBERING WHY WE MEASURE

NPC (New Philanthropy Capital) has championed impact measurement since it was founded in 2001, to help philanthropists be more effective in their giving by providing them with independent research and advice to highlight effective strategies and organisations. Finding that charities were struggling to articulate their impact, we developed consultancy services to help them get to grips with measuring progress towards their goals, and embedding approaches that allowed them to plan, manage, measure and communicate their impact.

Since then, we have seen a significant growth in interest and activity around measuring impact. Our 2012 research found that three quarters of charities said they were investing more in impact measurement than five years ago, and that they found impact measurement useful to help them understand, manage and improve the work they did.

Yet even with this progress there have been signs that impact measurement, in its current typical form, is not helping the charity sector make the progress that it could, or perhaps needs to. Our research found that impact measurement was still driven predominantly by a desire to satisfy funders' requirements, rather than to learn about and improve services. If we care about strengthening organisations so they are better able to improve their work, this should be a concern.

If learning and improvement are our goals, we can focus on some key questions that the leaders and boards of any charity should want to answer. Are we doing better than we were last year? How can we do better next year? Are we doing better than our peers (or competitors)? Are we focusing on the right (most effective) things? These are not esoteric or technical questions—these are questions that should be at the heart of every organisation's governance, strategy and management.

Yet it turns out that we are not doing so well, as a sector, on answering these critical questions. Evaluation is often seen as a one-off exercise (particularly if driven by funders) so doesn't become embedded in an organisation; doesn't become a tool for managing performance year on year. In fact here we need to make a number of distinctions within the overall practice called 'impact measurement'—we can certainly separate performance management (using data in as near to real-time as possible to gain insights, adjust programmes, maintain quality) and impact evaluation (using data gathered over a period of time to analyse and assess the results produced).

And when it comes to comparing ourselves with other organisations, we generally find ourselves sorely lacking in our ability even to start answering the questions. Charities (almost without exception) describe themselves as uniquely well-placed to deliver results—it is the basis of their funding applications and to an extent their very identity. But because we have no common frame of reference, it is impossible to establish whether or not they are unique or identical—we can't judge their results against each other. NPC's 2012 research found that a maximum of 15% of organisations were using any kind of standardised measurement tool—a prerequisite if we are to be able to compare our results and start to explore why they might differ. And the likelihood of being able to compare two organisations on the same basis starts to become vanishingly small.

What about funders' and investors' roles in this picture? Surely they seek out effective organisations and projects, and therefore want to be able to compare the results of the different applicants they might fund? It turns out that this is almost never the case. If we look at the social investment market for example, we might expect there to be the greatest interest in standardised measurement frameworks. Social investment is defined by a focus on measurable (and measured) impact. And the organisations involved have more than a passing familiarity with comparative data on the financial side. It stands to reason that investors will be looking for the best social returns as well as the best financial returns, and for a correlation of the two.

Yet if we look across the social investment market in the UK, or the impact investment market globally, we find no evidence that investors are able to, or are even working towards, standardised measurement of social impact. There are agreed sets of metrics, for sure, on the whole at the level only of outputs. There is no investor out there looking at social impact data alongside financial data and making investment decisions on the basis of comparative data on both sides. Not yet, anyway.

We could perhaps get to standardised measurement by simply dictating from the top down what needs to be measured. But what we've learned from governments' attempts to do this, and our own growing experience of measurement in the charity sector, is that for measurement to be meaningful and valuable, it needs to make sense at the frontline—at the level of the people who are actually delivering services. It needs to facilitate learning, not get in the way of service delivery, and most of all be practical. The only way to design measurement frameworks that meet these requirements is to start at the frontline. Develop consensus on key outcomes within a particular field (domestic violence for example), and then find measurement tools that reliably, robustly and efficiently gather the data that's needed. When that bottom-up process has reached its conclusion, then we need to ensure that funders, investors, commissioners and policymakers will use the data that's produced—will act on it, make funding decisions based on it, in short respond to it.

For some funders this will never be on the table. They want to do their own thing. Have their own personality. Have the flexibility to decide what to fund without constraints on their freedom.

But for those of us that think that the charity sector, philanthropy and social investment should add up to more, this isn't good enough. If we're supposed to achieve lasting social change, it can't be good enough to have no idea whether the organisations we're running, funding or investing in are best in class or worst. We have to develop shared frameworks that allow us to compare, to learn from each other, and to learn as a field. We'll never have common frameworks across the whole social sector—it's ludicrous to suggest that improving mental health can be measured with the same tools as increasing young people's employability. But within these fields, if we don't work towards and eventually achieve consistency, what we're saying is that our organisations are more important than our results. That we're more important than the people we're supposed to be here to serve.

Tris Lumley

BENCHMARKING – MEASURING FEATURES AS WELL AS OUTCOMES

I recently built a dataset on the Troubled Families programmes in England and Wales using an indigestible mix of published government data and Freedom of Information requests.

The underlying reason for doing this was a niggling feeling that the recent focus on all things innovative has left us with social programmes that we know mainly through their differences, to such a point that we have become unwilling to think about their commonalities.

It sometimes looks rather like the special sauce of the delivery organisation has become much more important than the substantive meat of delivery that it covers, however delectably. It's the sauce that sells. The meat is just so much dead animal, but the sauce can be branded and sold profitably to donors, celebrities and the media. Kids Company, to name a recent example of this approach, had a very solid run of sales of its high sugar special sauce to the point that people stopped asking what kind of meat it was covering, and whether it might possibly be on the turn.

I wanted to get back to the meat, and to see whether social programmes were serving up the same kind of flesh, and whether we could judge its quality sauce-free.

There is an ongoing argument amongst many within the broader social sector about what success might look like and how we can be sure we've seen it in a way that takes us beyond the evidence of conviction. At the risk of caricaturing a more nuanced range of views, this part of it can look – broadly – something like this: commissioners in one corner aiming for standardization of measurement based on outcomes, and the voluntary sector in the other resisting the introduction of comparable data as if their survival depended on it.

This is a complex area, and some suggested approaches certainly look surprising. The SE Ratio and Impact Genome are top of the list of measurement approaches whose ambition oversteps their potential usefulness and wildly overshoots their theoretical foundations.

There are, though, good reasons to spend a bit of time and energy on the common traits of social programmes rather than the differences. This need not lead us to the point of deciding that every single programme creates social value in exactly the same directly comparable way. Nor does it imply that this information can be captured in a live feed that should direct investment and procurement in the same way as a stock exchange.

There is a middle ground.

The fact is that despite rhetorical flourishes around USP, most social programmes do share common features. This is not a bad thing. It's a basic point about providing support to those who need it. There are only so many ways of doing that. To give an example, we might think of relational support and how this can be provided.

Broadly speaking there are four ways in which to provide support through established relationships:

1. One-to-one (1:1) dedicated support
2. Group support
3. Remote support with a dedicated worker via phone or internet
4. Mixed support offering a combination of these things

Within these basic premises are many different kinds of possible combinations. 1:1 support may be provided by professionals or by volunteers. It may be regular or occasional, intensive or informal. It may lead to specific outcomes such as qualifications, or may be open-ended. Assessing these particular kinds of combinations, however, is more effective if we know something about the basics – for instance how many hours of support are being provided through 1:1 programmes, on average. The Troubled Families calculations were eye-opening in this regard.

This kind of information could be descriptive in the first instance and draw on the wealth of experience of practitioners. This would be valuable not least because it is knowing about these kinds of parameters that would allow us to compare across different providers more fairly and find out – for instance – whether some programmes are more time-intensive than others. It would also help to surface much valuable knowledge that is currently lost between different delivery organisations, and that could usefully feed into the design of new interventions. It would also provide important context for any shared measurement of outcomes.

Caseload, a benchmark measure that I used to analyse the Troubled Families data, might be a good place to start.

The Family Nurse Partnership provides relatively detailed information on caseload. FNP nurses manage an average caseload of 25 cases. That finding is echoed by the 2012 Community Care survey of social work which found an average caseload of 25 amongst adult services social workers and 17 in children's services, based on 925 social workers surveyed. A more recent Unison survey from April 2014 found that on any one day social workers were, on average, responsible for 22 cases.

This is useful information that all 1:1 support programmes should be able to access and feed into.

We could – and I would argue, should – do better at using shared benchmarks of this kind as a means of internal appraisal and learning, and of external reporting. This would help organisations to learn from each other. It would also provide much better baselines for realistic support that would discourage the inflation of programme numbers, a common problem when detailed and testable information is lacking. Finally, it would inform the public about the work of social programmes, in itself a far from negligible outcome.

Genevieve Maitland Hudson

INTRODUCTION TO GLOSSARY

The next section sets out some interesting examples of how social impact is currently being encouraged, disseminated, measured and benchmarked. It is not intended to be exhaustive. Each example has a brief overview and each is assessed according to two parameters: comparability and reach.

This list gives a sense of both the flurry of activity in social impact measurement, its eclectic nature and the potential of the current range of work being developed.

Most of these examples come from the UK, with a couple of US approaches that show more well-developed efforts towards technological standardisation.

GLOSSARY

Approach	Legislation
Example	The Social Value Act
Description	Legislation is a good way to generalise practices by imposing standards, thresholds, targets etc. The Social Value Act asks companies bidding for services contracts over the value of £173k to include social value as one of the parameters in their initial bid. There is some reason to believe that this has encouraged more conscious effort to include consideration of social impact within contract tenders, but this evidence is mixed. More cynical commentators suggest that the act is a new market category to distinguish between equally viable bidders.
Comparability	There is comparability here in the sense that this is used to compare bidders, but the terms of that comparison are not based on standardised measures.
Reach	Specifically geared at UK services contracts over a given value.

Approach	Self-Improvement
Example	NPC and Project Oracle
Description	Both NPC and Project Oracle work on the basis of encouraging 'better' forms of measurement through voluntary efforts by charities and social enterprises delivering services. NPC – focus on 'theory of change' workshops to encourage charitable organisations and social enterprises to work out what difference their services make to the lives of those who access them. Project Oracle offers a breakdown of the paradigmatic medical model of research and encourages youth sector organisations to rate themselves on a spectrum of 'theory of change' up to RCT. This is assessed purely at the point of intention to act. There is no comparable assessment of any findings.
Comparability	Attempt to standardise using means rather than outcomes.
Reach	Charities and social enterprises only. Project Oracle is limited to youth services in London.

GLOSSARY

Approach	Reporting: CSR and the Triple Bottom Line
Example	Institute of Management Accountants integrated reporting
Description	Reporting guidelines are a legislative/regulatory means of changing business approaches towards social impact.
Comparability	Reporting is a standardising practice, but this does not necessarily mean that the data reported are comparable. They are usually published in PDF causing problems for technical reading and there are definitional difficulties between what different companies report under different headings.
Reach	UK public companies

Approach	Certification
Example	B Corporations
Description	One step further on from reporting guidelines – restrictive system with some odd side-effects. A good example of how globalising a system can have unexpected consequences, e.g. stipulations on private health insurance borrowed from the US may be problematic in the UK which has a public health service that could be destabilised by the increase of the private health insurance market.
Comparability	Could have standardising effects on willing companies.
Reach	Limited to accredited members.

Approach	Indexing
Example	Charity Navigator
Description	This is a good example of tech based standardised measuring, but its potential is limited by a reliance on narrow categories for audit, namely financial health and organisational probity.
Comparability	There is the potential here for highly standardising effects within the range of organisations audited according to the CN criteria with CN 3.0 offering a more rigorous set of strictures and results analysis.
Reach	Potentially wide given that charitable organisations can be audited without seeking permission. Currently covers around 80% of US philanthropic turnover.

GLOSSARY

Approach	Self-Improvement and Sanction
Example	Funding Guidelines
Description	Involves tying up the money donated to charities according to specific sets of regulations.
Comparability	Could have standardising intentions perhaps, but not systematically the case and standards not usually shared between funders.
Reach	Only applies charities and social enterprises and here unevenly.

Approach	Regulation
Example	Commissioning
Description	As with philanthropic funders but public funding tied up through procurement rules.
Comparability	More likely to standardise than funders if only because of the wider reach.
Reach	Potentially broad reach across all outsourced public service delivery.

Approach	Sectoral Encouragement
Example	Social Enterprise Incubation
Description	This involves using business ideologies and investment to stimulate social impact work. There is a gap in the UK between rhetoric and reality and currently no evidence that there is anything very much going on in the various highly funded organisations that are supposedly scaling socially impactful interventions.
Comparability	Not much evidence of standardising of indicators of measurement though much standardising of language.
Reach	Narrow reach.

GLOSSARY

Approach	Investment
Example	Social Impact Bonds
Description	Government backed scheme to use investment to support social impact in the form of specific projects with measurable benefits achieved over a set period e.g. reducing recidivism in Peterborough.
Comparability	Standardised approach to measurement, no specific theory within which different types of SIB would be comparable one with another aside from cost.
Reach	Currently limited.

Approach	User/Customer Voice
Example	Keystone Accountability and Feedback Labs
Description	Move to bring customer feedback into the normal practice of any organisation delivering frontline services or otherwise intending to create social value.
Comparability	Keystone have developed a standardised system intended to be usable by any organisation. Comparability will depend on the transparent publication of data by organisations. Additionally theoretical difficulties with ordinal Likert scale data being used for comparable statistical calculations.
Reach	Potentially wide

Approach	SafeLives' Insight Platform
Description	Outcomes measurement programme, specifically designed for specialist domestic abuse services supporting adults and/or children who have experienced domestic abuse. Gathering data to enable organisation to understand who is accessing their service and identify gaps, to tailor interventions and support and to evidence impact. Frontline practitioners collect information about the people they support and submit it to SafeLives for analysis using online forms.
Comparability	Unclear, reports include 'narrative, tables and graphs' to accompany data. May have potential to be standardized within the field.
Reach	Potential to standardise an approach across a field of social programming.

Approach	PerformWell in US
Description	Provides information, analyses, and perspectives to public and private decision makers. Deepens citizens' understanding of the issues and trade-offs that policy makers face. Regular, ongoing performance measurement, reporting, analysis, and programme modification. Performance measures assess (a) services and (b) outcomes. Measuring against benchmarks.
Comparability	Shared data could be comparable and encourages use of validated tools across programmes.
Reach	Potentially wide reach.

Approach	NPC's JET Framework
Description	Journey to Employment: Providing impact measurement/evidence for charities working to help young people into employment. Shared measurement system. Framework of 7 identified factors that contribute to successful job outcomes for young people. Provision of tools and indicators covering these aspects.
Comparability	Shared data and approach so could standardise with sufficient take up.
Reach	Potential to standardise an approach across a field of social programming.

Approach	iLearning system at Algorhythm
Description	Bespoke iLearning systems based on organisation specifics and choice of outcome metrics. Beneficiary survey-based, 'iLearning system' applies analytics and provides series of insights to survey data. 'Analytics engine' becomes 'smarter' as organisations share insights.
Comparability	Shared data (builds a 'shared learning community') built on basis of same tools so could achieve comparable data with sufficient take up and use.
Reach	Main focus currently on youth development. Potential to standardise an approach across a field of social programming.

AUTHOR BIOGRAPHIES

GENEVIEVE MAITLAND HUDSON is a researcher, evaluator and project designer. For the last six years she has worked with public, private and third sector organisations to design programmes that draw on a robust evidence base and demonstrate their effectiveness using appropriate metrics and methodologies. She leads Osca's research work, working on projects in health, education and organisational change and often developing new research methods to suit different people and different styles of delivery.

Gen started her career in academia with a doctorate in political philosophy. She has lectured on social research methodologies and evaluation at the Ecole Normale Supérieure in Paris and Birkbeck College London. She was formerly Head of Social Impact at The U, a social venture developed by the Young Foundation, and founder and director of GLUE, a social enterprise working with young people excluded from school. Before joining the Young Foundation, she worked at the youth charity Kids Company.

TRIS LUMLEY leads NPC's development of new strategies, partnerships and initiatives to help transform the social sector. He also leads NPC's fundraising activity to support research and thought leadership. Working with partners both in the UK and internationally, Tris focuses on both the demand and supply sides of innovation around social impact. His particular interest areas are leadership and culture, as well as frameworks and approaches that put impact at the heart of the social sector, including shared measurement, open data and systems thinking.

Tris helped initiate, and now coordinates, the Inspiring Impact programme which aims to embed impact measurement across the UK charity sector by 2022. He is also engaged in international efforts to advance an impact focus in the social sector as a trustee of the Social Impact Analysts Association, as a member of the EU GECES subgroup on impact measurement in social enterprise, the Leap of Reason Ambassadors Community and the Alliance for Effective Social Investing, and as a speaker at international conferences in Europe, Australia and the U.S.

Tris has led numerous research projects on subjects including impact measurement, community organisations, social campaigning, refugees, child abuse and older people. Before joining NPC in 2004, he worked in market research and management consulting.

BETHIA MCNEIL is Director of the Centre for Youth Impact, a role she has held since September 2014. Bethia has over ten years' experience of supporting organisations that work with and for young people, particularly in policy and research, evaluation, evidence and service design. She has worked at the Dartington Social Research Unit, the Young Foundation, the National Youth Agency and NIACE. Bethia is an accredited coach and facilitator, and has worked as a teacher and trainer in Further and Higher Education, and in the voluntary sector. She is a 2012 Clore Fellow.

Shared Measurement – Rethinking Impact is a short collection of essays raising questions about why and how we measure social programmes and share the results of that work.

Genevieve Maitland Hudson is Director of Research at Osca.
Tris Lumley is Director of Development at NPC
Bethia McNeil is the Director of the Centre for Youth Impact

Osca is a social impact consultancy.

OSCA.CO @OSCAGENCY +44(0)20 7125 0268