

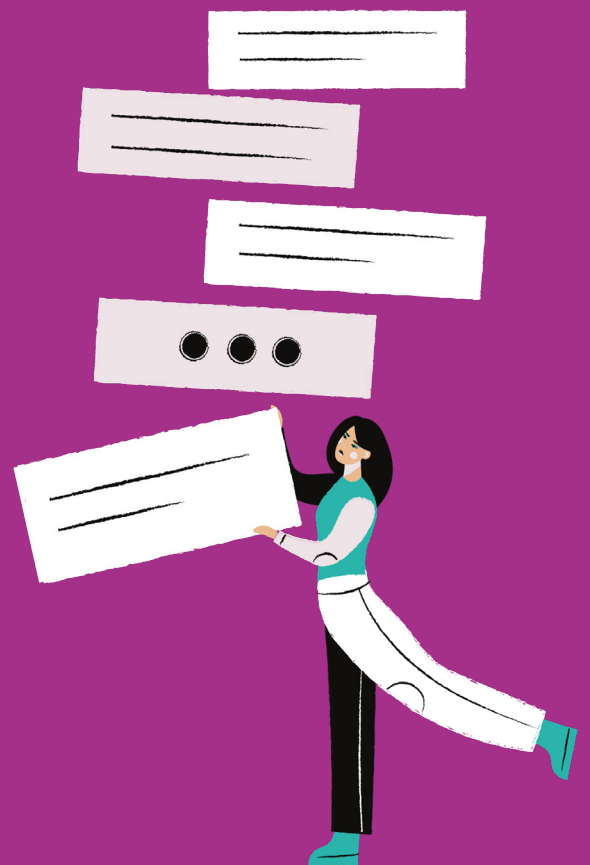


Impact Measurement Guidance Booklet

August 2023

Contents

Introduction.....	2
Terminology.....	2
Flowchart to finding the right support.....	3
Planning impact measurement.....	4
Impact measurement tools.....	5
Mental wellbeing.....	6
Physical wellbeing.....	6
Multiple outcomes.....	7
Communicating your impact.....	11
Tools for communicating your impact.....	12
Best practice.....	13
Move Momentum.....	13
Home-Start Hampshire.....	15
Risks and considerations.....	16
References.....	18



Introduction

Impact measurement is a term spoken about endlessly within the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector, but what does it really mean and involve?



For organisations who haven't heard of impact measurement before or those who are wanting to find out more, knowing where to look and which advice to take can be overwhelming. Even for organisations with more experience, impact measurement is a difficult thing to get right and getting buy-in from volunteers, staff, and community members can be tricky.

Well don't worry, we're here to help! Our Impact Measurement Guidance Booklet aims to provide you with practical tips and tricks to be successful in impact measurement, no matter where you're at in your impact measurement journey. There is already a wealth of guidance on impact measurement out there so rather than duplicating this work, this booklet will signpost you to the relevant places depending on your organisation's needs. We've sifted through lots of information to try and bring you the most up to date, easy to use, and relevant tools and information.

You can use this booklet however you like - follow it through from start to finish or dip in and out as and when you need. No matter how you use it, we hope you find it useful.

If you need any further support or guidance, please feel free to get in touch: info@actionhampshire.org

Terminology

Throughout the booklet you might find lots of impact measurement jargon/ technical language. The NCVO has created key terms guidance that defines many of the words you will read about, so is a good place to start.

[Follow the link here to read NCVO's key terms guidance](#)

Flowchart to finding the right support

First things first, it's important to consider where you are in your impact measurement journey, so you have a clear understanding of what steps you need to take next.

To save you time looking through pages and pages of guidance, use the flowchart below to find the guidance most relevant to your organisation's needs and impact measurement journey.

Flowchart to finding the right support...

You're likely person E:

Someone who wants to start from the very beginning to learn what impact measurement is and why it's important. For relevant help and guidance try this link: [Impact and evaluation | NCVQ](#)

Impact measurement...
What's that?

[Impact and evaluation | NCVQ](#)

Fair enough!

Impact measurement doesn't have to be for everyone

If you knew more about the benefits of impact measurement, do you think you would like to do it?

I don't see the point in it!

You're likely person A:

You feel positive about impact measurement but need some guidance to get you started. Try these links: [The cycle of good impact practice \(thinknpc.org\)](#) OR [Impact Toolkit 2013](#)

I don't have enough knowledge or wouldn't know where to start

You're likely person B:

You see the importance of impact measurement and have some understanding of how to carry it out, but have limited time to do so.

For relevant help and guidance try the following links:

[The Outcomes Matrix | Good Finance](#) OR [Data diagnostic - NPC \(thinknpc.org\)](#) OR [Simple and free social impact reporting - Impactasaurus](#)

Do you currently measure your impact?

START HERE

Yes

How do you feel about measuring your organisation's impact?

Super confident!

How do you feel about communicating the insights you've gained?

Okay...but I could benefit from some more guidance

You're likely person C:

Someone who is already doing impact measurement and wants to improve or get even more from it. For relevant help and guidance try this link: [Impact-Measurement-Toolkit \(culturehive.co.uk\)](#)

Okay...but I could use some more guidance

You're likely person F:

An impact measurement expert! Congratulations, it sounds like you're doing a great job. You could try making your impact measurement even better, by measuring the social return on investment: [A guide to social return on investment](#)

Telling people about our successes and challenges is my speciality!

You're likely person D:

You're doing a great job at measuring your impact and want to shout about your organisation's successes, but a little unsure on how best to communicate this message.

For relevant help and guidance try these links:

[Reporting your findings | NCVQ](#) AND [The cycle of good impact practice: Produce an impact report - NPC \(thinknpc.org\)](#)

Planning impact measurement

Planning is vital in impact measurement, as without it you won't be able to evidence how your organisation has caused any changes that have occurred.

Most, if not all, guidance suggests the first step to undertaking impact measurement is developing a theory of change, which is a plan for how you aim to create certain change. [The NPC's guidance booklet](#) explains how to create a theory of change, detailing simpler approaches for beginners as well as more complex approaches for those with more experience.

Once you've developed your theory of change, you can then use this in the next stage of planning – creating a measurement framework. Also known as a monitoring and evaluation framework, a measurement framework sets out what data you need to collect, when you need to collect it, and how you're going to collect it. The purpose of this is to evidence how your activities have achieved your outcomes (which you will have outlined in your theory of change).

[The NCVO provides step by step guidance](#) on how to create a basic measurement framework, with some really useful [examples](#).



Impact measurement tools...

Within your measurement framework, you will need to decide how to collect data to evidence if your activities have achieved your outcomes or not.

There are two different types of data you could collect:

Quantitative

Data that has a numerical value so can be counted or measured (i.e. numbers).

Qualitative

Descriptive data (i.e. words).



You could collect either type of data, but funders often want to see a little bit of both.

To collect quantitative data, we'd recommend using validated tools, as this means they've been checked many times by researchers and are more likely to produce accurate results.

If you're looking for some existing tools to collect quantitative data from your service users, the table below provides some examples of tools categorised by what they aim to capture and how easy they are to use.

Mental wellbeing

Name	What does it measure?	How much does it cost?	Do I need to register to use the tool?	Is the tool validated?	How easy is it to use?
The Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scales (WEM-WBS)	Mental wellbeing	Free	Yes	Yes	Easy – straight forward to use and simple analysis technique
Happiness Pulse	Mental wellbeing	Free – also a paid for version that has more features	Yes	Yes	Easy – although some of the word-ing/language used isn't accessible
ONS4	Personal wellbeing	Free	No	Yes	Easy – straight forward to use and simple analysis technique
The Questionnaire about the Process of Recovery (QPR)	Recovery	Free	Yes – must contact the creators/authors to get permission	Yes – it is an evidence-based tool	Easy - straight forward to use and simple analysis technique
The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale	Self-esteem	Free	No	Yes	Easy - straight forward to use and simple analysis technique

Physical wellbeing

Name	What does it measure?	How much does it cost?	Do I need to register to use the tool?	Is the tool validated?	How easy is it to use?
RAND 36-Item Health Survey (SF-36)	Physical health & quality of life	Free	No – but you must follow the terms and conditions	Yes	Medium – easy to use but analysis technique more complicated
The Physical Activity Questionnaire for Older Children (PAQ-C) and Adolescents (PAQ-A)	Children and young people's physical activity levels	Free	No – but must reference the authors	Yes	Medium - easy to use but analysis technique more complicated

Multiple outcomes

Name	What does it measure?	How much does it cost?	Do I need to register to use the tool?	Is the tool validated?	How easy is it to use?
Outcomes Star	There are over 30 different stars available. They cover a range of topics and are designed for different types of people (e.g. carers and students).	£250 for 1 license. Training in how to use the outcomes stars starts from £960.	Yes, as this is a paid for tool	Yes	Medium – easy to use but analysis technique more complicated
EQ-5D-5L	5 areas that assess physical and mental wellbeing: Mobility, self-care, usual activities, pain/discomfort and anxiety/ depression.	Free	Yes	Yes	Easy – straight forward to use and simple analysis technique
Older People's Quality of Life questionnaire (OPQOL-brief)	Older people's quality of life, therefore a mix of mental, physical, and social aspects are measured	Free	No – but the source must be credited	Yes	Easy – straight forward to use and simple analysis technique

These tools above are only a handful of what's available.

Below are some links to other resources that provide an extensive list of tools:

- 1. The [CAVEAT Toolkit](#) is one of our favourite resources.** Although designed specifically to support interventions with older people, the tools available in this toolkit are still applicable to a wide range of services/projects. Once you've used your email address to register, the toolkit is free to use and easy to find your way around. As well as providing measures across physical, social, emotional, and economic health, the website also has a bank of resources that gives guidance on impact frameworks, qualitative and quantitative data, and GDPR.
- 2. Another popular resource is the [Wellbeing Measures Bank](#).** Using the filters, you can search for relevant wellbeing tools across a range of topics – general; how we feel; what we do; personal circumstances. Once you click on the measure, it provides you with a description, how to implement the tool, and details around crediting your use of the tool.
- 3. Various tools can also be found in other guidance booklets on specific outcomes.** For example, the [Brief Guide to Measuring Loneliness](#) provides recommended loneliness measurement tools for adults and children, in addition to a template questionnaire. Within this Guide, they refer to The Campaign to End Loneliness, who also have a guidance booklet 'Measuring Your Impact on Loneliness in Later Life' that reviews the strengths and limitations of different loneliness measurement tools.
- 4. The [National Lottery Community Fund](#) (a regular funder!) have a useful list of guidance and tools.** In particular, their [outcome framework and standalone measures guide](#) is useful for projects with outcomes across different categories and can save you time searching for different ways to measure each outcome as they're all in one place!

Impact measurement tools **continued...**

It is important to note that sometimes there aren't validated tools for the outcome you want to measure or the validated tools that do exist aren't very accessible to the group of people you are working with. Moreover, if your organisation is a charity, you will have identified at least one charitable purpose when setting up. It is therefore good practice to align some of your outcomes with your charitable purpose, to ensure you are measuring your charity's progress against its core reason for being. Although, it is difficult to explicitly measure how well you are undertaking 'the promotion of recycling' for example.

In these instances, instead of using validated tools, you can create your own questions and/or methods for collecting data to assess changes in people's understanding, attitudes, and behaviours towards an issue.

If creating your own tools or methods is something that your organisation needs to do, [follow this link here to read some guidance from the NPC](#) - we think their page on 'Surveys' and 'Creative Methods' are particularly useful!

This section has mainly focussed on collecting quantitative data. However, we don't want to underestimate the importance of qualitative data; stories about people's experiences can really help capture the importance and meaning of your organisation and brings impact measurement to life!

Above we mentioned that The CAVEAT Toolkit is one of our favourite resources and this is because they provide guidance on collecting qualitative data too. Once you've registered, you can access their Knowledge Base which includes a section on 'Qualitative examples and advice', that provides explanations and examples of all these qualitative methods:

- **Testimonials**
- **Narrative**
- **Case studies**
- **Focus groups**
- **Interviews**
- **Photo elicitation/photo voice**

For organisations with more experience of impact measurement, a more complicated qualitative method to try is Most Significant Change.

As explained in an article from [Better Evaluation](#) (2021), this approach is about collecting stories on a particular aspect of a project, then analysing the stories with stakeholders to determine which are the most significant and why in order to learn about what is valued about a project. However, they note this approach cannot be used on its own to measure impact and must be used alongside other methods.

For step-by-step guidance on the Most Significant Change approach, [follow this link to access the Overseas Development Institute's toolkit](#)



Finally, in addition to obtaining data on different outcomes, it can be useful to collect demographic data (e.g. age, gender, ethnicity) of service users/ community members. This information can then be used in conjunction with your data on outcomes to understand if the same changes have occurred across different demographic groups. Moreover, depending on your work, you may have different outcomes for different demographic groups, so collecting demographic data will help you evidence if the intended groups are experiencing the intended outcomes.

Communicating your impact

Once you've collected data, you need to uncover what it is telling you; a process called data analysis.

The NCVO provide detailed guidance on how to analyse both [quantitative data](#) and [qualitative data](#). After which you should be ready to describe what the data is saying and then interpret what it means. For example, you could structure your writing by explaining what activity you delivered, describing the particular change it achieved, and interpreting why this is important. Don't shy away from talking about the things that have gone wrong or where you haven't achieved your outcomes. Acknowledging the challenges will help you identify what changes need to be made to your work, and how and when they can be implemented. Ultimately this will ensure you are providing the best service to your community members, which is at the heart of every VCSE organisation's work.

Moreover, there's no point in measuring your impact if you're not going to shout about it to your stakeholders – service users/community members, funders, partners, and policy makers.

However, communicating the impact of a project is often an afterthought or forgotten entirely. As written in the guidance we've shared, it's important to think about communicating your impact right at the beginning during your impact measurement planning.

Thinking about the communication stage early on means that you give yourself enough time to think about accessibility (how to present the information so everyone can access it) and ensures you have an end goal that you can hold yourself accountable to.

[Review \(thinknpc.org\)](#) - This guidance by New Philanthropy Capital details different ways of sharing and communicating findings. We love this resource because in addition to communications guidance, it provides step by step instructions on how to use your findings to produce recommendations and improve your work, a key part of any impact measurement!

Within [NPC's guidance](#), they identify different ways of formatting impact measurement findings. Whether you opt for a presentation, report, or poster, you'll need to use the right tools to put it together. We've compiled a list of tools below that could help you create a multitude of outputs and linked to some helpful YouTube tutorials so you can quickly get to up to speed.

Tools for communicating your impact...

Tool	What is it for?	How much does it cost?	Guidance
Canva	Designing reports, posters, and leaflets. Canva has lots of free templates, graphics, and fonts you can use to create a range of impact measurement content.	Canva is free to sign up to and use. It does have business and pro versions that come at an extra cost, which gets you access to additional templates, graphics, and fonts. TIP: if you're a first time user you can get a month's free trial of a pro account!	Follow the link here to a tutorial on how to use Canva for beginners .
Piktochart	Similar to Canva, Piktochart can be used to create a range of visual outputs such as infographics and reports.	Sign-up to use a free version of Piktochart. Their pro and business versions come at an extra cost but have additional features.	Follow the link here to watch a simple guide to Piktochart for beginners .
Doodly	Doodly can be used to create animation videos. You download the software to your computer and use Doodly's pre-drawn cartoons to create different scenes.	Doodly is on the more expensive side at \$39 per month. TIP: they have a free 14-day trial, more than enough time to create a video!	Follow the link here for a tutorial on creating your first Doodly video .
Microsoft Power BI	BI stands for business intelligence, meaning this platform is used to analyse and present data (i.e. get insights and build reports). To understand and use, Microsoft Power BI is on the more difficult side and can take a while to get to grips with. However, if you collect a lot of data and need to present it in a clear, organised way, this tool is for you.	If you have a Microsoft 365 E5 account, Power BI is already included as part of this package. However, if you don't, you can create a Microsoft Fabric account to activate a free trial. Power BI will cost £8.20 per month/per user after the trial has ended.	There are tutorials on the Microsoft Power BI platform but for a beginner friendly guide , follow the link here

Best practice...

Now you've reached this part of the booklet, hopefully you're feeling like you've increased your understanding of impact measurement and know where to go to get support at this stage of your impact measurement journey. However, if you still need a bit of inspiration or want to see how other VCSE organisations are successfully measuring their impact, this next section provides two best practices examples from **Move Momentum** and **Home-Start Hampshire**.

Move Momentum

Move Momentum is an award-winning local charity based in Winchester, Hampshire that aims to make dance accessible to everyone. They provide inclusive and affordable dance classes for people who otherwise might not have the opportunity to enjoy the benefits of dance. They offer weekly dance classes for young people aged 11-16, over 65s and wheelchair users.

The focus of Move Momentum's impact measurement is telling participants' stories and supporting those stories with numbers and other data. To measure their organisation's impact, Move Momentum have created a 'Story of Change' – a tool for explaining how and why a project/programme has achieved its intended outcomes (also sometimes known as a theory of change, [follow the link here to find out more about Stories of Change](#)).

As part of this, they have outlined that they are aiming to achieve the following outcomes:

1. Improved physical health and well-being
2. Improved mental health and well-being
3. Increase in individuals' community and social connection
4. Developing skills and continued learning
5. Improved quality of life

To assess the extent to which they are achieving these outcomes, Move Momentum gather data in a variety of ways such as annual student impact monitoring surveys, case studies, and student video interviews. They always take a student-centred approach that encourages continual feedback from participants.

Move Momentum

Recommendations:

For creating a Story of Change and identifying outcomes follow the link [here](#)

For ideas on how to collect impact data and the different aspects of impact reporting follow this link [here](#)

For free impact measurement information and support for charities: contact Pro Bono Economics



Top tips/advice:

“Keep it simple, focus on a few stories of the people your organisation is supporting, a few good stories say so much more about the good work your organisation is doing. Think about how you can collect information in a way that works best for your participants. For example, it could be written or a video/ audio recording of you asking them a few questions.

Those stories alongside the number of people you’re reaching and if your able to get something from participants that indicates whether they agree that they have seen improvement in line with your outcomes that’s all that is needed to create a good impact report. In terms of presenting the information, think about making it something that people want to read and engage with and using different media to present the information.”



[Follow the link here to view Move Momentum’s latest Impact Report](#)

Home-Start Hampshire

Home-Start Hampshire is a volunteer led organisation that offers regular confidential and non-judgemental support and practical help to families under stress, to help give their children the best possible start in life. Their volunteers work alongside parents of children aged 0-11, in their own homes, to help them cope with the stresses and strains of life and make sure they have the confidence, skills, time and strength they need to nurture their children.

To understand whether they are achieving their outcome of improving parenting abilities, Home-Start Hampshire uses the tool Family Star Plus from Outcomes Star (as mentioned in the Impact Measurement Tools section), which collects data across 10 areas:

1. Home and money
2. Work
3. My children's health
4. How I feel
5. My children's emotions
6. Keeping my children safe
7. Friends & community
8. My children's learning
9. My children's behaviour
10. Our family routine

In addition to this data, they also collect qualitative data through observations and case studies, in order to highlight the voices of their service users (both parents and children) and bring the impact to life.

Together, this data provides a strong understanding of the positive impact of their support and where they could adapt their delivery to ensure service users are benefitting the most from their service. Home-Start Hampshire reports this information back to their funders in different ways, depending on their requirements, but also ensures they take into consideration all their stakeholders by reporting back to their service users via an Annual Report and Impact Report.

Recommendations:

If a funder offers workshops or webinars on impact measurement, make sure you attend as they're very useful and tell you exactly what funders are wanting to see measured. Other courses, such as those run by the Hampshire CVS Network organisations are also helpful.

Top tips/advice:

“Think about your audience and what you want them to do with the information – why are you sharing this with them and what is the call to action.”

[Follow the link here to view Home-Start Hampshire's latest impact report](#)

Risks and considerations

Now you've got the impact measurement know-how, we're sure you'll want to jump straight into undertaking it!

However, when you undertake impact measurement, you are collecting other people's data which carries important legal and ethical considerations.

They provide a checklist of questions you can ask yourself to ensure you've addressed each of these principles, to which you must be able to answer 'yes' to before undertaking any form of data collection.

[Follow the link here to download the checklist](#)

This resource provides clear and straightforward guidance, however occasionally you may find there are more complicated ethical issues to consider. For more detailed information on research ethics in evaluation...

[Follow this link to read the UK Evaluation Society's Guidelines for Good Practice in Evaluation](#)

The [NCP](#) suggests the following ethical principles are essential to any research project (including impact measurement):

- Voluntary participation
- Informed consent
- Do no harm
- Protected identity
- Neutrality

The legal considerations you need to make are about protecting people's data, this is also known as General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

It is important to securely protect any data you collect from participants/ service users/community members, volunteers, and other stakeholders. However, if you are collecting personal data (any data that can be used to identify a person such as name, email address, age etc.) within your impact measurement you MUST comply with GDPR. Most, if not all, VCSE organisations will be familiar with GDPR, as this is important in other aspects of work and not just impact measurement.

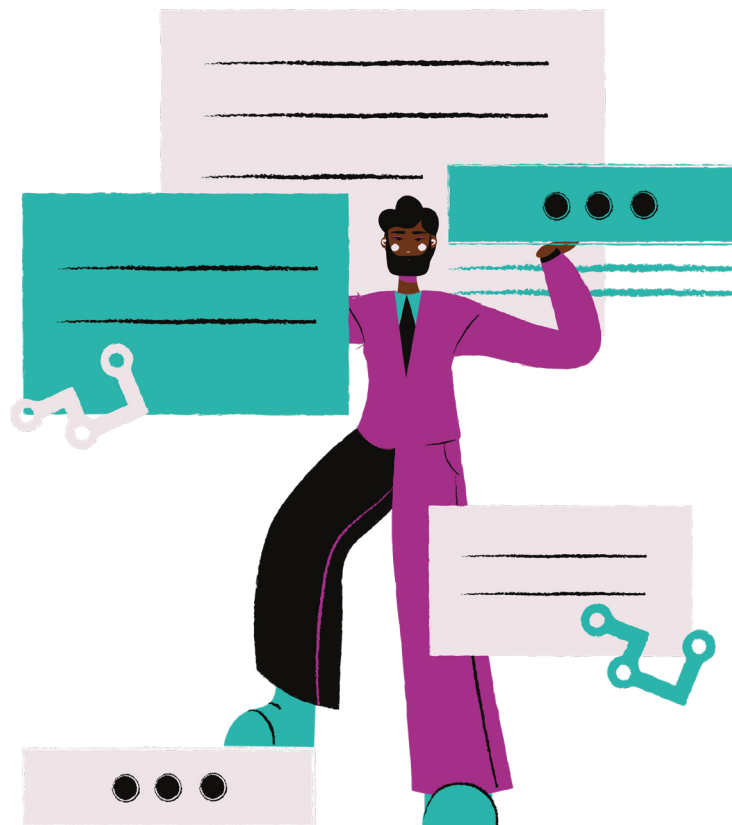
The Information Commissioner's Office is definitely the best place to go to get guidance on data protection. Their [beginners guide to data protection](#) gives step by step guidance on what is required by law.

Risks and considerations continued...

In addition to ethical and legal considerations, within impact measurement it's important to think about the concept of attribution.

When looking at the change caused by your project or organisation, attribution refers to how much your activities have caused this change, which acknowledges the fact that other factors in a person's life will also contribute to change. We've mentioned attribution in the considerations section because you cannot state your organisation is the sole cause of a particular change or refer to the extent to which you have influenced change, without having the evidence to support this.

[This really helpful article from Catalyst](#) explains the difference between contribution and attribution and provides suggestions for how you can measure attribution. One of their suggestions is to develop a theory of change, which we've included guidance on earlier in the booklet (see page 4 on planning and page 10 on stories of change), so you're able to address this issue confidently and quickly.



Thanks for reading...

We wish you all the best on your impact measurement journey!

References

(In order of appearance in booklet)

[Understanding the language of impact and evaluation | NCVO](#)

[Impact and evaluation | NCVO](#)

[The cycle of good impact practice \(thinknpc.org\)](#)

[Impact Toolkit 2013 \(mooreks.co.uk\)](#)

[The Outcomes Matrix | Good Finance](#)

[Data diagnostic - NPC \(thinknpc.org\)](#)

[Simple and Free Social Impact Reporting - Impactasaurus](#)

[Impact-Measurement-Toolkit.pdf \(culturehive.co.uk\)](#)

[Reporting your findings | NCVO](#)

[The cycle of good impact practice: Produce an impact report - NPC \(thinknpc.org\)](#)

[Creating your theory of change \(thinknpc.org\)](#)

[How to develop a monitoring and evaluation framework | NCVO](#)

[Examples of monitoring and evaluation frameworks | NCVO](#)

[The Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale \(WEMWBS\)](#)

[Home - Happiness Pulse](#)

[Personal well-being user guidance - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](#)

[Questionnaire-about-the-Process-of-Recovery.pdf \(leedsandyorkpft.nhs.uk\)](#)

[Self Measures for Self-Esteem \(fetzer.org\)](#)

[36-Item Short Form Survey Instrument \(SF-36\) | RAND](#)

[Chapter 1: Introduction \(prismsports.org\)](#)

[Outcomes Star™ transforms lives and services | Triangle](#)

[EQ-5D-5L - EQ-5D \(euroqol.org\)](#)

[OPQOL-brief-questionnaire-and-responses.pdf \(ilcuk.org.uk\)](#)

[CAVEAT toolkit \(caveat-toolkit.co.uk\)](#)

[Wellbeing Measures Bank - Evaluating wellbeing \(whatworkswellbeing.org\)](#)

[Brief Guide to Measuring Loneliness - What Works Wellbeing](#)

[Loneliness Measurement Guidance \(campaigntoendloneliness.org\)](#)

[Tools to help you gather and use evidence and learning | The National Lottery Community Fund \(tnlcommunityfund.org.uk\)](#)

[4.2-Outcome frameworks and standalone-measures-database.xlsx \(live.com\)](#)

[Do \(thinknpc.org\)](#)

[Most significant change | Better Evaluation](#)

[Strategy Development: Most Significant Change \(MSC\) | ODI: Think change](#)

[How to analyse quantitative data for evaluation | NCVO](#)

[How to analyse qualitative data for evaluation | NCVO](#)

[Review \(thinknpc.org\)](#)

[The cycle of good impact practice: Share your findings - NPC \(thinknpc.org\)](#)

[Canva: Visual Suite for Everyone](#)

[Canva for Beginners | All you need to know to get started in 2023 - YouTube](#)

[Visual & Video Maker Trusted By 11 Million Users - Piktochart](#)

[Piktochart Tutorial: A Simple Guide to Piktochart for Beginners - YouTube](#)

[Doodly | Voomly Cloud](#)

[How to Create your FIRST Doodly Video | Doodly Tutorials - YouTube](#)

[Data Visualisation | Microsoft Power BI](#)

[How to use Microsoft Power BI - Tutorial for Beginners - YouTube](#)

[GOKH Stories of Change \(ids.ac.uk\)](#)

[Social impact Toolkit | Centre for Agroecology, Water and Resilience | Coventry University \(social-impact-toolkit.co.uk\)](#)

[Our Impact | Move Momentum | Dance Charity](#)

[PowerPoint Presentation \(home-starhampshire.org.uk\)](#)

[The cycle of good impact practice: Research ethics and data protection - NPC \(thinknpc.org\)](#)

[UK Evaluation Society Guidelines for Good Practice in Evaluation](#)

[Your beginner's guide to data protection | ICO](#)

[Catalyst Resource - How to measure attribution in impact evaluations \(thecatalyst.org.uk\)](#)



Found this booklet useful?

Let us know [Facebook](#) / [Twitter](#) / [LinkedIn](#)

All information correct at time of writing - August 2023

Impact Measurement Guidance Booklet

actionhampshire.org