Social Impact Assessment for Social Service NGOs

Guidelines and Protocol (Ver.1)

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Introduction

In the past two years, The Hong Kong Council of Social Service (HKCSS) and ExCEL3 Project of The University of Hong Kong have collaborated and ventured into an exploration of Social Impact Assessment (SIA), hoping to identify major concepts, framework, and method of conducting SIA in the context of social service NGO sector. In addition to organizing seminars and conference to bring together interested parties and experts in SIA, HKCSS has attempted a number of SIA on social service projects and consolidated experiences in conducting SIA practically. This Guidelines and Protocol represents this effort of consolidation, trying to outline the conceptual framework on SIA and delineate the principles, guidelines, and protocol of conducting SIA. It is expected that this can serve as a conceptual and practical reference for NGOs to conduct practice-based SIA and for academic institutions interested in SIA.

Defining Social Impact

Defining social impact is not easy. Many in the social service sector would ask: how is it different from the term "outcome" which has been more prevalently used in the past two decades?

The definition that we have been using as a starting point is the following:

> "any public or private actions that alter the ways in which people live, work, play, relate to one another, organise to meet their needs and generally cope as members of society" US Department of Commerce. (1994).

A definition like this is rather all encompassing. And indeed, the concept of social impact does have this characteristic, as our society and its players are living as a dynamic whole where one action's, however small it may be, will in one way or another influence how people live, work, play, relate to one another, organize to meet their needs and generally cope as members of the society. Think about, for example, Hong Kong Tourist Association's campaign on courtesy. It promotes the idea that every person should wear a smile as a welcoming gesture to the tourists. The idea is: even a simple smile can make a difference for the entire society.

Experiences and exchanges on SIA show, however, that when people invoke the term social impact, they mean something more. They usually distinguish it in terms of *depth* or/and *scale* of changes that an action can create. A government policy, for example, is usually seen as impactful because a public policy will bring about changes to people's lives in a big scale. And when an impact of a big scale is successfully created, it modifies collective behavioral patterns, thereby modifies the entire social structure of action. As a government policy can effect deep structural change, it therefore entails that any private action or public action capable of changing a government policy is often impactful.

However, actions leading to changes at the social or structural level are not limited to those of the government. A movement, an advocacy campaign, a service programme, or a project may sometimes create huge impact at the structural level. During the period of SARS, for example, everybody acquired a set of hygiene habits like wearing facemask or using "public" chopsticks. Of course, the former is not in use any more except on special occasions, the latter is still widely practiced. The idea has penetrated deeply into the structure of social actions of the people that the desired outcomes are capable of systematically reproducing itself. In the age of Internet, we have just got too many examples of how one single individual's act could generate big social impact, *both positive and negative*.

Outcomes and Impacts

The last insertion, "both positive and negative," is not merely for textual purpose. It should be placed in the very core of the discussion on SIA. When an impact is said to have been created, we should ask whether it is a positive one or a negative one? The question should be addressed in terms of at least three inter-related concepts: outcome, stakeholder (engagement), and valuation.

In traditional programme evaluation, "outcome" is the utmost concern as all programme organizers are concerned with whether their programme has produced any outcome. Outcome is usually referred to the *planned changes* resulting from the programme. The word "planned" is critical because it denotes that in traditional programme evaluation, we measure outcome to gauge the *intended* consequences of the programme in question. The question of whether the outcome is positive or negative is external to the evaluation process because in designing the programme, those planned changes are believed to be positive for the organizers. Thus, even though 9.11 Incident was a nightmare to the people of the USA and the world, it had been thought to be good for those few terrorists who organized it. For the latter, the outcome was fully achieved and the impact was huge. However, from the angle of the majority in the society who did not choose the outcome, it is definitely negative.

In other words, if *unintended* consequences are taken into account, then the term outcome should be qualified. The 9.11 Incident has created a lot of unintended consequences: the suffering of the people directly affected and those indirectly impacted, tightening of security measures globally, all the ensuing attacks vicariously or not, and so on. Among all these, which are positive and which negative?

Social Objectives, Stakeholder Engagement and Valuation

This leads us to the discussion on *valuation*. How do we value all these changes or consequences? Against what standards shall we value them? As these consequences concern a much wide group of people, within or beyond any particular society or nation, how do we possibly know how this wider group of people thinks?

The SIA that we are talking about is not going to resolve this problem. However, it proposes to face this issue directly (let's call it an issue of the *social*) and tries to identify a method or procedure to deal with it.

The issue of the *social* pushes us to think beyond the objectives of individual person or organization, but the social ones. In other words, once we try to value changes or consequences, social objective gets in the way. *Social objective* should be seen as the foundation on which SIA is built up.

One can think of a lot of social objectives easily. To name a few:

- equal opportunities for all
- promotion of social inclusion
- elimination of discrimination against women
- alleviation or reduction of poverty
- promotion of health for all and so on

As social objectives, they are supposed to be shared among members of society. Yet, how could we be certain that an objective is truly socially shared? How could we know that, for example, a programme that has successfully helped to eliminate discrimination against women in Hong Kong can be said to have achieved an objective which is shared among members of society?

Stakeholder engagement is therefore a very important part of any SIA. It is believed that by engaging relevant stakeholders, we will be able to arrive at a consensus on what objective is truly socially shared.

The difficulty of stakeholder engagement lies in defining the *scope of engagement*, for unless you can engage all members of the society to arrive at a conclusion, any claim about social objective is bound to be limited. In fact, even if one could really engage the entire society, it would be very unlikely that each and every member can agree upon a shared objective.

Notwithstanding a certain level of imprecision, there can certainly be different *protocols of engagement* to arrive at a socially shared objective.

Social Impact Assessment Process

Based on the basic introduction to the major concepts related to social impact assessment, we can briefly outline an SIA process in Diagram 1.

Diagram 1: Process of Social Impact Assessment

Being the foundation of SIA, what we should first ascertain is the social objectives for which a programme may achieve. And to do that, the preceding step will be to conduct a stakeholder engagement or any method which could help us identify the social objectives. With this, we shall be able to identify the social objectives. Based on these larger social objectives identified, we should map out the programme level objectives and try to align them with the social objectives. The next step is to define the programme outcomes and the indicators we use to measure those outcomes.

For a traditional programme evaluation, this will be the end of the process. Underlying this process is a *theory and method of change for the programme* in question. But for an SIA, one more step will be required, i.e. to account for the value of the outcomes measured or observed. This requires a *theory and method of accounting,* based on which we can account for the value of the outcomes (intended and unintended) being produced. The valuation process depends on social objectives being established.

In the ensuing sections, we will be covering the above concepts and steps in a more detailed manner. In Chapter 2, we are going to discuss social objectives and stakeholder engagement together, as these two are actually inextricably linked as explained above. In Chapter 3, we will deal with the programme objectives and its measurement in relation to its outcomes. In Chapter 4, we will briefly describe the principle of valuation and some of the methods of valuation so as to determine the impact. Throughout all these chapters, examples, materials or tools which may be useful for the readers will be provided as appropriate.

Readers should be cautioned when reading this Guidelines and Protocols of two points. First, this is not intended to be a very comprehensive Guidelines and Protocols. Rather, it provides some basic topics and principles for those interested in SIA to deliberate how they can approach it. Indeed, as Version 1, we expect that this is only a start and we shall treat it as a living document. We shall be reviewing the content constantly as we conduct more SIA. Second, readers will find that the language being used in this document is basically a language of quantitative approach. There is a reason of practice behind, as stakeholders concerning SIA care about impacts as expressed in figures. The pre-dominant use of quantitative language does not imply that qualitative approach should not be used in SIA. As a practice-based methodology, we shall think primarily from the need of practice. This however shall not prevent future exploration and explanation of qualitative approach when the next version is produced.

Chapter 2: Social Objective and Stakeholder Engagement

Introduction

In Chapter 1, we have outlined the concepts and steps of conducting SIA. In this Chapter, we shall start our discussion on the cornerstone of SIA, namely, social objective. As briefly mentioned before, the problem of the "social" embedded in the concept of social objective makes stakeholder engagement an inevitable and inseparable topic of discussion in deliberating social objective. We therefore are going to discuss both concepts together.

Defining Social Objective

In social service settings, most of the service programme or projects are set out to achieve a set of objectives which are almost always "social" in nature. A couple of years ago, the government embarked on an initiative to provide additional funding for District Elderly Community Centre and Neighborhood Elderly Centre in Hong Kong to help identify hidden elders in the community. The primary objective is to get these elders connected with formal service network and informal social network. The underlying belief is that older persons who live alone should not be left alone and that our community should give the older persons a feeling that they are cared. The programme was also a response to advocates in the society in view of the prevalence of elderly suicide or accidental deaths or injuries due to their being alone and disconnected.

This service programme is particularly useful in illustrating the concept of social objective, for it inevitably touches upon the relationship between the objective of this service programme at the social level and the need of older persons at the individual level. We understand that many older persons choose to be alone, and they really do not want to get connected with formal service network or informal social network, though the government, advocates or many members of the society believe that the government or the society should take care of these older persons by connecting them with the larger society and rendering more care and support to them. The question therefore is whether this objective cannot be said to be a social objective when some older persons who do not want to get connected to the larger society, while a reasonable majority of singleton elderly in Hong Kong may welcome for its being able to meet their individual needs of social affiliation.

As much as the social objective defined by the government for the elderly as a social group is met, the need of affiliation of a majority of individual single older persons is also met. For those who do not want to get connected, the programme does not impose its objective on them. Their individual choices or preferences are also respected though the society or the government would still hope that they can be connected in some ways. At least in the context of Hong Kong, achieving a social objective does not necessarily jeopardize individual rights to choose. Social objective and individual end are not necessarily mutually exclusive. Also, the fact that social objective is "social" in nature does not necessarily mean that it concerns something beyond individuals. More often than not, a social objective serves both individual and social ends. It usually serves the social end through serving the individual ones.

We should always be vigilant that there are always persons of the directly concerned target who do not think this programme represents their interest and think that their rights are jeopardized by the introduction of the programme or intervention. For example, two decades ago, a Bill was enacted to grant women in the New Territories rights to inherit properties, which used to be the exclusive rights of men in the New Territories. The proponents argued that the introduction of this law would not jeopardize the rights of those who still insisted on passing their properties onto their sons. While this is true, the opponents thought that by letting some to do otherwise, the entire tradition of the New Territories would be called into question and eroded gradually. From their perspective, intervention like this may not be just meaningless but highly undesirable. The very existence of such a perspective implies that a social objective, though being social in nature, is never completely representative of the view of all members of the society.

In fact, as in the example of hidden elder service, other than the expected benefit for the society as a whole (the benefit for the reasonable majority of single older persons), some more benefits may be generated for the operators themselves or other stakeholders in the process of achieving the programme objective. The latter benefits, if any, are not the government's intended outcome, but in the programme for hidden elder, do contribute to changes like re-engineering of service delivery mode in District Elderly Community Centres (DECC)/ Neighbourhood Elderly Centre (NEC), inspiration for service development, or increase of capacity of the service operators in appealing for further funding to support other needs being identified. Unintended though, these changes, for a good majority of stakeholders in the society, are still desirable objectives to have achieved unintentionally.

Yet, as the intended objectives, these unintended objectives will never be shared by all in the society. For example, some might question whether the strengthening of NGO capacity might in fact be detrimental to the entire society's development.

In short, a social objective, in an operational sense, may be better seen as *a contingent statement of social change expected by the people in the society on its development, both development process and development outcome*. In the illustration above, it is not difficult to understand how a social objective is a "statement of social change expected by the people in the society", i.e. hoping that the singleton elderly can in some ways get connected with the society and not left isolated. And there are outcomes of process and end result.

What needs to be explained in this definition is the word "contingent". As the statement of expected social change is contingent, we have to be aware of how it is always subject to and should be open to redefinition. It is contingent on time, for what the society desires to achieve may change over time. What prevails at this moment may not be uphold in future. Individuals' or groups' views are also bound to be changing due to temporal and contextual factors.

As it is not easy to get a precise representative view of the entire society, engagement of different groups of individuals or entities may produce entirely different sets of objectives that are said to be representative of the society. This qualifying term of "contingency" necessitates a step of stakeholder engagement, which will be discussed later.

Intention and Social Objective

All objectives have their owners. They should somehow be coming out of the intention of the owners. However, the owner of the social objectives cannot be simply understood as the society as an entity above all individuals. In the context of Hong Kong society, there is not a "superstructure" up there to impose a social objective on every individual.

That said, the government is usually thought of as such an entity above individuals that represents the society's view. Thus, the Policy Address by the Chief Executive of HKSARG may have a list of policy objectives which are presented as representing the common ends that the people of Hong Kong desires to reach. Although the Policy Address is written by the government officials or the CE, it is presented as something representing what is on the mind of all the residents in Hong Kong. Through the government, as a public authority, the social objectives can be understood as owned by the people.

An objective is social because it is shared by at least some individuals in the society. Individuals in the society as well as the society itself can be said to be the owners of the social objective. The social objective reflects what they intend for the society and themselves.

However, rarely would individuals in the society or the society itself be having an opportunity to deliberate specific social objective. Using the hidden elder progamme above, the society or many Hong Kong people would intend to help singleton older persons to get connected with the community, but in fact, the people of Hong Kong would not all be consulted. We could claim with a bit of confidence that there would be such a social intention (usually based on our reflexive understanding of the value of the members of the society, being a member ourselves).

That said, the social intention should never be over-claimed. Hence, there has to be a mechanism through which we can engage a reasonable range of stakeholders to identify the social objectives.

Unintended Consequences and the Boundary of Social Objectives

What is intended to generate a certain level of welfare may end up creating much more or somewhat less than expected. Also, what is intended to achieve may produce positive or negative externalities which are entirely out of the original expectation. For example, there has been a big consensus in our society that land in Hong Kong is limited and we have inadequate land supply in Hong Kong to provide adequate housing for people in Hong Kong. The government's plan to develop the North Eastern New Territories should be a socially welcome objective as the intended consequence will be an increase of land for housing.

Along the positive line, many villagers who own the farmland see this plan as a good opportunity for them to capitalize their land asset. The housing developers will also benefit from the development project. These latter two at least are not the objectives which the government or the society intends to create.

For some people, pursuit of private interest by the villagers and developers may not be thought as positive consequences. They think that the development would only benefit developers. Claiming in

the interest of the public, they think that the development will damage the back garden of Hong Kong and the general public will lose a place where they can enjoy the nature.

There is a group of villagers who have been farming in the zoned area and they do not want the land to be developed. They would like to stay in the same place and to keep their existing life intact. Destroying the home of these people and their lifestyle is obviously not the intended consequences of the development project. However, such a project is obviously doing negative unintended consequences on them. Yet, for some people in Hong Kong, farming is no longer a viable industry and is very costly for Hong Kong to farm. They maintain that not developing the area is a private interest of the farmers, not social interest of the people of Hong Kong.

While the positive or negative intended and unintended consequences of a big development project at this scale are more observable, those of a smaller scale in the welfare sector may not be easily observable or accountable. Take for example an organization implementing a hotmeal canteen in a community with highest ratio of low-income households. Providing affordable and diet meals to people who have limited means for even basic quantity and quality of food would of course be seen as something good. This positive intended consequence is obvious. The unintended consequences are usually not paid attention to, particularly those of the negative type.

Let's focus on the positive unintended consequences first. A programme like this may be subsequently known to a wider community and many ordinary citizens may find this programme worth supporting. They may volunteer themselves to help in the service implementation. They may donate money to help sustain the programme. The project may then be able to scale up, and so may the entire institutional system supporting the project. What's more, a successful programme may attract the attention of many other operators and donors concerned with this group of target participants, and more such programme may join the service market, benefiting a lot more people. As more and more stakeholders are involved, this kind of hotmeal programme may even be scaled up to be a food assistance campaign at the societal level, which is capable of drawing the entire society's attention.

We should not however think that a hotmeal programme like this does not produce any negative social consequences or that the abovementioned positive consequences are essentially positive. Social stigmatization, for example, may be one such negative consequences experienced by the recipients. Similarly, as much as the project may scale up, the stigmatization may grow with the number of recipients. It is not uncommon to find in the world of social media that the recipients have been portrayed so negatively that some may not even dare to apply for such assistance of food or cash.

This list of unintended consequences of social nature can be as long as anyone can possibly think of. The question thus arises is: how would it be possible that a social impact assessment, underlined by a concept of unintended consequence, could include all these consequences? How are we going to delimit the boundary or scope of social impacts in a social impact assessment?

Inherent in any outcome evaluation or social impact assessment has always been such a question. Think about conducting a clinical trial for a newly invented drug or a counseling therapy. The experimenter focuses on examining the outcome or impact of the experimental condition (the drug or therapy). Other conditions, positive or negative, naturally do not fall within the scope of concern because they are said to have been randomized. True though that they are randomized in the

experiment, they do constitute real impacts on some people in the real world when the drug is put on sale in the market. A lot of drugs in the world can stand the test of clinical trial well, but they may be something which even the medical practitioners would not prescribe for themselves in spite of their claimed effectiveness evidenced by the clinical trial. The unintended consequences, i.e. the side-effects, are either not known or not clearly articulated in any way more than some anecdotal notes in the instruction.

Assessment of unintended consequences therefore requires at least two things: (1) a general level of intention to measure unintended consequences; (2) existing knowledge about the likelihood of occurrence of consequences which are unintended. Stigmatization, for example. Although this is certainly not the intended consequence of a programme, the assessor/programme worker's awareness of possible consequences would determine whether it would be assessed at all. Of course, even if the assessor was aware of such consequence, s/he would still need knowledge about the baseline level of stigmatization against which the resulted level can be compared.

Social Impact: Conceptual Framework for Social Service Sector

An assessment driven by an intention of measuring social impact can measure consequences which are unintended by the organizer of a social programme, but it can never measure consequences which the assessor does not intend to measure. That is, the unintended consequences can be measured so long as they are within the intended scope of concepts or measurement of the assessment. In other words, delimiting the indefinitely long list of intended and unintended consequences requires the assessor to take reference to the organizer's objectives or intended outcomes as well as to go beyond those objectives or intended outcomes to identify some relevant unintended consequences.

Obviously, it is not fair to assess a social programme based on a set of objectives which are entirely irrelevant to the organizer's original plan or intention. However, focusing narrowly on the organizer's original plan or intention may miss out a lot of unintended consequences generated by the programme. To resolve this problem, some conceptual tool may be needed to specify areas of social impact which go beyond individual programme objective but reasonably capture relevant unintended consequences.

In specifying a framework, the assessor will have to go beyond individual project's intended objectives to a higher societal level thinking. The individual project's objectives, as explained above, are already embedded with social meanings and can be understood as contingent statement of expected social changes of the individuals of the society. Beyond this set of objectives, the assessor will have to have a reasonable grasp of the social values, preferences or objectives of the society that any social programme is usually expected to achieve.

During the period of its development, our initial framework emerged is a "3-level 6-dimension" as tabulated below:

Table 1 Initial SIA framework

Level	Dimension
Individual	Quality of life
	Self-awareness and self-esteem
Community	Involvement in society
	Empowerment in social capacity building
Project/Organization	Sustainability of the project
	Skills improvement

After about 15 months of experiences in conducting social impact assessments, the initial framework is modified. The latest model has regrouped the dimensions into 2 tiers as shown below:

Table 2 Second version of SIA framework

Primary tier		
Impact dimension	**Assessment objective**	**Impact indicator**
Individual	To assess how a social intervention could cause changes to the directly-involved individuals.	Quality of life - Self-esteem - Information acquisition - Skills and knowledge development - Health and physical change
Social	To assess how a social intervention could cause changes on interpersonal level, and individual's interaction with the society that could cause immediate effect on their living.	Social capital - Social network - Social integration - Community participation - Financial integration - Volunteerism
Economical	To assess how a social intervention could cause changes on resources and revenue usage on public expenditure.	Financial sustainability - Financial adjustment on the service - Community resources allocation
Secondary tier		
Organisational	To assess the effectiveness of the intervention in terms of intervention design and execution; and the subsequent changes that may cause to the executing entity as a whole.	Mode of service delivery - Effectiveness - Programme restructuring - Stakeholders involvement - Service continuity - Service expansion

		Organisational development - Organisation restructuring - Inter-organisational collaboration - Cross-organisation collaboration
Community	To assess whether an intervention could induce changes on community composition and on policy level.	Community development - Demographic change - Public participation in community affairs Policy change - Subsequent policy change - Other policy area adjustment

Subsequent to this revision, further attempts were made and we came to an understanding that both versions of the framework may be useful in terms of providing a guide for us to look beyond the intended consequences/outcomes of a programme. Which framework is to be used depends on the project in question.

In the context of the social service sector in Hong Kong, it is composed of various NGOs who have been maintaining constant contacts with diverse groups beneficiaries and working partners, involving hundreds of thousands of individuals. While we may not be able to comfortably claim knowledge about the social objectives of the entire society, our work does enable us to spell out a theoretical model of social impact. As social objective is defined previously as a contingent statement of expected social changes of the society on its development, our understanding of the social service perspective's on social objectives is also contingent. Thus, we should treat this task of specifying a framework of social impact as a process in which the framework itself can be constantly modified.

The implications of this are at least three: (1) different pieces of social impact assessment may not be entirely comparable unless the components or dimensions of impacts are consistently included over a given period of time; (2) while the framework of social impact may be a starting reference for any social impact assessment, how the framework is adopted and the assessment conducted should be a localized decision; and (3) it is practice-oriented or practice-based that we do not seek to arrive at a static theoretical model about social impact, but an evolving tool of social impact that it can be applied when needed.

The above 2 versions of the framework have clearly assumed that the impact level/tier and dimensions are widely agreed ones. At the very least, they are supposed to be widely agreed upon by stakeholders within the social service sector. The problem of this claim is obvious: we have never done any systematic process of engagement or consultation/survey to arrive at this conclusion. That said, it does not mean that it is based entirely on wild guess. Rather, it is obtained by an extensive review of literature together with the opinion of selected individuals in both the academia and the sector.

Social Impact and Stakeholder Engagement

However, how does a framework of social impact come up, as the one shown above?

This again brings us back to stakeholder engagement: the social values, preferences or objectives of the society are to be understood through engaging different stakeholders. Yet, in an attempt to engage stakeholders, we inevitably come across a problem of delimitation: Who are we going to engage, so that we can ascertain our framework of social impact is conceptually rich enough to cover a reasonable and relevant scope of social impact? Like social impact, social engagement requires both a definition and a process of delimitation. That is, what do we mean when we talk about social engagement in SIA? Are we going to engage every single individual in the society? If not, how are we going to delimit the boundary?

It seems that we are being trapped in an endless process in which we cannot fully ascertain what are truly valued by the society as a whole:

- In defining social objectives in terms of intended and unintended consequences, we rely on the stakeholders to determine what is valuable to the society.
- Yet, the scope of those who can tell the answer, the stakeholders, is to be delimited by some insights on social objective.

Mindful of the importance of being open to opinions from a wider circle, we have to approach the issue in a practical manner by contextualizing it in a certain social setting and determining what social objectives are most agreeable and which groups of stakeholders are most relevant, notwithstanding that the judgment is bound to be limited.

There are essentially a few tips/principles for handling this issue:

1. We need to recognize our limitation: There is ***no way*** we can ***fully*** ascertain whether an objective or value is truly representative of the people in a society.
2. Recognizing this limitation though, we need to be confident that there are two practical ways through which we can get insights into the objectives or values which are largely shared by the society:
    i. We ourselves are socially competent members of the society and we do have practical knowledge about what our society values
    ii. We ourselves are living or working in a social situation where many members sharing the situation do give you information or feedback on what our society values.
3. Recognizing the limitation means more than just recognizing, but subjecting our judgment to feedback from your stakeholders.
4. You will never know in full who are to be engaged but you must have practical knowledge about which groups are more important than the others to engage, given limited time and resource.
5. As there must be stakeholders and their views being left out, your social impact assessment is always subject to review and reconsideration.

Stakeholder Engagement and Its Purposes

In any literature about social impact assessment, stakeholder engagement is said to be one of the cornerstones. Some talk about both stakeholder analysis and engagement. However, not many can clearly spell out what is stakeholder engagement and what are the purposes of it.

Stakeholder engagement can be defined as *a process of making attempts to arrive at a consensus of social objectives*. Some would confuse the stakeholder engagement process and the data collection process as we usually think that the beneficiary of a programme, for example, is an important group of stakeholders and therefore the process of asking for feedback from them after the programme is a process of stakeholder engagement.

It is true to say that the beneficiary is an important group of stakeholders whom we should engage, but stakeholder engagement in SIA should refer to a process of engagement before and after the assessment commences. The beneficiary, for example, should be engaged to express their opinion on what constitutes an achievement of a social objective, and they are usually the most relevant group when we talk about the impact of a programme on themselves.

In the definition stated, we emphasize that social engagement is a process of making *attempt* to arrive at a consensus. This requires more elaboration. As discussed above, social objectives are contingent in the temporal and contextual senses, its fluid nature prevents any possibility of a real consensus of an everlasting nature. And in a society full of differences, it sometimes is practically impossible for a group of people to arrive at a consensus. Many in the group may not be really convinced before a decision is taken. To stress that it is an attempt is however not to emphasize only its impossibility, but to appreciate the process of social assessment is always open and stays ready for critical scrutiny. SIA shall never take a set of social objectives, defined at a given moment or in a given context, as if they were always representing what the society embraces.

Scope of Engagement and Stakeholder Analysis

The other reason of saying that it is a process of making attempt is that stakeholder engagement requires delimitation of the scope of engagement. That is, who are to be engaged?

Although defining social objectives is important, it is impossible for us to engage everybody in the society for any impact assessment exercise, for the simple reason of practicality. Indeed, it may not be necessary based on theories of social organization. Values are never fixed. Neither are they entirely unstable and individual. Any group of stakeholders involved can in one way or another reflect the values of the society, but only partially. A group of stakeholders engaged has, as a delimited set among all, always already implied that the social objectives agreed upon among them may be disputed when some more different individuals or groups are engaged.

How are we going to delimit and identify a group of relevant stakeholders? To do so, we will have to start an exercise of stakeholder analysis.

Social impact assessment is essentially a type of practice-based research/assessment. Primarily, it is not an academic exercise of enquiry or theory building. Rather, it is conducted in response to some

practical concerns. Many SIA projects that we previously conducted are donor-driven projects. Experiences elsewhere in the West also show that at the beginning stage, as we are now in Hong Kong, SIA would tend to be driven by funders, for the obvious reason that they would like to understand what impact their social investment can generate.

Given the above, the scope of engagement can only be practically assessed case by case. Assessors can brainstorm with the project holders and list out all possible stakeholders of the project concerned. Based on this list, they can make a decision on which groups among all are most relevant and materially impacted. Again, the word "social" in social impact assessment has already implied all social beings in the society will in theory be in one way or another affected by any action of anybody. But in a practice-based setting, which groups are most relevant and materially impacted are not difficult to determine. Drawing a map of stakeholders may help you get some insights.

So long as we adhere to the most basic principle of scientific inquiry of transparency, and we provide a clear account of how that decision is made, subjecting the entire piece of assessment to public scrutiny, the assessors should be able to make a reasonable decision as to what is the scope of engagement. For practical purpose, only if the boundary is delimited can a proper stakeholder engagement, hence social impact assessment, be conducted.

A certain defined scope of engagement at any given point of time should be subject to further modification throughout the process of engagement. Usually, the stakeholder groups you have decided to engage may provide you with good insights on other groups you should be consulting even though it may not be within your initial scope. It is always advisable to treat your stakeholders' opinions seriously. SIA starts with stakeholder engagement because they give you most important insights on social objectives.

Steps in Stakeholder Engagement

1. Conduct a stakeholder analysis by asking a number of basic questions: Who are the stakeholders? How many types of stakeholders? General tips are:

    - The target beneficiary of the project is always the most important group of stakeholders.
    - The funder/investor of the project is another important group of stakeholders.
    - There is another group of stakeholders who can be identified "social observers." They usually are the policy advocates, practitioners, researchers or experts of the social cause concerned.
    - The group which is taking the role of catalyst is the implementer.

2. Draw up a map of stakeholders.
3. Starting with the implementer and funder, who have a set of outcome in mind to achieve, identify different groups of stakeholders of at least two levels of significance: The core stakeholders and the non-core ones.
4. Asking why they are so distinguished
5. Using our social impact model to map out, as hypotheses, how those impact dimensions may be relevant to these stakeholders
6. Setting up meetings or focus groups to talk with your core stakeholders.

7. If the stakeholders involved are regularly met in your day-to-day operation, then you can make a judgment on whether separate meetings are required
8. For new group of stakeholders, you should always set up meeting to discuss with them what they consider as impacts.
9. Determining which of the non-core groups of stakeholders you can practically arrange to meet up with.
10. Verifying social objectives and outcome areas/impact dimensions
11. Relating the programme objectives with some bigger social objectives which your stakeholders identify with.
12. Identification of indicators where the stakeholders see as most important or relevant

Chapter 3: Objectives and Outcome Measurement

Introduction

Any social programme or project is supposed to be guided by its theory of change, in which the implementer specifies what are expected to take place with a specific set of inputs and actions. Operationally, in assessing the social impact, we need to assess whether and how the programme objectives and the social objectives are achieved before we can account for the social values of the programme. This Chapter will mainly focus on how programme objectives and outcome can be measured operationally.

Establishing Baseline and Assessment Design

In the preceding Chapter, we define social objectives in terms of expected social changes. In any assessment of whether such expected social changes have taken place, we need to establish a baseline against which programme outcomes can be measured. The baseline can be understood as a contingent description of what the concerned individuals, community and project would be like if there were no such a programme or if the programme were to be organized differently. The baseline serves as a reference point against which changes and their magnitude in the outcome areas and indicators can be assessed.

Any evaluative research or assessment will concern itself with establishing a baseline. There are many research designs which help us to consider how a baseline can be established. Three of these designs will be discussed here, namely one-group pretest-posttest design, pretest-post test control group design and the one-shot design. They are discussed because a practice-based approach to SIA has to take into account the practical constraints which NGOs or other social implementers may face. These designs may be more relevant for these implementers in that sense.

The One Group Pretest – Posttest Design
The one group Pretest – Posttest design is the most commonly used method for assessing change as a result of a programme or project intervention. Such design involves observing or measuring the concerned individuals, community or project before the programme or project commences (the pretest) and then observing them again (the posttest) after the programme or project (the independent variable), based on an agreed set of outcome areas and their corresponding indicators. The result obtained from the pretest becomes the baseline against which the posttest result can be measured and compared. Any difference (or change) found after the programme can then be said to be the consequences of the programme or project.

It is obvious that there are a number of rival explanations to account the changes found based on this kind of designs. For instance, the changes in the beneficiaries may happen anyway simply because of time. *Maturity* is one of the obvious rival explanations to the programme or project. In some cases, the beneficiaries may find the programme useless during the programme and they may have dropped out of it before the posttest. *Dropout* is another rival explanation which may render the attribution of change to the programme or project invalid.

The Pretest – Posttest Control Group Design
To rule out the rival explanations, a control group may be needed. The pretest-posttest control group design involves setting up two groups, namely, an experimental group and a control group, measuring and comparing the changes and their magnitudes in the experimental group and in the control group. That means when the programme organizer recruits the concerned beneficiaries to join their programme, they need also to recruit a control group who are either not going to receive the programme, not going to receive the same sort of programme, or are going to receive the programme treatment at a time later than the experimental group. The programme organizer should use the same criteria to recruit all beneficiaries, who should then be randomly assigned to the experimental group (i.e. group of subject who will receive the programme treatment) and the control group respectively.

With the data gathered from the control group, if changes are found in the beneficiaries in the experimental group but not the control group, then more evidences are provided for the assessor to believe that the changes observed are a result of the programme or project.

Despite the result coming from this pretest posttest control group design seems to be more rigorous, the technical complexity of setting up a control group may be higher than that of the one group pretest-posttest design. For example, to run a control group, the assessor needs to carefully design what the experimental criteria are, how many of them be and its level of specificity. Besides, the implementer also needs to face the ethical issue in running a control group where the subject will receive no, partial or deferred treatment only.

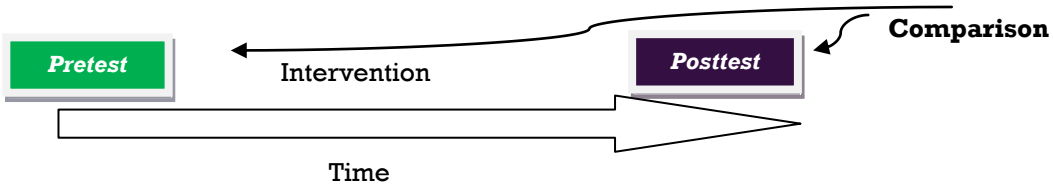
The One-Shot Design (or the Posttest Only Design)
Practically speaking, the decision to assess the programme outcome may not be made before the commencement of the programme. In a practice-based setting, it is often that the programme may have started already but a decision on impact assessment is made. The One-Shot Design can be applied under this circumstance.

The One-Shot Design means that after a programme or project is implemented, data are collected to determine the outcomes of the programme. In this case, it is obvious that the baseline can no longer be established before the programme. What is practically feasible is that the assessor identifies or designs the measurement tools in a way that allows him/her to re-construct the baseline based on the information provided by the data sources. For example, in a questionnaire for the beneficiaries, we can ask them to assess and report retrospectively the situation or state they are in before the programme and compare the situation or state after.

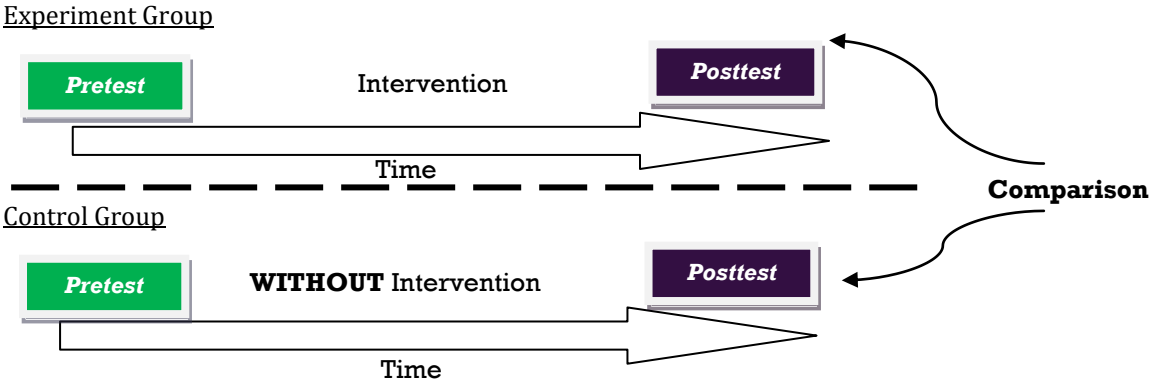
The merit of using this design is that it is easy to administrate and the cost of administration is relatively lower than the aforementioned designs. However, the assessor has to trade off some degree of internal validity and reliability. It is particularly the case when the baseline data is related to the emotion or psychological status of individuals, which is extremely difficult for them to recall exactly how they are before. And even if the baseline data is related their behaviors in the past, the subject may have memory loss or scattered memories only. Hence, the baseline constructed retrospectively in this design may not be as reliable or accurate as those having a pretest arrangement.

Figure 1 –Different Assessment Design

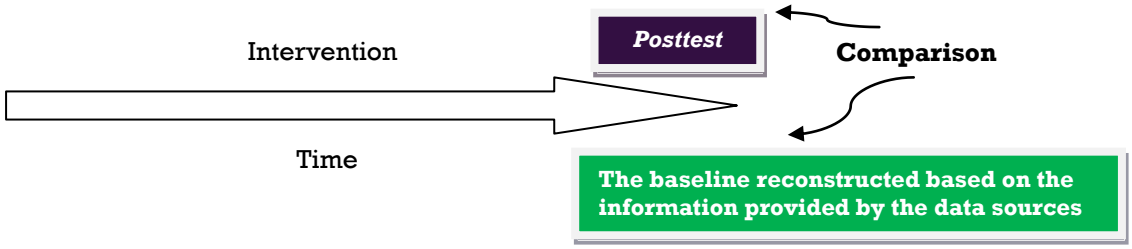
1. The One Group Pretest – Posttest Design



2. The Pretest-Posttest Control Group Design



3. The One-shot Design (or the Posttest Only Design)



Measuring Outcome: From Concepts to Indicators

After deciding the method to construct a baseline for assessing the changes, we should be thinking about how the outcome areas are measured, whether as baseline or as result.

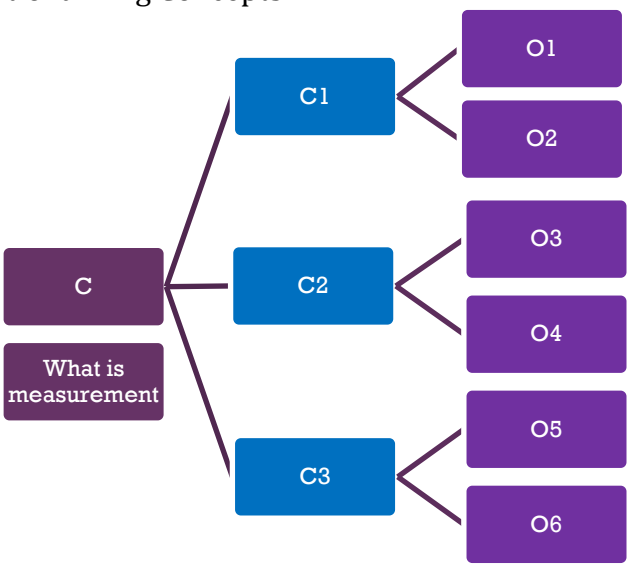
Measurement necessitates a question of what we intend to measure. Whatever design we are using, we need to understand what it is that we are trying to measure. Referring to our framework of social impacts, we have specified a number of dimensions of impacts. Based on that framework, what we are trying to measure are these dimensions as concepts. In other words, to carry out a measurement process, we need:

1. To have a concept at hand that you would like to measure;
2. To specify the conceptual properties of that concept;

3. To identify observable indicators based on these properties;
4. With the indicators at hand, you can assign numbers or labels for measurement.

Hence, the whole measurement process is in fact a process moving from conceptualization (abstract) to operationalization (concrete). Figure 1 below is an illustration to the pathway for moving from concepts to observable indicators.

Figure 2 –Operationalizing Concepts



C stands for "concept"; O stands for "observable indicator."

As shown in Figure 2, the process of measurement starts with a theoretical concept (C in Figure 2). At times, we may want to breakdown the abstract concept into several sub-concepts (C1, C2 and C3). To operationalize a concept, we may ask what exactly the concept means. However, for operationalization, this question may not help because it may result in further abstract conceptual discussion while what you need are operational tools. It may help by asking what a concept *refers to* in terms of behaviors, attitudes, emotions and so. Essentially, to develop such a concept to something observable and thus measurable, we need to identify some indicators (O1 to O6), or proxies, which are believed to representing the concept in question in an observable and measurable sense. With these indicators at hand, we can then go about observing the individuals, community or project concerned.

Putting this understanding in the context of conducting SIA, the social impact(s) you agreed with your stakeholders can be viewed as the "concepts" you would like to measure. To assess the agreed social impact meaning that you need to spell out the properties of the social impact and pick out appropriate observable indicators for measurement.

Take the concept "social inclusion" as an example. Theoretically, social inclusion is "the process of improving the terms for individuals and groups to take part in society"[1]. Individuals and groups here are communities of people who are systematically blocked for access of rights, opportunities and

[1] http://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/socialdevelopment/brief/social-inclusion

resources. Underlying by a certain perspective on social inclusion, we can further breakdown the concept of "social inclusion" to rights, opportunities and resources to take part in society.

Rights, opportunities and resources are all concepts to be operationally defined and measured. The assessor therefore needs to come up with a set of observable indicators. To facilitate deliberation, we can always ask ourselves: How would we consider we are being socially included? What constitutes our feeling of being socially included? For instance, behaviorally, what type of behaviors we see as an indication that we have an "opportunity to take part in society"? Could seeing the ethnic minority students (EM) to have various choices on extracurricular activities and career development be an observable indicator of "opportunity to take part in society"? Attitudinally, assessor may ask the employees if they welcome and ready to hire EM students to be an indicator of "opportunity to take part in society". All these are examples of how we can develop a concept to observable indicators.

Figure 3 –Operationalizing Concepts for Social Inclusion

C stands for "concept"; O stands for "observable indicator."

Measuring Outcome: From Indicators to Tools

Once indicators are developed and confirmed, we can develop tools to collect data about these indicators. In theory, we can develop tools which are suitable for quantitative approach and qualitative approach.

People in the field of SIA do talk about qualitative approach. However, to the best of our knowledge, rarely do people practice it. To be exactly, not many conduct SIA based *purely* on qualitative approach in Hong Kong. The primary reason is that SIA is usually intended to serve the interests of the stakeholders. The ways that the results of SIA are eventually used usually determine the approach adopted for SIA. In recent years, many funding institutions have been talking about "impact investing", and they have been looking for ways to quantify the impacts to justify investment decisions and demonstrate investment returns. Qualitative results may not be treated as powerful as the quantitative evidences by these institutions.
That said, some are not only interested to obtain figures to justify investment decisions or demonstrate investment returns. They are not only interested in knowing what changes have taken place or what magnitude of changes are observed, but also how changes have been experienced. They may adopt both quantitative and qualitative approach to data collection.

For practical reason, this guidelines and protocols have primarily focused on quantitative approach. However, we have experienced using both quantitative and qualitative approach to conduct our SIA and demonstrated how a project achieved its objectives and created impacts.

The primary tool for quantitative approach we usually use for conducting SIA is questionnaire. It can take two forms. One is a standard questionnaire distributed to individual beneficiaries or other stakeholders from whom we intend to collect opinion or data. The other is a data form for collecting project administration and financial data mainly from the programme or project's organizers or implementers.

Our experiences of using our framework of social impact, in which we have spelled out a few major component concepts of social impact, tell that it will be more convenient to gather a set of measurement tools to measure the concepts that are commonly used. In our experiences, we usually adopted some measurement tools and put them into our questionnaire to become our tools for data collection. Concepts such as "self-esteem", "social capital", "participation", "quality of life" etc. are among the most commonly used constructs that we intend to measure to demonstrate impacts on individuals and community. To this end, we have been making attempt to gather all those freely available validated measurement tools for those interested in conducting SIA to use. Readers may refer to our website on SIA to obtain these measurement tools[2].

Steps in Measuring Outcome

1. Identifying a design for outcome assessment
2. Determining the stages at which data collection, hence measurement, is required.
3. Determining major outcome areas which you intend to measure.
4. Mapping out the concepts underlying the concerned outcome areas
5. For each of the concepts involved, identifying observable indicators, as proxies of the concepts.
6. Designing measurement tools and, if needed, identifying indicators which are to be measured by validated measurement tools

[2] http://sia.hkcss.org.hk/index.php?lang=eng&action=download

Chapter 4: Accounting for Value and Impact

Introduction

In the preceding chapters, we have already gone through a process of assessment based on the theory of change. Based on a certain set of outcome indicators, as proxies of the expected outcomes, we can ascertain what changes have been effected by a particular programme or project.

However, outcomes often are not easily intelligible to the general public while public intelligibility is actually very important for SIA. Remember, we start our process with an attempt to address a social cause, with a certain social objective in mind. For example, you may want to attack poverty problem in Hong Kong and you have established a social objective as alleviation of poverty in Hong Kong through a programme or project, say, a food assistance programme. Yet, you may be attempting to run this food assistance programme to collect food from restaurants or hotels and deliver the food to charity organizations. At the programme level, you may only aim to make sure the food is not contaminated in the process of delivery. While this can be an important outcome of your programme, this is more immediately meaningful to you as the programme implementer/funder than other stakeholders in the society. For most of the people in the general public, this outcome may not be relevant to them.

Some programme may be concerned with some intangible goods like self-esteem, self-efficacy and so on, which may be good outcomes in itself but may not be perceived as relevant, unless they are translated into something intelligible with reference to the original social objective. The question core to this part of SIA is: what do the outcomes of the programme mean?

From Theory of Change to Theory of Accounting

The theory of accounting in SIA generally deals with three issues.

First, it is the *social relevance* of the change created. Referring to the food assistance programme above, food safety or delivery efficiency has to be translated into something related to the original social cause or social objective to stay socially relevant because that is where the social consensus (originated from our stakeholders' engagement) lies at. Unless the implementer is able to tell what food safety or delivery efficiency means to poverty alleviation, the social objective, the value of the programme cannot be fully accounted for.

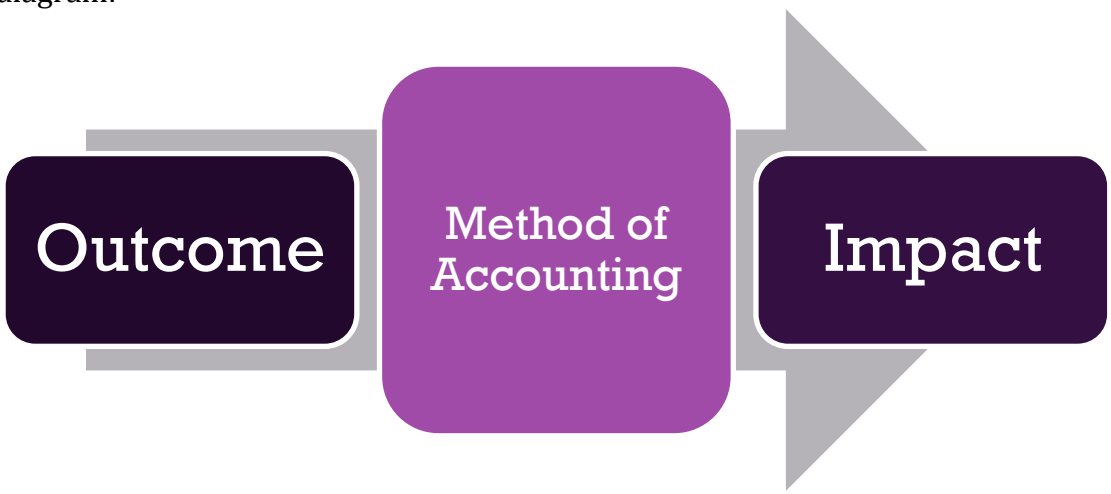
The second issue is *social acceptance* of the unit of accounting in the process. The issue is essentially about identifying a widely accepted unit of accounting that is used in the process of accounting for the changes created. The most widely accepted and readily available unit of accounting in our society that people may think of is *dollar*. Dollar has a level of social acceptance that is almost second to none in our society. Most of the people generally accept (or act as if they accept) that money is a convenient unit of value measurement.

Related to the second, the third issue pertains to *social comparability*. To account for and compare different values of different outcomes, we need to rely on a unit of measurement which is at least weighable in a relative manner. That is to say, a measurement of an ordinal scale will be the basic requirement so that the assessor will be able to determine the position, in terms of value, of different outcomes under comparison. A better measurement, of course, will be of a ratio scale. Again, dollar is one among all of such level of measurement. It allows an ordinal comparison, say, 100-dollar note is better than a 50-dollar note, as well as a precise calculation of value difference, say, 10 dollars are 1 dollar more than 9. And, arbitrarily, people prefer 10 to 9 dollars.

In Hong Kong, many engaged in SIA are therefore very much attracted by the model of Social Return on Investment (SROI), because SROI champions a method of accounting for social impacts/values based firmly on monetization.

Conceptualizing Value Accounting

Accounting for the value of an outcome, as said above, is to ask for the meaning of an outcome, say self-esteem, which is achieved. To visualize the process of accounting, we can construct the following diagram:



The diagram depicts that using a certain "method of accounting", we shall be able to convert an outcome achieved into social value, i.e. something meaningful to the social (the public). Put it differently in terms of the 3 issues of accounting, it is a translation of an outcome into something that is "socially relevant", "socially acceptable", and "socially comparable." The functional purpose of accounting, or translating an outcome into value, is ultimately to provide evidence which is intelligible not only to the implementer or programme designer/manager who is knowledgeable about the programme itself, but also to stakeholders who know very little about the programme but are concerned with the social impact/value of the programme.

Value Reference

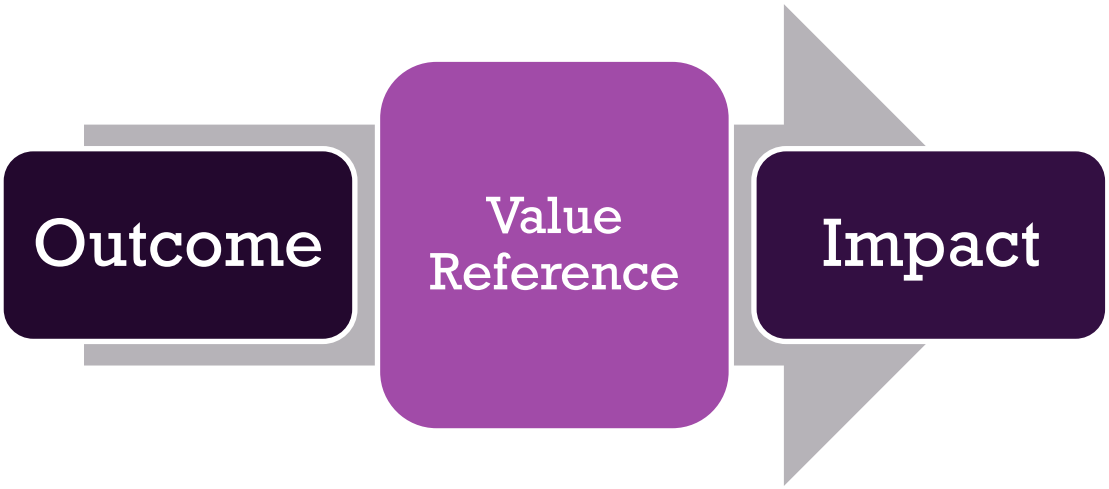
To account for the value of an outcome, we need to identify tools which provide information about the values of the social objectives concerning the programme in question. Obviously, attaching a precise and accurate value to a social object, say health of the people, is like venturing into the impossible.

Notwithstanding that for many people health is invaluable, different people certainly value health differently and the same person or group of persons may value health differently at different times. In other words, having a universal and permanent value is not possible.

Neither is it necessary, indeed, to obtain a universal and permanent value of social object. Methodologically, what is needed is a *value reference* that is consistently used in an assessment or in different assessments involving impact comparison of different programmes.

A value reference can be conceived as a scheme, constructed or given at any point of time, which provides you with data on the marginal value of any marginal change (increase or decrease) of an outcome. Such scheme is supposed to be one which *grossly* represents the value assigned to a particular social object by the public. Thus, the scheme is essentially a reflection of a mediated collective valuation which can never be truly reflective of the subjective valuation of each and every person within the collective. It can only be a reference.

Using the health example, a value reference will be a scheme showing how much extra value is generated with an extra health outcome produced. As an analogy, it can be understood as a currency converter between a currency of which you don't know the value and the one you are using daily. Korean Won or Lira Italia are good examples of the former. An ordinary person in Hong Kong may not know by heart how much value a Korean Won or Lira Italia is worth. But you can always google to find a converter to convert it into the value of Hong Kong dollars. Same as the value of Korean Won or Lira in terms of Hong Kong dollars, the value of the social objectives may change from time to time and may be valued differently by different people.



Choice of Value Reference

In recent years, many people in the field of SIA prefer value to be monetized for reasons of social acceptance and social comparability. Whether monetization is the only way, or the best way, of assigning a value to a social object is very debatable. A social and political philosopher Michael Sandel has a famous proposition that once a price is attached to a social good, its social value will be diminished. In other words, money does not just reflect the value of the social object in question, but also *transforms* it. Yet, in the practice-based setting, you may need to conduct a value accounting

based on a monetization for many different practical reasons. Hence, a bit of introduction to different choices of value reference for monetization purpose is necessary.

There are different methods of value accounting under the monetization approach. *Cost-saving method* or *cost-reduction* method is the most commonly used. It is a method to identify the cost which would have been incurred without the programme under assessment. Cost saving method, however, has a shortcoming as a method of social value accounting because in the process of accounting the cost being saved, an undesirable social meaning may be tacitly conferred at the same time, namely that the beneficiaries are the cost (burden) of the society.

Other than the cost-related methods, there are methods which are more *value-based,* such as "stated preference method" or "revealed preference method." However, these methods are operationally quite difficult to implement. Part of the reason is that, as explained above, attaching a price to a social object may diminish its value. More importantly however, many people find it hard to state a preference or reveal a preference even if choices of objects are available for comparison.

A value reference does not have to be data showing the financial value of a social object, as SROI champions. It can be non-financial data, which however may not be as intelligible as the financial data. Yet, non-financial data have certain qualities which financial data are not comparable. Social impact assessment is fundamentally about explication of social values generated by programme or projects which are intended to fulfill a social mission. Social investors, practitioners or other stakeholders are attracted to this sector or area of work of the "social" primarily because of the social meanings. Imagine if we speak of social value purely in monetary terms in front of all these groups of people sharing a social mission or being prepared to hear about how the programme or project is to fulfill the social mission. How would they think about your programme or project if its value is presented in purely monetary terms? On the other hand, as said above, SIA places great emphasis on stakeholder engagement. The flip side of the intelligibility of financial data is that it may pre-maturely draw a closure of a possibly engaging discussion of what is truly socially valuable and impactful among stakeholders.

That said, this is not to say that we should not account for the social value by monetization. Rather, we should be cautious of the shortcoming of using a measure which is too readily intelligible as to take its arbitrariness for granted in our social valuation process. One way of dealing with the issue is to treat those financial figures not as direct reflection of the true value but indexes whose meanings are to be revealed and constructed in actual contexts of practice. Using the hotmeal programme mentioned above, eventually it was found that the money saved by the beneficiaries due to the meals provided was a few hundreds. For an average income earner, it may not be very significant. However, for the low-income beneficiaries, it accounts for a very substantial proportion of their income. An average person in the society shall be able to see the value (meaning) of those few hundreds in the situation of the low-income beneficiaries and understand that the value created is much more than the actual dollar value.

Identification or Construction of Value Reference and Accounting for Value

In general, there are two ways we can obtain a value reference to account for the social object concerning us.

The first is to search for and identify it from existing sources. Going for the monetizing approach, cost schemes of different public services or pricing schemes used by private practitioners of services of public or social nature can be good value references. The famous Peterborough Pilot Social Impact Bond project in UK is one good example which is run based on a scheme of cost of re-offending available from the concerned government department. (Nicholls, Alex and Emma Tomkinson, 2013) Similarly, cost figures on money spent on subsidized health care for in-patients or out-patients can also be such value reference of how much marginal cost can be saved if people's level of health can be improved by a programme or project. Same for education, housing, environment, social welfare, employment and so on. A collection of all these value data will allow social impact assessors to account for the outcomes that they produce in monetary terms easily.

The availability of value reference without resorting to monetary value depends mainly on the availability of territory-wide research data that capture how people values different social objects that programme or projects usually desire to pursue. The Social Indicators project by the Chinese University of Hong Kong can be a practically accessible value reference because the data can provide evidence of how people in Hong Kong value different social objects. However, data from such kind of survey do not have the same level of immediacy in terms of its expression of the value of a certain social object. With this value reference, we will be able to know how much rating people assign to, say, alleviation of poverty, enhancement of health and so on (or how many assign favorable rating to such social objectives). If a certain number of people living in poverty are helped to get out of poverty, then these data will be able to provide good reference about how people in the territory would likely think about the programme's outcome. Precise calculation of the value magnitude is however relatively difficult, though not entirely impossible.

The second way of obtaining a value reference is to construct it by yourself. Apparently, this can be done by conducting a territory-wide value survey as the one conducted by CUHK mentioned above. This however is not always practically feasible for various reasons. A more feasible approach will be to ask the respondents for information about their second best options when you are collecting the outcome data. In conducting the impact assessment on the hotmeal service mentioned above, the beneficiaries were asked how much money they would have had to spend without the hotmeal service on meal and how they spent the money saved with the hotmeal. The information allowed us to explore the second best option to food in the daily life context. In that assessment, we found that the beneficiaries did save up a good proportion of money. That in itself serves to indicate the value of the programme. A contrast between the meals obtained from the programme and the second best, which was found to be health care service, could render the real life situation facing the beneficiaries for readers to get an intuitive understanding of the value of the meals to the beneficiaries. A low-price decent meal by itself for people who normally can have reasonably decent meal already may not be seen as valuable. But for people who are faced with a hard choice between health and food, the value of a low-price decent meal would become very significant. Outcome data revealing this valuation will be more intelligible for any average person in the society.

Steps in Value/Impact Accounting

To summarize, you may follow the following steps in accounting for value and impact of your programme:

1. Having a set of outcome of the programme
2. Stating your theory of accounting linking the outcome and the value conceptually
3. Identifying or constructing a value reference, based either on a cost saving method or value-based method.
4. Calculating the value of the outcome by showing how many units of value (or how much if the unit of value in question is dollar) the produced outcome is worth. The value reference will be the valuation scheme by which you can assess the units of value.
5. Assessing the magnitude of impact:
   - Monetization approach:
     i. Determining the cost of input
     ii. Determining the monetary value of the outcome
     iii. Calculating the impact, as a ratio of value generated to unit of cost
   - Non-monetization approach:
     i. Determining indicators of input
     ii. Describing the depth or breadth of the influence of the outcome at different levels
     iii. Comparing the input and the influence of the outcome at different levels

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