Impact Measurement and Management for Sustainable Development Goals

15 Impact Data Categories Checklist

The SDG Impact Standards ask you to set goals and analyze outcomes across the 5 dimensions of impact – WHAT, WHO, HOW MUCH, CONTRIBUTION, and RISK. To do that, the Standards and the Impact Management Project detail 15 data categories that help you consider information across all 5 dimensions.

Consider the 15 data categories a useful checklist, helping you think through the different kinds of data you may collect. In practice, few organizations decide to collect and manage data across ALL 15 categories. But whether you are starting from scratch or evaluating an impact management structure you already have in place, the categories can serve as a frame to determine what trade-offs you may need to make, and how you can strive to collect more complete data over time, to enable better decision-making.

WHAT

Outcome level
The level of outcome experienced by the Stakeholder when engaging with your enterprise. The outcome level measures some aspect of wellbeing that can be positive or negative, intended or unintended.

Outcome threshold
Level of outcome that is "good enough" according to societal goals or ecological limits. Outcome threshold defines the acceptable range for the outcome; performance outside the acceptable range is negative/unsustainable, performance within the acceptable range is positive/sustainable. Can be set locally, nationally or internationally, and should represent the affected Stakeholder's perspective.

Importance of outcome to stakeholder
The Stakeholder's view of whether the outcome they experience is important (relative to other outcomes). Where possible, the people experiencing the outcome provide this data, although third party research may also be considered. For the environment, scientific research provides this view.

SDG target
The specific SDG target(s) that the outcome relates to; an outcome may relate to more than one SDG target, or may relate to sustainable development outcomes other than SDG targets.

WHO

Stakeholder
Type of stakeholder experiencing the impact

Geographic boundary
Geography where the Stakeholder experiences the outcome

Outcome level at baseline
Level of outcome being experienced by a Stakeholder before engaging with, or otherwise being affected by, your intervention. Note that stakeholders experiencing an outcome level below threshold are considered "underserved."

Stakeholder characteristics
Socio-demographic, behavioral, and ecosystem characteristics of the Stakeholders that enable segmentation.

HOW MUCH

Scale   represents the number of individuals experiencing the outcome

Depth   represents the degree of change experienced by the Stakeholder, between the outcome level at baseline and the outcome level after the intervention.

Duration   represents the time period over which a Stakeholder experiences an outcome.

CONTRIBUTION

Depth
Counterfactual   is the estimated degree of change that would have happened anyway – without the enterprise.

Duration
counterfactual   is the estimated time period for which the outcome would have lasted anyway – without the enterprise.

RISK

Risk Type   The type of risk that may undermine delivery of the expected impact

Risk Level   Risk level is assessed by combining the likelihood of the risk occurring, and the severity of the consequence for stakeholders if it does

Checklist: Document the data categories you already collect, and what additional data you could add across categories. This template includes examples from a maternity clinic serving women in South Africa to illustrate each data category.

	SDG Outcome:	Reduce infant mortality	
↗	**Outcome level**	2% infant mortality rate	
—	**Outcome threshold**	1.2% infant mortality defined by SDG 3.2	
❗	**Importance of outcome to stakeholder**	Extremely important. Any infant mortality is considered too much for the family.	
#	**SDG target**	SDG 3.2	
👤	**Stakeholder**	Prenatal and post-natal mothers and their infants	
📍	**Geographic boundary**	Rural areas in South Africa	
◓	**Outcome level at baseline**	4% infant mortality rate	
☰	**Stakeholder characteristics**	Women in rural South Africa, 14-40 years old, first time & repeat birthers, living below poverty line	
📊	**Scale**	2000 pregnant mothers per year and their infants	
⏬	**Depth**	2% infant mortality compared to 4% at baseline before clinic opened	
📅	**Duration**	95% of infants who survive birth are still alive 5 years later	
⏬	**Depth counterfactual**	Region has seen infant mortality decrease from 3% to 2.7% over the last 5 years	
⏬	**Duration counterfactual**	On average, 95% of infants who survive birth are still alive 5 years later	
⚠	**Risk type**	Execution risk if staff are not trained correctly/adequately, or there is staff turnover	
⚠	**Risk level**	Medium likelihood of risk occurring, high consequences	

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—	**Outcome threshold**	
⊡!	**Importance of outcome to stakeholder**	
#	**SDG target**	
👤	**Stakeholder**	
📍	**Geographic boundary**	
◗	**Outcome level at baseline**	
☰	**Stakeholder characteristics**	
▁▃▅	**Scale**	
⌄⌄	**Depth**	
📅	**Duration**	
⬧	**Depth counterfactual**	
⬧	**Duration counterfactual**	
⚠	**Risk type**	
⚠	**Risk level**	

UNDP

SDG Impact

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