



Using the SDG Outcomes Map

Use our SDG Outcomes Map to organize your data needs based on your most important SDG Outcomes and the 15 data categories underneath the 5 dimensions of impact. Consider what data categories are part of your current system, and what additional categories would help you make better decisions and improve impact going forward. Remember, you are striving for improvement over time, knowing you will always be making trade-offs in the data you can collect.

Our SDG Outcomes Map is adapted from one created by [Social Value International](#). The spreadsheet file contains the following tabs:

- A blank **template of the outcomes map** that you can customize for your organization
- A partially completed **example outcomes map** for Grace, our social enterprise manager running a chain of maternity clinics serving South Africa
- A blank **template with additional space to input performance data** and compare to targets, thresholds, and counterfactuals
- A partially completed **example performance section** showing how Grace's SDG outcomes compare to targets, thresholds, and counterfactuals

Additional information about each section of the outcomes map can be found below.

TEMPLATE – OUTCOMES MAP

WHAT/WHO:

The first section of the outcome map asks you to explain the SDG Outcome - the WHAT/WHO combination you want to have impact on. This may be related to a specific SDG Target. Remember your description should articulate if you are reducing a negative outcome or improving a positive outcome. The ABC goal shows the level of change you are aiming to achieve - whether that be reducing a negative outcome, maintaining impact above the sustainable development threshold, or bringing an outcome from below the threshold to above the threshold in a substantial way for an underserved group.

For the WHO section, you should be as specific as possible in describing the primary stakeholder or stakeholders you want to impact. Remember the data categories ask you to consider the geographical boundary and other demographic or behavioral characteristics that enable you to segment your stakeholders to make better decisions about how you impact different groups.

GRACE EXAMPLE: For example, Grace wants to segment the pregnant women she serves into urban and rural categories. As she evolves her impact management practices over time, she may develop hypotheses about additional factors that result in differences in outcomes, and may want to test them with additional data. For example, she may decide to segment patients into four categories: urban 1st time delivery, urban experienced delivery, rural 1st time delivery, rural experienced delivery.

IMPACT THESIS - HOW MUCH, CONTRIBUTION:

The next section encourages you to start with the impact thesis you developed for each SDG Outcome - that is, a description of the specific activities you think will lead to a certain outcome. This is where you can list the specific metrics you want to track to gauge if your if/then impact thesis is proven true. Note that you may want to list a number of different metrics to track for each SDG Outcome. If you use IRIS metrics or metrics from some other standard, you can specify that in this section.

In this section you can also articulate the relevant sustainable development threshold for this outcome. Remember this is the “good enough” threshold set by policy or industry standards, or by asking stakeholders what range of outcomes would be acceptable to them.

Target setting: When setting targets, remember that your goal level - A, B, or C - specifies the type of performance you are targeting - either reducing a negative outcome but not yet meeting the threshold for sustainable development, continuing to perform above the threshold for sustainable development, or providing a substantial change for an underserved stakeholder group.

Note that when you set targets, the UN SDG Impact Standards ask that you consider your size and scale and ability to contribute your organization's share to the global performance required to achieve the goal by 2030 and to set ambitious and rigorous goals.

Next, you can label the type of target - whether this is a scale, depth, or duration target.

GRACE EXAMPLE: We’ve shown in the example the different metrics that Grace wants to track related to her SDG Outcome about reducing infant mortality and increasing the share of renewable energy at her clinics.

CONTRIBUTION:

The contribution section will help you analyze whether changes you see in outcomes can be attributed to your efforts. There is space in the SDG Outcomes Map to list your internal baseline, if you want to assess an improvement in your performance over time. And there is space to label the outcome level experienced by your WHO population given other available options in the market.

GRACE EXAMPLE: We’ve shown internal baselines for Grace’s clinic based on previous performance. In addition, we’ve shown other counterfactual data that Grace may want to compare future performance against – for example, outcomes at alternative clinics in her area or average outcomes at the country level.

PRIORITIZATION:

If you were to complete these parts of the map for all SDG Outcomes you want to achieve, you would now have a great idealized roadmap for impact management. But we’re dealing with the real world - where you may need to make tradeoffs now in what data you can collect, with a goal of improving over time.

The final section helps you prioritize the most important metrics to actively monitor and manage – those outcomes with high importance to stakeholders and high impact risk. The first column

asks you to articulate how important this outcome is to stakeholders. The second column asks you to rate the level of risk that impact doesn't occur as expected, and has space for you to articulate the types of risk that are most important to pay attention to and mitigate. Consider the risk tolerance of your stakeholders and the impact on them if outcomes are different from what is expected. If you have limited resources and need to make tradeoffs in what you measure right now (with goals to gather additional data for better decision-making in the future) you might now prioritize the data related to outcomes with high stakeholder materiality and high risk.

GRACE EXAMPLE: We've shown how Grace may rate the stakeholder materiality of each outcome and the impact risk level.

TEMPLATE – PERFORMANCE TRACKING

There is an additional tab for tracking how performance relates to goals. You can copy your SDG Outcomes information into that spreadsheet, and then use the columns on the right to input actual performance.

Many of the cells in this section link to the same data in previous columns, simply to cluster together the relevant information for performance tracking, including:

- Output or outcome
- Target
- Outcome threshold
- Counterfactual

Enter **performance data** in the correct column. Then compare performance data to target, outcome threshold, and counterfactual. You can use the dropdown menu next to each to note whether performance *met or exceeded* or *underperformed* in comparison. The automatic color-coding may help you get a sense of where gaps in performance are clustered.

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