GRANT AGREEMENT NO. 101111120

Deliverable No.: D3.2

Deliverable Title: SIM Programme Content

Lead beneficiary: EFRI UNIRI

Contractual delivery date: 28/2/2025

Actual delivery date: 28/2/2025

www.**simproject**.eu

By
Faculty of Economics and Business, University of Rijeka

Table of contents

www.simproject.eu

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

SHORT INTRODUCTION

The Social Impact Manager (SIM) Programme is a forward-thinking initiative designed to prepare leaders in Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and community engagement to meet the challenges of balancing profitability with sustainability. Developed through the collaboration of top European universities and vocational education providers, under the leadership of the Faculty of Economics and Business of the University of Rijeka (EFRI), this training programme offers an innovative curriculum to empower professionals to drive meaningful social and economic change.

The SIM Programme redefines the role of businesses in society by fostering a new generation of managers who integrate sustainability into corporate strategies while building strong connections with local communities. By aligning business objectives with social impact, the programme equips leaders to navigate the complexities of today's socio-economic environment and contribute to transformative progress.

Structured around five core modules—Corporate Governance and Strategy, Territorial Analysis, Stakeholder Engagement, Project Management, and Impact Assessment and Reporting—the SIM Programme provides participants with the tools and knowledge to lead sustainable change. Each module focuses on key areas such as integrating ESG principles, engaging local stakeholders, managing social impact projects, and effectively assessing and communicating sustainability contributions.

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

MODULE 1: CORPORATE GOVERNANCE AND STRATEGY

Description of Module 1	The first module "Corporate Governance and Strategy" explains: the rationale for including social impact in strategies; value creation and appropriation; ESG integration; business ethics, organisational structure and sustainability in strategy. By participating in this module, students will learn a wide range of concepts and acquire skills critical to understanding and participating in the management and direction of organisations.
Objectives	➢ Understand the importance of incorporating social impact into corporate strategies ➢ Learn about value creation and appropriation ➢ Integrate ESG into corporate strategy ➢ Explore ethics in enterprise and organisational culture ➢ Embed sustainability into internal strategy
Learning Outcomes	➢ **Knowledge:** Define the theory of the firm, value creation, ESG, and ethics ➢ **Skills:** Apply ESG principles in strategy, foster ethical practices, and promote a sustainable culture ➢ **Attitudes:** Advocate for integrating social impact in corporate governance
Duration	➢ 6 hours

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

SUBTOPIC 1: Why should companies include social impact into their strategies?

Aim and scope	➢ Understanding the role of social impact in corporate strategies. ➢ Exploring the relationship between company and society.
Teaching tools	➢ Lectures with lecturers from the academic community and/or from the private sector and/or civil society ➢ Guest speakers ➢ Interactive activities: workshops and role-playing exercises ➢ Case studies ➢ Multimedia Content
Learning Outcomes	➢ LO1: Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the complexity of sustainability dimensions in social and economic terms, and implications in relation to diverse territorial and socio-economic development and planning issues. ➢ LO2: Demonstrate insights into critical conditions that provide a basis for developing and applying transformative planning and projects at the local level.

Why is it important to incorporate social impact into corporate strategies?

In an increasingly interconnected and socially conscious world, discussing social impact in strategic planning has become imperative for organizations across all sectors. Incorporating social impact into strategies not only reflects ethical responsibility but also serves as a critical determinant of long-term success and sustainability. This discourse draws from established academic literature. Its aim is to underscore the necessity of addressing social impact as a core element of strategic frameworks.

Strategic planning traditionally focused on financial profitability and market competitiveness. However, scholars such as Porter and Kramer (2011) argue that businesses must now adopt a "shared value" approach, emphasizing the interdependence between societal well-being and corporate success. Their seminal work *Creating Shared Value* published in the *Harvard Business Review* contends that aligning business strategies with social impact creates opportunities for innovation, market differentiation, and sustainable growth. This paradigm shift reflects a broader recognition that organizations are inextricably linked to the communities and ecosystems in which they operate.

Discussing social impact in strategies is particularly crucial given the mounting global challenges such as climate change, inequality, and resource depletion. These issues underscore the need for organizations to align their objectives with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), a universal framework designed to address pressing global challenges. Sachs (2015) in his work *The Age of Sustainable Development* stresses that organizations play a pivotal role in achieving these goals. Incorporating social impact considerations into strategy allows organizations to contribute meaningfully to the SDGs while fostering resilience and adaptive capacity in a volatile world.

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

Moreover, engaging in discussions about social impact enhances stakeholder trust and engagement, which are vital for organizational legitimacy and longevity. Freeman's (1984) stakeholder theory highlights that organizations must consider the interests of diverse stakeholders, including employees, customers, communities, and investors. Modern stakeholders, particularly millennials and Gen Z, increasingly prioritize ethical practices and social contributions when supporting organizations. Research by Edelman's Trust Barometer (2023) reveals that 89% of global consumers expect organizations to act on social issues. Failing to address these expectations can result in reputational damage and diminished trust, ultimately affecting financial performance.

Critically, embedding social impact into strategy fosters innovation and adaptability. Hart and Milstein (2003) emphasize the role of sustainable strategies in driving technological innovation and market opportunities in their framework, *The Sustainable Value Creation Model*. For example, companies like Tesla have demonstrated how prioritizing social and environmental impact can redefine industry standards while achieving commercial success. Such a case illustrates that discussing social impact is not merely a moral imperative but a strategic advantage in competitive landscapes.

Finally, discussing social impact in strategic planning catalyses cultural and organizational transformation. By prioritizing social outcomes, organizations can cultivate a sense of purpose among employees, thereby improving morale, productivity, and retention. In his book *Start with Why*, Simon Sinek (2009) argues that purpose-driven organizations inspire greater loyalty and performance. Addressing social impact as part of the strategy reinforces the idea that organizations can be a force for good, fostering a culture of responsibility and shared achievement.

Therefore, discussing social impact in strategic planning is no longer optional but a critical necessity in today's complex global environment. As Porter, Kramer, Freeman, Sachs, and others have articulated, integrating social impact into strategies enhances organizational resilience, stakeholder trust, and innovation while aligning with broader societal goals. By making social impact a central focus of strategic discussions, organizations can create a more equitable, sustainable, and prosperous future for all.

Trends in contributing to the society

Social impact initiatives have evolved significantly over the decades, adapting to social and environmental needs and reflecting broader changes in societal values and corporate responsibility. Here is an overview of the major trends and terminology in the development of social impact initiatives, from early philanthropy to today's multifaceted approaches.

The evolution of social impact trends over the past century reflects an expanding awareness of corporate responsibility, a desire to address global issues, and a shift in how businesses perceive their role in society. Early social impact efforts, dating back to the late 19th and early 20th centuries, were rooted in philanthropy. Wealthy individuals and foundations, such as the Carnegie Foundation and the Rockefeller Foundation, led the way by donating to charitable causes and addressing societal issues without expecting a direct return for their businesses. This form of altruistic giving laid the groundwork for more structured approaches that would follow.

By the 1950s, the idea of **Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)** began to take shape, marking the start of a formal commitment from businesses to contribute positively to society. CSR encouraged companies to act ethically, emphasizing practices that respected labor rights, environmental concerns, and fair trade. Initially seen as an ethical obligation, CSR later became integral to brand identity, with businesses using annual reports to highlight their efforts. Through CSR, corporations moved beyond mere profit-making to take ownership of their broader social impact.

The 1980s saw the emergence of **cause marketing**, a new approach that directly linked social causes with consumer engagement. Brands began partnering with nonprofit organizations, combining product sales with social contributions. For example, American Express's partnership with the Statue of Liberty restoration fund allowed customers to feel they were contributing to a cause while purchasing products, creating a sense of shared purpose between companies and consumers.

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

However, cause marketing faced criticism for being overly commercial, as some questioned whether companies were more focused on brand image than genuine impact.

In the 1990s, the **Triple Bottom Line (TBL)** concept, coined by John Elkington, introduced a more holistic perspective on corporate success. Instead of evaluating companies solely on financial performance, TBL encouraged the consideration of social and environmental factors alongside profits, urging businesses to think beyond economic returns. This shift was significant because it expanded CSR's reach by suggesting that sustainable success depended on aligning financial goals with social good.

Social entrepreneurship gained traction in the early 2000s, representing a transformative approach to problem-solving in which entrepreneurs developed innovative solutions to societal challenges, often through profit-driven models. Figures like Muhammad Yunus, founder of the Grameen Bank, showed that businesses could help address global issues such as poverty while generating revenue. Social entrepreneurship further blurred the lines between nonprofit and for-profit sectors, highlighting a new way to approach social impact that combined business acumen with a mission-driven mindset.

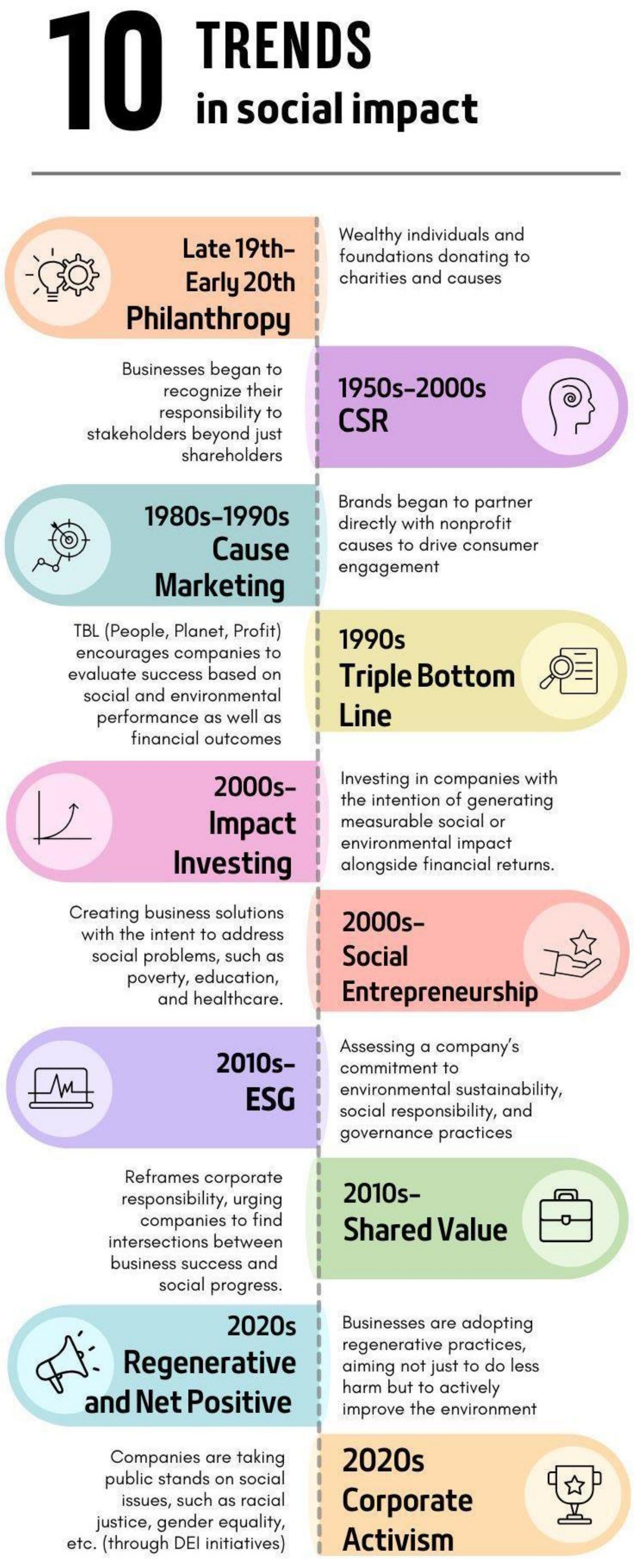
The growth of **impact investing** also began in the 2000s, introducing a financial model that prioritized measurable social or environmental impact alongside profit. This trend encouraged investors to support organizations that aligned with their values, fundamentally shifting the purpose of capital toward sustainability. This form of investing created new opportunities for social impact and attracted investors seeking to make a difference without sacrificing returns.

In the 2010s, **Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG)** criteria gained prominence as stakeholders, particularly investors, sought metrics to assess corporate ethics and sustainability. ESG transformed social impact from an optional initiative to a strategic imperative that helped manage risks, increased transparency, and drove ethical decision-making within organizations. Companies now integrated ESG into their operations and mission, demonstrating to stakeholders that they took social responsibility seriously.

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

Figure 1. Trends in approaches to achieving social impact



Source: Author (https://www.canva.com/design/DAGVifdQ7wE/TpvPkBjg1upwviyeusv1gA/edit?utm_content=DAGVifdQ7wE&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link2&utm_source=sharebutton)

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

The same decade also saw the rise of **shared value and purpose-driven brands**, reflecting a new understanding of social impact as central to business success. This concept, advanced by Michael Porter and Mark Kramer, emphasized finding opportunities where societal needs intersect with business opportunities, transforming social responsibility into a strategy for growth. Purpose-driven brands took this concept further by centering their marketing and operations around a defined mission, aligning themselves with customers who valued ethics and social responsibility.

More recently, the concept of **regenerative and net positive approaches** has arisen in response to urgent environmental challenges. Regenerative practices aim to restore rather than simply reduce harm, calling for companies to actively improve ecosystems through their business practices. Similarly, net positive approaches advocate giving back more than is taken, making companies environmental stewards in a world that requires proactive restoration.

In the 2020s, **corporate activism** and **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)** became central themes. Companies took public stances on social issues like racial justice, gender equality, and LGBTQ+ rights, responding to a public increasingly aware of and invested in social justice. DEI initiatives became a staple of workplace culture, promoting equality and belonging within the workforce, and reinforcing the idea that social responsibility must be reflected internally before it can be credibly promoted externally.

The trajectory of social impact efforts has moved from traditional charity toward **deeply integrated business strategies** that place **social and environmental welfare at the core of operations**. Today, businesses are expected not only to avoid harm but to use their influence and resources to create positive, sustainable change. This shift demonstrates a new understanding that success in the modern world is about more than just profits; it is about a holistic commitment to purpose, progress, and responsibility.

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

SUBTOPIC 2: Value creation and appropriation

Aim and scope	➢ Mechanisms of value creation for stakeholders. ➢ Appropriation of values in socially responsible enterprises.
Teaching tools	➢ Lectures with lecturers from the academic community and/or from the private sector and/or civil society ➢ Case studies (company analysis and/or industry comparisons ➢ Assignments (example: Strategic Analysis)
Learning Outcomes	➢ LO1: Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the complexity of sustainability dimensions in social and economic terms, and implications in relation to diverse territorial and socio-economic development and planning issues.

Value creation and appropriation

The concepts of value creation and appropriation form the foundation of business success and sustainability. Yet, in the context of social impact, these ideas gain a broader and more urgent significance. The traditional focus of value creation, which prioritizes generating economic benefits for firms and shareholders, has evolved. Today, it is increasingly evident that creating and distributing value in a way that benefits society at large is not only a moral imperative but also a strategic necessity. Tools that boost the interplay between value creation, appropriation, and social impact equips companies to thrive in a world where societal expectations of corporate responsibility are higher than ever.

Value creation refers to the process by which businesses develop products, services, or solutions that generate worth, either through innovation, efficiency, or addressing consumer needs. Appropriation, on the other hand, involves capturing a portion of that value to sustain and grow the enterprise. The relationship between these two processes must be carefully managed to ensure that companies not only sustain profitability but also contribute meaningfully to societal well-being. Porter and Kramer (2011) argue that businesses can achieve competitive advantage by aligning value creation with societal progress. The authors highlight that addressing societal challenges - whether through sustainable supply chains or equitable labor practices - enables businesses to tap into new markets and build long-term resilience.

Firms that focus on value creation without considering the broader societal context risk fostering inequity and environmental degradation, undermining their legitimacy and long-term viability. For example, in industries such as extractive mining or fast fashion, companies that maximize short-term profits without regard for sustainable practices often face public backlash, regulatory penalties, and reputational damage. Bansal and DesJardine (2014) argue on the importance of adopting a long-term perspective to balance the trade-offs between immediate financial gains and sustained societal

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

value. Companies have to pay attention to how value is created and appropriated over time – in that way they can ensure development of strategies that are ethical, equitable, and sustainable.

Importantly, discussions around value appropriation must also include equitable distribution among stakeholders. Freeman's (1984) stakeholder theory asserts that businesses thrive when they address the needs and concerns of all stakeholders, including employees, customers, suppliers, and communities. In a world increasingly shaped by income inequality and social disparities, failing to ensure fair value appropriation can lead to social unrest and disrupt business operations.

Awareness about value creation and appropriation in the context of social impact also highlights the role of innovation. Hart and Milstein's (2003) argue that firms that incorporate sustainability into their innovation strategies not only reduce risks but also unlock untapped markets. For example, companies like Unilever have shown how integrating social and environmental goals into their core strategy can result in significant financial and societal gains. By creating products tailored to low-income communities, such as affordable health and hygiene solutions, Unilever captures new market segments while addressing pressing social needs.

Finally, understanding these concepts prepares companies to navigate the complex, interconnected challenges of the modern world. The UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) provide a compelling framework for value creation and appropriation, offering businesses clear priorities to align their strategies with societal impact. By addressing these concepts, companies can not only enhance their profitability and resilience but also contribute to a fairer, more sustainable society. Insights from scholars like Porter, Kramer, Freeman, and Hart demonstrate that the integration of these ideas into corporate strategies is both an ethical and strategic imperative. Through implementing these principles, businesses can learn to balance profit with purpose, ensuring their success aligns with the greater good.

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

SUBTOPIC 3: ESG and integration into corporate strategy

Aim and scope	➢ Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) criteria ➢ Integrating ESG into corporate strategic planning
Teaching tools	➢ Lectures with lecturers from the academic community and/or from the private sector and/or civil society ➢ Interactive activities: workshops and role-playing exercises ➢ Case studies and Real-World Examples ➢ Multimedia Content ➢ Data Analysis and Visualization ➢ Assignments for participants
Learning Outcomes	➢ LO1: Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the complexity of sustainability dimensions in social and economic terms, and implications in relation to diverse territorial and socio-economic development and planning issues. ➢ LO3: Demonstrate understanding of complex structures that influence sustainable development of a territory, such as resources, stakeholder networks, and power relations.

ESG and integration into corporate strategy

The integration of Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) factors into business strategies has become a critical focus for organizations seeking to align profitability with responsibility. ESG integration transcends traditional risk management, representing a proactive approach to fostering sustainability, ethical governance, and social impact. In a world grappling with climate change, social inequality, and increasing calls for transparency, incorporating ESG principles enables businesses to navigate complex challenges while creating shared value. Teaching ESG integration within the framework of social impact is therefore essential for equipping companies with the tools to balance corporate goals with societal needs.

Environmental considerations in ESG highlight the urgent need for businesses to mitigate their ecological footprint and address the global climate crisis. Academic research underscores the necessity of this focus. Integrating environmental strategies, such as reducing greenhouse gas emissions or adopting circular economy models, is not merely a compliance measure but a strategic necessity. Companies like IKEA and Interface have demonstrated that embracing sustainable practices, from renewable energy investments to waste reduction, can enhance efficiency, foster innovation, and build consumer trust. These examples highlight the transformative potential of ESG integration in fostering environmental stewardship while driving business performance.

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

Social impact, the second pillar of ESG, is central to creating equitable and inclusive societies. Addressing issues such as diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), community engagement, and employee well-being ensures that businesses remain connected to the societies they serve. Freeman's (1984) stakeholder theory emphasizes that prioritizing stakeholder interests leads to long-term success. This view is supported by empirical studies, such as Edmans`s (2012) on the link between job satisfaction and firm value, which demonstrates that companies investing in employee satisfaction experience higher financial returns. By integrating social considerations into their strategies, businesses not only fulfill ethical obligations but also enhance their resilience and reputation in an era of heightened societal expectations.

Governance, the third dimension of ESG, focuses on the structures and processes that ensure accountability, transparency, and ethical decision-making. Good governance is a cornerstone of organizational integrity, as highlighted by Shleifer and Vishny (1997) in their work on A Survey of Corporate Governance. They argue that sound governance practices mitigate risks and align management with the interests of stakeholders. Recent corporate scandals, such as those involving data breaches or financial misconduct, underscore the costs of neglecting governance. ESG integration teaches businesses to adopt frameworks such as the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) or the Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD), ensuring robust reporting and accountability.

Moreover, ESG integration is increasingly linked to financial performance and access to capital. Research by Friede, Busch, and Bassen (2015), which aggregates over 2,000 empirical studies in ESG and financial performance, finds a positive correlation between ESG performance and financial outcomes. Investors, too, are placing a premium on ESG considerations. The rise of sustainable investing, with global ESG assets projected to surpass $50 trillion by 2025 (Morningstar, 2022), signals a paradigm shift in capital markets. Companies should become aware that adopting ESG principles ensures they remain attractive to investors who prioritize long-term, impact-driven growth.

Moreover, ESG integration fosters innovation and strategic foresight. Hart and Milstein (2003) argue that incorporating ESG considerations unlocks opportunities for technological advancement and market expansion. For example, Tesla's emphasis on clean energy and electric vehicles has revolutionized the automotive industry while generating significant value for shareholders and society alike. Integrating ESG teaches businesses to identify such opportunities, aligning operational goals with global challenges like the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Therefore, integrating ESG principles into business strategies is not merely a response to societal pressures but a pathway to sustainable success. The academic insights of Rockström, Freeman, Edmans, and others provide compelling evidence that ESG integration enhances resilience, innovation, and profitability while addressing urgent global challenges. By teaching the importance of ESG in the context of social impact, organizations can learn to thrive in a world that demands ethical, inclusive, and sustainable practices. Ultimately, ESG integration offers businesses a framework to align purpose with profit, ensuring their growth contributes positively to society and the environment.

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

SUBTOPIC 4: Ethics in an enterprise

Aim and scope	➢ Importance of ethical conduct in business
Teaching tools	➢ Lectures with lecturers from the academic community and/or from the private sector and/or civil society ➢ Teamwork and brainstorming ➢ Case Studies and Real-Life Examples ➢ Interactive Tools ➢ Polls and Surveys: Ask students about their ethical standpoints or perceptions of common business practices. ➢ Role-Playing and Simulations
Learning Outcomes	➢ LO6: Link proposals, recommendations, and judgments with a reflection on the social and ethical responsibilities of stakeholders in the field.

Ethics in an enterprise

Ethics in enterprise forms the cornerstone of organizational integrity and societal trust, playing an indispensable role in shaping a company's value. Beyond legal compliance, ethics encompasses the moral principles guiding decisions and actions that affect stakeholders and the broader community. In the context of social impact, integrating ethics into corporate strategies ensures that companies not only meet societal expectations but also contribute to the collective good. Teaching ethics within the framework of social impact is essential for equipping businesses to navigate moral complexities while building long-term value.

Ethical behavior in organizations directly influences a company's reputation and stakeholder trust. Freeman's (1984) stakeholder theory underscores the importance of maintaining equitable relationships with all stakeholders -customers, employees, investors, and the community. Ethical lapses, such as those seen in cases like Enron or Volkswagen's emissions scandal, demonstrate how deviations from moral standards can erode trust, lead to financial losses, and damage societal well-being. On the other hand, organizations that prioritize ethical practices, such as IKEA, Tesla or Ben & Jerry's, gain competitive advantage by cultivating loyal customer bases and enhancing brand value. Eccles, Ioannou, and Serafeim (2014) show that companies with strong ethical and sustainability commitments outperform their peers financially and socially over the long term.

Co-funded by the European Union
Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

Ethics also serves as a guide for decision-making in complex, ambiguous situations where laws and regulations may not provide clear directives. Ethical frameworks enable organizations to address dilemmas with integrity, balancing profit motives with societal interests. This capability is critical in addressing global challenges such as climate change, labor rights, and data privacy. For example, companies navigating the use of artificial intelligence (AI) must contend with ethical considerations like bias, surveillance, and accountability. Putting ethics as a core element of business strategy ensures that organizations are equipped to innovate responsibly while safeguarding public trust.

Furthermore, ethics reinforces the internal culture of an organization, shaping employee behavior and organizational resilience. Ethical companies cultivate environments where employees feel respected, valued, and motivated to contribute positively. Ethical leadership creates cultures of accountability and shared purpose (Shein, 2010). This, in turn, drives employee engagement and retention, reducing costs and enhancing productivity. Valentine and Godkin (2016) demonstrate that ethical organizations experience higher levels of employee commitment and morale, which translate into improved performance. By embedding ethics in their culture, businesses can create workplaces that foster innovation and collaboration while aligning with societal values.

Ethics also plays a pivotal role in addressing systemic inequities and promoting social justice. Modern consumers and investors increasingly demand that companies act as forces for good, addressing societal disparities and contributing to collective well-being. Ethical practices such as paying fair wages, ensuring safe working conditions, and avoiding exploitative labor are not merely moral imperatives but strategic necessities in a world where social awareness influences consumer behavior. Edelman’s Trust Barometer (2023) highlights that 73% of consumers expect companies to shape social and political issues, underscoring the centrality of ethics to a company’s value proposition.

Ethics enhances a company’s ability to achieve long-term resilience and sustainability. Organizations that act with moral clarity are better positioned to anticipate and adapt to societal changes, mitigating risks and seizing opportunities in dynamic markets. Porter and Kramer (2011) argue that ethical considerations must be integrated into business strategies to foster innovation and societal progress. By aligning operations with ethical principles, companies not only mitigate risks but also unlock new avenues for growth, such as sustainable product development or inclusive business models.

Ethics is an indispensable component of a company’s value, forming the foundation for trust, resilience, and meaningful social impact. Respecting ethics within the context of social impact prepares businesses to act with integrity, ensuring their success contributes to a just, equitable, and sustainable society. By prioritizing ethics, companies can align their actions with the values of their stakeholders, reinforcing their role as positive agents of change.

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

SUBTOPIC 5: Organizational culture

Aim and scope	➢ Building a culture that supports social impact
Teaching tools	➢ Lectures with lecturers from the academic community and/or from the private sector and/or civil society ➢ Case Studies and Real-Life Examples ➢ Role-Playing and Simulations ➢ Theoretical Frameworks
Learning Outcomes	➢ LO4: Have the ability to use appropriate methodologies for data gathering and analysis, integrate various knowledge, handle complexity, and formulate proposals and solutions acknowledging the limits and constraints of specific territories and communities.

Organizational culture

Organizational culture serves as the heartbeat of any company, shaping its values, behaviors, and decision-making processes. It is the invisible force that influences how employees interact, how leaders govern, and how stakeholders perceive the company. When aligned with a commitment to social impact, organizational culture can become a powerful driver of innovation, trust, and long-term value creation. Succeeding to embed social impact within a company`s cultural framework is essential to ensuring that companies operate not only as profit-generating entities but as contributors to societal well-being. Culture is not static but evolves based on internal dynamics and external challenges. In this context, aligning organizational culture with social impact initiatives ensures that companies remain adaptive, relevant, and responsible in a rapidly changing world. By fostering a culture that prioritizes ethical behavior, sustainability, and inclusivity, companies can create environments where employees and stakeholders feel a sense of purpose and belonging.

The relationship between organizational culture and a company's value is increasingly evident in modern business practices. A culture that integrates social impact into its core values enhances the company's reputation, stakeholder loyalty, and operational effectiveness. Cameron and Quinn (2011) highlight that strong cultures aligned with clear, positive values drive higher employee engagement and organizational performance. When employees believe in the company's mission and its commitment to making a difference, they are more motivated, innovative, and productive. Companies like Salesforce, which prioritizes philanthropy and sustainability as integral to its culture, demonstrate how a purpose-driven ethos can enhance brand value while fostering internal and external trust.

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

Moreover, organizational culture is a critical enabler of effective social impact strategies. Without a culture that supports and embraces social responsibility, even the most well-intentioned initiatives are likely to falter. Kotter's (1996) change management theories emphasize that cultural alignment is a prerequisite for sustaining strategic transformations. For example, integrating diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) practices into a company's culture ensures that social impact efforts go beyond surface-level compliance to become deeply embedded in daily operations. This alignment not only benefits employees by creating equitable and inclusive workplaces but also strengthens the company's competitive edge in attracting and retaining top talent.

Organizational culture also amplifies the collective capacity of a company to address global challenges. Hart and Milstein's (2003) suggests that companies with cultures grounded in sustainability are better positioned to innovate and address complex issues like climate change and resource scarcity. Patagonia, for instance, exemplifies how a strong environmental ethos embedded in company culture can inspire employees and customers to support broader sustainability goals. By adopting similar approaches, companies can align their cultural values with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), contributing to systemic change while creating value for all stakeholders.

In addition, culture influences the ethical compass of an organization, ensuring that decision-making processes prioritize integrity and accountability. Treviño and Nelson (2021) argue that ethical cultures reduce the likelihood of misconduct and enhance organizational resilience. When social impact becomes a cultural norm, it creates a framework for consistent, values-driven decision-making, even in the face of external pressures or crises. This ethical grounding builds trust with stakeholders, reinforcing the company's legitimacy and long-term sustainability.

Finally, a culture of social impact supports innovation and adaptability. Companies that cultivate openness, collaboration, and purpose are more likely to generate creative solutions to societal challenges. Cultures fostering intrinsic motivation and shared purpose drive higher levels of innovation. Social impact initiatives provide opportunities for employees to connect their work with meaningful causes, enhancing morale and unlocking their creative potential.

Organizational culture plays a pivotal role in shaping a company's value, particularly in the context of social impact. Fostering a culture aligned with sustainability, ethics, and inclusivity enhances not only internal cohesion but also external trust and performance. By raising awareness in companies on the importance of embedding social impact into their cultural fabric, educational programs can equip organizations to act as catalysts for positive change, creating shared value for employees, communities, and society at large. Through a purpose-driven culture, businesses can ensure their success is both enduring and impactful, contributing to a more equitable and sustainable future.

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

SUBTOPIC 6: Integration of sustainability into internal strategy

Aim and scope	➢ Integration of sustainability into internal strategy
Teaching tools	➢ Lectures with lecturers from the academic community and/or from the private sector and/or civil society ➢ Teamwork/Brainstorming/Group Activities ➢ Case Studies and Real-Life Examples ➢ Frameworks ➢ Critical Thinking - Debates
Learning Outcomes	➢ LO4: Have the ability to use appropriate methodologies for data gathering and analysis, integrate various knowledge, handle complexity, and formulate proposals and solutions acknowledging the limits and constraints of specific territories and communities.

Integration of sustainability into internal strategy

Sustainability has shifted from being an optional aspect of business operations to a strategic imperative, driven by growing societal expectations, regulatory pressures, and environmental challenges. Embedding sustainability into a company's core strategy ensures not only compliance and risk mitigation but also long-term value creation and resilience. As businesses face unprecedented global challenges such as climate change, resource scarcity, and social inequities, integrating sustainability into strategic planning provides a framework for addressing these issues while enhancing competitiveness and relevance. Teaching companies to incorporate sustainability into their strategies is critical to equipping them to create meaningful social impact and thrive in a changing world.

At its core, embedding sustainability in strategy involves aligning business objectives with environmental stewardship, social equity, and economic prosperity. Businesses that prioritize people, planet and profit (see concept of Triple Bottom Line) can better anticipate and adapt to emerging risks, such as supply chain disruptions or shifting consumer expectations. For example, Unilever's Sustainable Living Plan, which integrates sustainability goals into every aspect of its operations, has driven both financial growth and significant reductions in environmental impact. This demonstrates that strategic sustainability is not merely a moral obligation but a source of innovation and competitive advantage.

Integrating sustainability into strategy also strengthens a company's ability to respond to stakeholder demands. Freeman's (1984) stakeholder theory emphasizes that businesses succeed when they address the needs of all stakeholders, including employees, customers, investors, and communities. Modern stakeholders increasingly expect companies to act responsibly,

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

as evidenced by the rise of ethical consumption and sustainable investing. According to Eccles, Ioannou, and Serafeim (2014), companies that adopt sustainability-oriented strategies experience higher levels of trust and loyalty from stakeholders, ultimately enhancing their financial performance. By embedding sustainability into their strategies, companies can build deeper connections with stakeholders while demonstrating their commitment to social and environmental well-being.

Furthermore, sustainability-oriented strategies drive innovation and open new markets. Hart and Milstein's (2003) highlights how focusing on sustainability challenges enables companies to develop cutting-edge solutions and capitalize on emerging opportunities. For instance, Tesla's integration of clean energy and electric vehicles into its strategy has revolutionized the automotive industry while addressing critical environmental issues. Similarly, companies in the food and beverage sector, such as Danone, have embraced sustainable agriculture and circular economy principles to reduce waste and enhance resource efficiency. Embedding sustainability into strategy thus ensures that businesses remain at the forefront of innovation while contributing to systemic change.

A strategic focus on sustainability also enhances resilience by mitigating risks associated with environmental and social disruptions. Environmentalists underscore the urgent need for businesses to operate within ecological limits to prevent destabilizing impacts on natural systems. Companies that fail to account for sustainability risks—such as water scarcity, climate-related disasters, or biodiversity loss—expose themselves to operational and reputational vulnerabilities. Conversely, organizations that integrate sustainability into their strategies build adaptive capacities that enable them to navigate uncertainty and secure their long-term viability. For example, Nestlé's efforts to promote sustainable sourcing and water conservation reflect its strategic commitment to mitigating resource-related risks while supporting global environmental goals.

Embedding sustainability in strategy aligns businesses with global frameworks and societal priorities, such as the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Sachs (2015) highlights the pivotal role of businesses in achieving the SDGs, given their ability to mobilize resources, drive innovation, and influence global systems. By incorporating the SDGs into their strategic objectives, companies contribute to global progress while enhancing their own value proposition. Initiatives like Microsoft's commitment to becoming carbon negative by 2030 exemplify how aligning strategy with sustainability not only addresses pressing global challenges but also strengthens corporate reputation and stakeholder trust. Embedding sustainability into business strategy is essential for creating social impact, driving innovation, and ensuring long-term success. This approach ensures that business success is defined not solely by profits but by the value it generates for society and the planet.

Strategy and strategic planning

Strategy creates a common understanding of what an organization wants to achieve and what it needs to do to meet its goals. Strategic plans bridge the gap from overall direction to specific projects and day-to-day actions that ultimately execute the strategy.

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

Figure 2. Strategic Planning

Source: Essential Guide to Strategic Planning, https://www.gartner.com/en/insights/strategic-planning

Strategy defines the long-term direction of the enterprise. It articulates what the enterprise will do to compete and succeed in its chosen markets or, for the public sector, what the agency will do to achieve its mission.

Task 1. *Finding a valuable cause*
Start thinking about possible social contributions of your (fictional or real) organization - create a strategic framework focused only on what is relevant for your project — critical assumptions, relevant metrics and the key initiatives your project needs to contribute effectively to organizational goals, even as those goals shift.

Strategic planning defines how the enterprise will realize its strategic ambitions in the midterm. Too often, strategic plans are created and then forgotten until the next planning cycle begins. A well-done strategic plan turns an enterprise strategy into a clear roadmap of initiatives, actions and investments required to execute the strategy and meet business goals.

Strategic planning is crucial because it sets a clear direction for an organization, helping to align resources and efforts toward achieving long-term goals.

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

Figure 3. Key reasons for the importance of Strategic Planning

Source: Author

Integrating **social impact goals** into a strategic plan allows an organization to address broader societal challenges while achieving its business objectives. Here is a structured approach to embedding social impact goals into strategy and strategic planning:

1. Align Social Impact Goals with Mission and Vision

Begin by revisiting the organization's mission and vision to ensure they reflect a commitment to positive social impact. If necessary, update them to include social and environmental aspirations. Define what social impact means for the organization and how it aligns with the core business purpose. For instance, a tech company might focus on digital inclusion, while a food business might emphasize sustainable sourcing.

2. Identify Relevant Social Impact Areas

Conduct a materiality assessment to identify the social and environmental issues that matter most to stakeholders (customers, employees, investors, communities, etc.) and have a strong alignment with the business. Choose specific areas where the organization can make a tangible impact, such as education, health, environmental sustainability, or economic development.

3. Set Clear, Measurable Social Impact Goals

Establish clear, actionable goals that align with social impact priorities. Make them SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound) to facilitate tracking and accountability. For example, a financial institution might set a goal to increase funding for underrepresented entrepreneurs by a certain percentage over the next five years.

4. Incorporate Social Impact into Core Strategic Objectives

Integrate social impact goals directly into the broader business objectives. For instance, if a goal is to reduce carbon emissions, this could tie into operational efficiency, product development, or supply chain management. Ensure social impact goals complement financial and operational goals, creating a cohesive strategy that values both profit and purpose.

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

5. Engage Stakeholders and Form Partnerships

Engage employees, customers, investors, and community members to get input on social impact goals and ensure they align with stakeholder expectations. Build partnerships with nonprofits, NGOs, or other organizations with expertise in relevant areas. These collaborations can amplify impact and create credibility in achieving social goals.

6. Embed Social Impact into Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Incorporate social impact KPIs alongside financial metrics in performance reviews and reporting. This could include metrics on emissions reduction, community investment, or social well-being improvements. Regularly track and report on these KPIs, both internally and in external sustainability reports, to create transparency and accountability.

7. Empower Leadership and Allocate Resources

Ensure leadership buy-in and designate champions to drive social impact initiatives. Empower these leaders with the necessary authority, budgets, and support to implement social impact projects. Allocate resources, such as funding and talent, to social impact goals, embedding them into departmental plans and budgets to ensure they are actionable and sustainable.

8. Foster a Culture of Social Responsibility

Communicate the importance of social impact goals to the entire organization. Encourage employees at all levels to contribute ideas and initiatives that support these goals. Offer training and incentives that align with social responsibility, creating a culture where employees are motivated to advance both business and social goals.

9. Regularly Assess and Adjust

Continuously monitor the effectiveness of social impact strategies, gathering data to understand what's working and where improvements are needed. Adapt goals and strategies in response to changes in social, environmental, or regulatory landscapes to stay aligned with both business and social priorities.

Frame 1. *Examples of Social Impact Goals in Strategic Planning*

- Sustainable Operations: Reducing environmental footprint by minimizing waste and using renewable energy sources.
- Inclusive Workforce: Setting diversity, equity, and inclusion goals to ensure a representative workforce and fair opportunity.
- Community Engagement: Committing to social programs in communities where the organization operates, such as education, healthcare access, and economic development initiatives.

Putting strategy into practice

Integrating social impact goals into strategic planning not only improves a company's reputation, but also strengthens its long-term value and resilience.

Social impact engagement must be embedded in strategy and strategic planning. Embedding social impact into your strategy and strategic planning can create lasting value for both your organization and the communities you serve.

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

Table 1. Steps to integrate social impact effectively

Steps	Action	Purpose	Tools
1. Define Your Social Impact Vision	Align with Mission	Ensure that your social impact goals align with your organization's core mission and values.	Brainstorming
	Identify Key Issues	Determine the social issues that resonate most with your stakeholders and align with your expertise.	Brainstorming
2. Set Clear Goals and Objectives	Develop goals	Develop specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound objectives related to social impact.	SMART objectives
	Stakeholder Engagement	Involve stakeholders in the goal-setting process to ensure their perspectives and needs are addressed.	Guest speaker
3. Conduct a Social Impact Assessment	Perform Baseline Assessment	Analyze the current social conditions and needs in the communities you affect.	Community Needs Assessment Simulation
	Design Impact Metrics	Establish key performance indicators (KPIs) to measure social impact, including both qualitative and quantitative metrics.	Stakeholder Role-Play / Real-World Examples
4. Integrate Social Impact into Strategic Planning	Strategic Priorities	Incorporate social impact goals into your organization's strategic priorities and initiatives.	Role-Playing
	Resource Allocation	Allocate resources (time, budget, personnel) specifically for social impact projects and initiatives.	Resource Allocation Simulation
5. Foster a Culture of Social Responsibility	Training and Development	Provide training for employees to understand the importance of social impact and how they can contribute.	Social Impact Training Workshop
	Incentives	Create incentives for teams to pursue social impact goals alongside traditional business objectives.	Guest speaker

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

6. Collaborate with Partners	Strategic Alliances	Form partnerships with NGOs, community organizations, and other businesses to enhance your social impact efforts.	Partnership Simulation Exercise Guest Speaker
	Shared Resources	Leverage shared resources and expertise to maximize your impact.	Guest speaker
7. Communicate and Engage	Transparency	Regularly communicate your social impact goals, progress, and results to stakeholders, including employees, customers, and the community.	Stakeholder Communication Simulation
	Feedback Mechanisms	Establish channels for feedback from stakeholders to continuously improve your social impact initiatives.	Stakeholder Feedback Design
8. Monitor and Evaluate	Ongoing Assessment	Regularly assess and report on your social impact initiatives to evaluate their effectiveness.	Social Impact Assessment and Reporting
	Iterative Improvement	Use evaluation findings to refine strategies and enhance future initiatives.	Strategic Refinement and Action Planning
9. Showcase Impact	Storytelling	Share success stories and case studies that highlight the positive social changes your organization has facilitated.	Storytelling and Case Study Development Workshop
	Impact Reports	Publish annual impact reports detailing your social impact activities and outcomes.	Impact Report
10. Commit to Long-term Engagement	Sustainability	Develop long-term strategies that ensure ongoing social impact, rather than one-off projects.	Sustainable Social Impact Strategy
	Community Investment	Consider establishing a foundation or dedicated fund to support ongoing social initiatives.	Foundation

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

By following these steps, you can create a strategic plan that genuinely integrates social impact into your organization's DNA, fostering both organizational success and positive change in the community.

Best practices (international & national)

Case study 1: Integrating Social Impact Objectives at GreenLeaf Foods

Background

GreenLeaf Foods, a mid-sized food production company, decided to integrate social impact objectives into its business strategy to address consumer demand for sustainable and ethically produced goods. With a focus on plant-based foods, GreenLeaf had a natural alignment with environmental goals, yet it wanted to deepen its impact. The company committed to several social impact objectives, including reducing its carbon footprint, sourcing ingredients ethically, and supporting local communities. The challenge was implementing these objectives in a measurable way to ensure accountability and demonstrate results to stakeholders.

Setting Social Impact Objectives

GreenLeaf Foods identified three core social impact objectives:

1. **Environmental Sustainability**: Achieve a 30% reduction in carbon emissions across the supply chain within three years.
2. **Ethical Sourcing**: Transition to 100% ethically sourced ingredients by partnering with certified suppliers and farmers.
3. **Community Support**: Invest 2% of annual profits in local community programs, particularly those addressing food insecurity and supporting education.

These goals were chosen for their alignment with GreenLeaf's brand values, impact on stakeholders, and relevance to industry trends.

Implementation Strategy

GreenLeaf Foods began by establishing a cross-departmental Social Impact Committee responsible for overseeing and reporting on the initiative's progress. The company also set up partnerships with third-party organizations to verify its sourcing standards and monitor carbon emissions. Additionally, GreenLeaf created educational programs and volunteer initiatives for employees, helping to foster a culture around social impact.

To track progress, the committee developed key performance indicators (KPIs) tailored to each objective:

1. Carbon Reduction KPIs: Monthly and annual carbon emission metrics, compared against baseline data from previous years.
2. Ethical Sourcing KPIs: The percentage of ingredients from certified ethical sources and the number of partnerships with ethical suppliers.
3. Community Support KPIs: Financial contributions to community programs, number of volunteer hours from employees, and survey data on program effectiveness.

Measuring Impact and Results

After one year of implementation, GreenLeaf Foods **analyzed the impact** of its social objectives. For environmental sustainability, GreenLeaf's carbon emissions had decreased by 10%, putting the company on track to meet its three-year goal. The ethical sourcing goal showed slower progress, with only 60% of ingredients sourced ethically. GreenLeaf

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

responded by adjusting supplier requirements and providing support to smaller suppliers to meet certification standards. On the community support front, GreenLeaf had invested 1.5% of its profits, with a positive reception from local communities, as evidenced by survey feedback indicating a 20% perceived improvement in food security among beneficiaries.

To provide transparency, GreenLeaf released an annual **Social Impact Report** detailing these metrics and actions taken to address gaps. Additionally, the company conducted an employee survey, which revealed that 85% of employees felt more motivated working for a socially responsible company, indicating that the objectives also enhanced employee morale and retention.

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

Test your knowledge of Module 1 – Corporate Governance and Strategy

1. True or False Questions

	Question	Answer (True / False)
Q.1	Programs and measures to promote social wellbeing can go by different names: Cause Marketing, Employment Engagement, CSR, including ESGs, SDGs, Social Entrepreneurship, etc.	
Q.2	The first step in embedding social impact into your organization's strategy is to conduct a social impact assessment.	
Q.3	Setting SMART goals means ensuring that objectives are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound.	
Q.4	Collaborating with external partners can enhance an organization's social impact efforts by providing additional resources and expertise.	
Q.5	Monitoring and evaluating social impact initiatives is not necessary once the project is launched.	

Correct answers: True Q1, Q3, Q4; False Q2, Q5

2. Multiple choice questions

	Question	Answers offered	Correct answer (A/B/C/D)
Q.1	What is the first step in embedding social impact into your organization's strategy?	A) Set Clear Goals and Objectives B) Define Your Social Impact Vision C) Conduct a Social Impact Assessment D) Foster a Culture of Social Responsibility	
Q.2	What is a crucial aspect of conducting a social impact assessment?	A) Identifying potential partnerships B) Analyzing current social conditions and needs C) Allocating budget for projects D) Establishing marketing strategies	
Q.3	How can an organization foster a culture of social responsibility?	A) By focusing solely on financial performance B) By providing training and development opportunities C) By limiting stakeholder engagement D) By reducing community outreach efforts	

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

Q.4	What should be included in the communication strategy regarding social impact?	A) Sharing only financial performance metrics B) Regular updates on social impact goals, progress, and results C) Minimizing stakeholder feedback D) Focusing only on successful projects	
Q.5	What is an effective way to display your organization's social impact?	A) To maintain secrecy around projects B) To refine strategies and enhance future initiatives C) To ensure no changes are made to the original plan D) To avoid stakeholder involvement	

Correct answers: Q1: B, Q2: B, Q3: B, Q4: B; Q5: B

Task 2. Developing a Social Impact Strategy

Objective: Students will design a social impact strategy for a fictional or real organization, integrating the concepts learned about social impact in strategic planning.

Guidelines:

1. **Choose an Organization:** Select a fictional organization or a real nonprofit or for-profit company. Provide a brief description of the organization, including its mission and core activities.
2. **Identify Social Issues:** Research and identify 2-3 relevant social issues that align with the organization's mission and the communities it serves. Explain why these issues are significant.
3. **Define Social Impact Vision:** Articulate a clear social impact vision for the organization. This vision should reflect how the organization intends to address the identified social issues.
4. **Set SMART Goals:** Develop 3-5 SMART goals related to the social impact vision. Ensure each goal is specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound.
5. **Conduct a Social Impact Assessment:** Describe the key elements of a social impact assessment that the organization could use to understand the current social conditions. Include the types of data that would be useful to collect.
6. **Outline Strategic Initiatives:** Propose 2-3 strategic initiatives or programs that the organization could implement to achieve its social impact goals. Explain how these initiatives will address the identified social issues.
7. **Create a Communication Plan:** Develop a brief communication plan that outlines how the organization will engage stakeholders about its social impact goals and initiatives. Include methods for transparency and feedback.
8. **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Describe how the organization will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of its social impact initiatives. Include specific metrics or indicators that would be used to measure success.

Deliverables:

1. **Paper:** A written document (3-5 pages) outlining the social impact strategy.
2. **Presentation:** Prepare a presentation (5-10 minutes) summarizing your social impact strategy. Highlight the key points, including the social impact vision, goals, initiatives, and evaluation plan.
3. **Reflection:** After the presentation, write a short reflection (1-2 paragraphs) on what you learned during this task about the importance of social impact in strategic planning.

Co-funded by the European Union
Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

References

1. Porter, Michael E. and Kramer, Mark R. (2011): Creating Shared Value: How to reinvent capitalism and unleash a wave of innovation and growth. HBR
2. Freeman, Edward R.; Dmytriyev, Sergiy D.; Phillips, Robert A. (2021), Stakeholder Theory and the Resource-Based View of the Firm, Journal of Management 47(5):014920632199357, https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206321993576
3. Hart, Stuart L. and Milstein, Mark (2003), Creating Sustainable Value, Academy of Management Perspectives 17(2), https://doi.org/10.5465/AME.2003.10025194
4. Sinek, Simon (2009), Start with Why, Portfolio - Penguin group
5. Bansal, P. and DesJardine, M. R. (2014), Business sustainability: It is about time, Strategic Organization, 12(1), 70-78. https://doi.org/10.1177/1476127013520265
6. Edmans, Alex (2012), The Link Between Job Satisfaction and Firm Value, with Implications for Corporate Social Responsibility, Academy of Management Perspectives 26(4), 1-19, available at SSRN: https://ssrn.com/abstract=2054066 or http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2054066
7. Shleifer, Andrei and Vishny Robert W. (1997), A Survey of Corporate Governance, The Journal of Finance, Vol. 52, No. 2, pp. 737-783, available at: https://www.jstor.org/stable/2329497, https://doi.org/10.2307/2329497
8. Friede, Gunnar; Busch, Timo and Bassen, Alexander (2015), ESG and Financial Performance: Aggregated Evidence from More than 2000 Empirical Studies, Journal of Sustainable Finance & Investment, Volume 5, Issue 4, p. 210-233, https://doi.org/10.1080/20430795.2015.1118917
9. Eccles, Robert G.; Ioannou, Ioannis and Serafeim, George (2014), The Impact of Corporate Sustainability on Organizational Processes and Performance, Management Science, Vol. 60, No. 11, pp. 2835-2857 https://www.jstor.org/stable/24550546
10. Valentine, Sean and Godkin, Lynn (2016), Ethics policies, perceived social responsibility, and positive work attitude, The Irish Journal of Management, Volume 35 (2016): Issue 2, https://doi.org/10.1515/ijm-2016-0013
11. Kim S. Cameron, Robert E. Quinn (2011), Diagnosing and Changing Organizational Culture: Based on the Competing Values Framework, John Wiley & Sons

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

MODULE 2: TERRITORIAL ANALYSIS

Description of Module 2	➢ What is the relevant territory for SIM's action? (institutional and economic analysis) ➢ What are the challenges facing SIM's territory of action? ➢ Who are the key stakeholders for SIM's action?
Objectives	➢ Understanding the local ecosystem in which the company operates (LO1, LO3) ➢ Identifying the social needs to which the company could respond (LO4, LO5) ➢ Exploring the possibilities of partnerships with local actors (LO2, LO5)
Learning Outcomes	➢ Knowledge: knowledge and understanding of the territorial context (LO1), of the network of stakeholders and possible territorial alliances (LO2, LO3). ➢ Skills: data gathering and analysis, stakeholder mapping (LO4, LO5). ➢ Attitudes: Value the role of territorial analysis in strategy (LO3).
Duration	➢ 6 hours

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

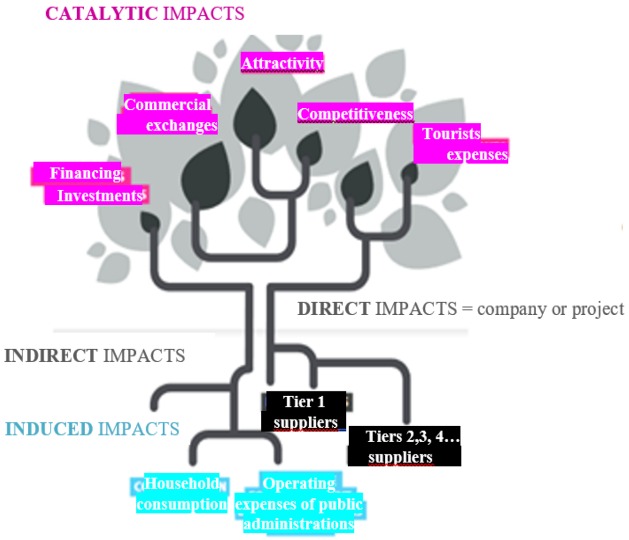
SUBTOPIC 1: Which territory?

Aim and scope	➢ Understanding the institutional environment in which the company operates and the scope of its economic action ➢ Identifying the relevant territory for SIM's action
Teaching tools	➢ Institutional analysis ➢ Mapping software
Learning Outcomes	LO1 & LO4 ➢ Knowledge and understanding of the territorial context ➢ Skills: data analysis

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

Which territory?



Your company has an impact on the territories **by what it is or do**, by allowing local businesses to access a market, by promoting their competitiveness and development.

Your company has an impact on the territories **through its spending flows** (purchases, salaries, taxes, investments, etc.).

Source: https://utopies.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Empreinte-economique.pdf, author's translation

Editable figure here: :https://docs.google.com/document/d/1z_qdhyltg5-LXPg8etOhcCKmU69MVcP3/edit?usp=drive_link&ouid=116242742118202539311&rtpof=true&sd=true

The aim of this part is to provide an understanding of the local ecosystem in which the company operates. When we talk about the company's **territorial responsibility**, to which territory are we referring? It is therefore necessary to identify the relevant territory for the company, the one in which it can/wants to develop links.

	Objectives	**Methodology / tools**
Administrative territory	Understanding the institutional environment in which the company operates	Institutional analysis
	Identify the public actors on whom the SIM can rely	Constitution of a directory of contacts
Economic territory	Define the scope of the company's economic action	Use of customer/supplier files
	Locate the company's suppliers and customers	Mapping software
SIM's territory of action	Define the area within which SIM wishes to concentrate his action	Data analysis

The notion of territory is polysemous. It's a geographical space, of course, but it's not just that. It is also - above all - a social reality and, as a result, agents have different representations of the territory depending on their personal experience. For example, for a household, the territory corresponds to its living zone (Cf. "bassin de vie" in French zoning). For a company,

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

the territory refers more to the area in which its economic activity takes place (sales, purchasing, recruitment, etc.). However, studies show that business leaders have a confused view of the territory (see for example the study of French SMEs by Cardebat et al. 2014). In particular, they have an unclear conception of territorial divisions and the associated networks of actors.

A first approach to the company's territory is therefore to understand the institutional environment in which the company operates.

1.1. Administrative territory

The entire national territory is divided into districts that are managed by public bodies. The range of competences of these territorial public authorities depends on the degree of decentralisation of the country (*Cf*. World Observatory on Subnational Government Finance and Investment, OECD/UCLG).

➔ **Content to be adapted by each partner on :**
- Types of subnational governments
- The powers of sub-national levels of government

Source for France : collectivites-locales.gouv.fr

Objective: On the basis of this institutional understanding of the territory, the objective is to identify the public actors (or services) with which the SIM may need to collaborate.

1.2. Economic territory

Another approach to the company's territory is that of the area in which the company carries out its economic activities. This territory needs to be mapped using different sources of information (customers', suppliers', employees' files...).

The map should show

- The locations of operational units
- Where employees live
- Customer locations
- Supply locations (raw materials and suppliers).

Ideally, this location exercise should be accompanied by a description of the associated cash flows, which can be traced from the company's balance sheet. In this way, the geographical distribution of cash flows into and out of the company's territory can be visualised.

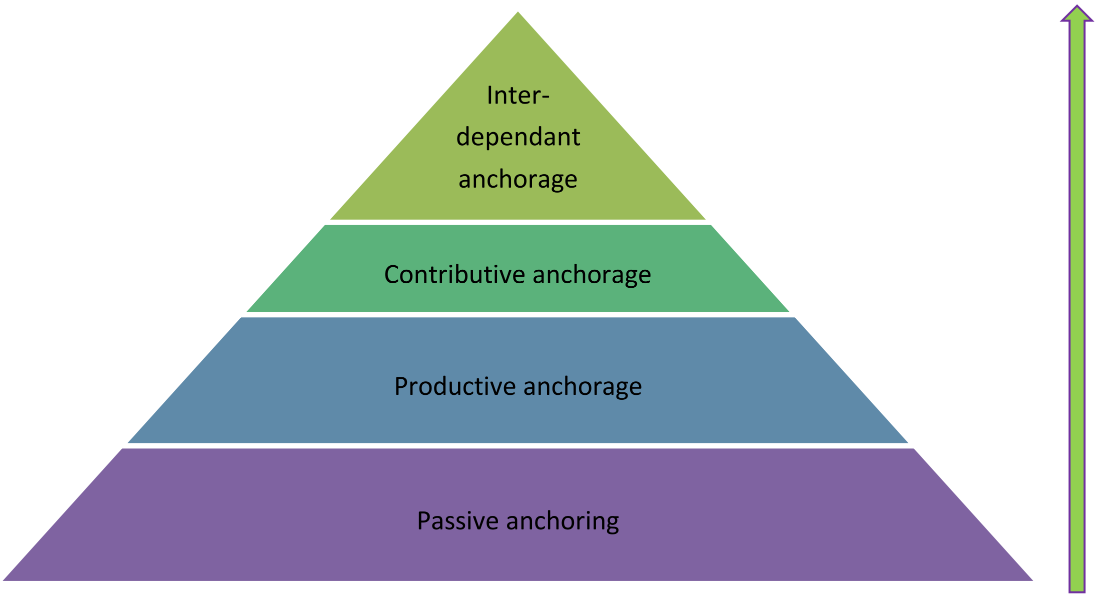
Tool: mapping software (e.g. QGIS)

1.3. SIM's territory of action

We can define a gradation in the local anchoring of companies in the manner of a Maslow pyramid.

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)



Source : S’ancrer dans les territoires pour gagner en performance, Orée, 2017, p 13 (author's translation).

"Passive anchoring: The territory is a support for the activity of the company, which does not seek to develop its local anchoring beyond the "licence to operate".

Productive anchoring: The company analyses its environment in order to consolidate its "licence to operate" and adapt its offer to local needs. Its actions are aimed at making its production facilities more efficient. It works on its image and reputation to maintain trust in an environment that it perceives as more restrictive.

Contributive anchoring: In order to develop its economic performance, the company needs to strengthen its local anchorage. It engages in collective learning and co-construction processes that enable it to contribute to local development in a win-win situation.

Interdependent anchoring: For the company, the territory has become a space for projects with other actors in the local ecosystem. This multiplies the company's capacity for innovation and strengthens its ability to respond to its markets." (S’ancrer dans les territoires pour gagner en performance, Orée, 2017, p 13, author's translation)

The analysis carried out in the previous section will make it possible to situate the company in this pyramid and to identify the area in which the company wishes to develop links with the local community.

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

SUBTOPIC 2: Profile of SIM's territory of action

Aim and scope	Identifying the challenges facing the territory in order to pinpoint the social needs to which the company, through the SIM's action, could seek to respond.
Teaching tools	➢ Data analysis and mapping software ➢ PESTEL / SWOT analysis
Learning Outcomes	LO2 & LO4 ➢ Ability to use appropriate methodologies for data analysis ➢ Ability to formulate recommendations based on the results of a diagnosis

Profile of SIM's territory of action

The aim of this section is to enable learners to diagnose the needs of the region by using and analysing different sources of data. Learners will then be enabled to identify possible courses of action.

	Objectives	**Methodology / tools**
Data collection	Collect information on economic, social, societal and environmental conditions of the territory	Definition of indicators Use of databases
Territorial diagnosis	Drawing up an inventory of the territory's vulnerabilities and opportunities	PESTEL / SWOT analysis
Action axes for SIM	Identify the needs to which the company is likely to respond Define action paths for the company	

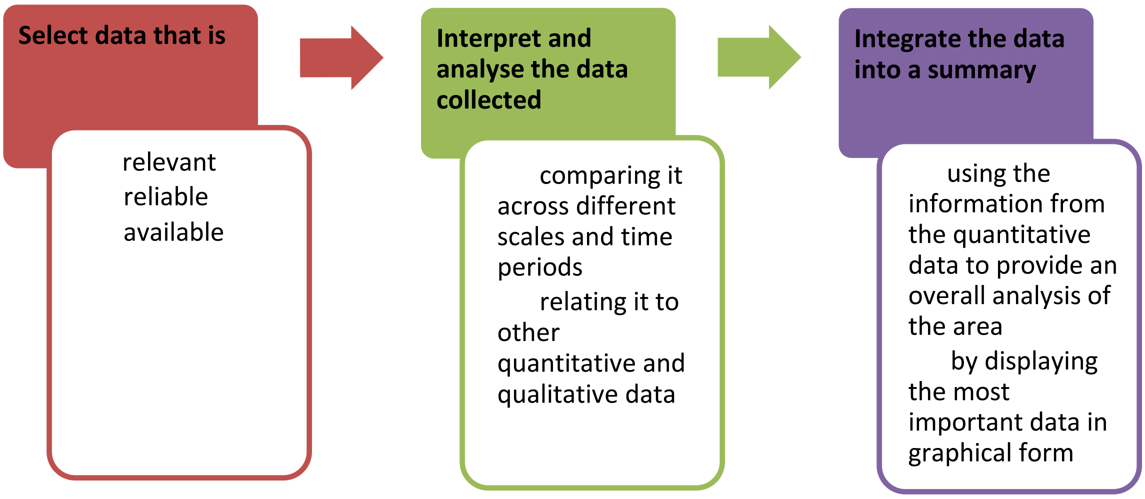
Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

2.1. Data collection and analysis

Statistical indicators provide a solid basis for assessing a territory's vulnerabilities and opportunities.

The collection and organisation of the data will take place in 3 stages:



Source: https://www.diagnostic-territoire.org/documentation/donnees-quantitatives, author's translation

In order to characterize the territory, data could be collected in 4 areas:

- economic (employment/unemployment, standard of living, economic development)
- social (poverty/exclusion, housing, diversity/disability, demographics)
- societal (education, health, safety, mobility, digital access, culture/leisure)
- environmental (pollution, energy transition).

Various sources of data will need to be mobilised.

➔ **Content to be adapted by each partner.**

In France, the main source of data is the Institut National de la Statistique et des Etudes Economiques (INSEE) which uses different statistical zoning systems. Other sources of information include https://www.observatoire-des-territoires.gouv.fr/ To become familiar with the use of available data sources, see examples on https://www.diagnostic-territoire.org/documentation/donnees-quantitatives (in French).

Tools: Data analysis and mapping software.

2.2. Territorial diagnosis

The aim is to draw up a portrait of the region based on the data collected. The analysis will seek to answer two main questions: What are the most important problems facing the area? What assets can be mobilised for future projects?

Methodology and tools: PESTEL and SWOT

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

→ **PESTEL analysis applied to a territory** (Political, Economic, Socio-cultural, Technological, Environmental, Legal) enables us to understand territorial dynamics by examining external factors.

- Policy: Local programmes, European subsidies
  - *Example: Financial aid is available for energy transition projects*
- Economic: growth indicators, employment structures
  - *Example: The territory has a high unemployment rate, particularly among young people.*
- Socio-cultural: consumer habits, demographics
  - *Example: An ageing community will need to develop services for the elderly*
- Technological: digital equipment, innovations
  - *Example: A rural area equipped with fibre optics can be attractive for teleworkers*
- Environmental: air quality, management of natural resources
- Legal: Specific regulations or constraints

→ **SWOT Analysis**: Integrate the findings of the PESTEL analysis with an internal analysis of the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats, to derive actionable insights and strategic recommendations.

	Positive	*Negative*
	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
Internal	Internal characteristics of the territory constituting an advantage - from which the company can benefit	The internal characteristics of the territory that hinder it from developing - which the company can try to help correct
	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
External	External factors on which the territory can capitalise for its own development - which the company can help to mobilise	External factors that can harm the territory - which the company can assist in mitigating

2.3. Action axes for SIM

The analysis of the development potential of the territory and the identified issues (SWOT analysis) should help identify action pathways that will enable the company to strengthen its local anchorage. These actions should answer the questions "Where do we want to go?" and "How will we get there?"

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

Where to go?

The strategic direction should emerge from a clearly defined vision, accompanied by prioritized and measurable objectives. The objectives must, of course, be consistent with the company's strategic direction, realistic, and limited in number. Some objectives can be achieved in the short term, while others will require a longer timeline.

The most common method for developing such a vision is to organize workshops. Regardless of the method chosen, the process must include broad community participation. The proposed strategic direction should be widely circulated for feedback and comments to ensure strong stakeholder engagement.

The objectives should be prioritized to guide decisions regarding the use of available resources. The following factors should be considered:

- The potential impact of each objective on solving the identified issues,
- Actions related to this objective that are already underway or planned,
- The relationship between this objective and the other objectives.

How to achieve it?

The action plan answers the question, "How will we get there?" It involves identifying a limited number of priority actions, specifying the distribution of responsibilities, schedules, and the resources committed.

Identifying priority actions should include broad participation from stakeholders, involving those affected by the proposed activities and those capable of ensuring their success. Partnerships with various local actors, such as local public authorities, associations, and other businesses in the area, are essential for successful implementation – See Subtopic 3.

Practical exercise, simplified example:

Action Steps *What Will Be Done?*	**Responsibilities** *Who Will Do It?*	**Timeline** *By When? (Day/Month)*	**Resources** *(financial, human, political & other)* *A. Available* *B. Needed*	**Potential partners** *Who might be involved?*	**Potential Barriers** *What people or organisations might object?*
Step 1:			**A.** **B.**		**A.** **B.**
Step 2:			**A.** **B.**		**A.** **B.**
Step 3:			**A.** **B.**		**A.** **B.**

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

SUBTOPIC 3: Stakeholders analysis

Aim and scope	➢ Identifying and mapping key stakeholders. ➢ Understanding stakeholders' needs and expectations. ➢ Prioritizing stakeholders based on their influence and interest
Teaching tools	➢ Stakeholder mapping ➢ Power – Interest grid ➢ Risk Assumptions matrix
Learning Outcomes	LO3 & LO5 ➢ Analysis and problem-solving abilities ➢ Ability to understand power relations.

Stakeholder analysis

Strengthening the company's links with the local community is the aim of SIM's action. It must be based on local actors and take into account their needs, expectations and concerns. It is therefore necessary to identify the stakeholders involved in the planned actions and to understand how they can participate in the company's approach to territorial responsibility.

	Objectives	**Methodology/tools**
Knowing and understanding stakeholders	Identify the internal and external stakeholders in the planned project	Stakeholder list Stakeholder identification map
	Pinpoint their needs and expectations	Survey & interviews

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

Identifying key stakeholders	Assess the importance and influence of each stakeholder	Stakeholder mapping models

3.1. Knowing and understanding stakeholders

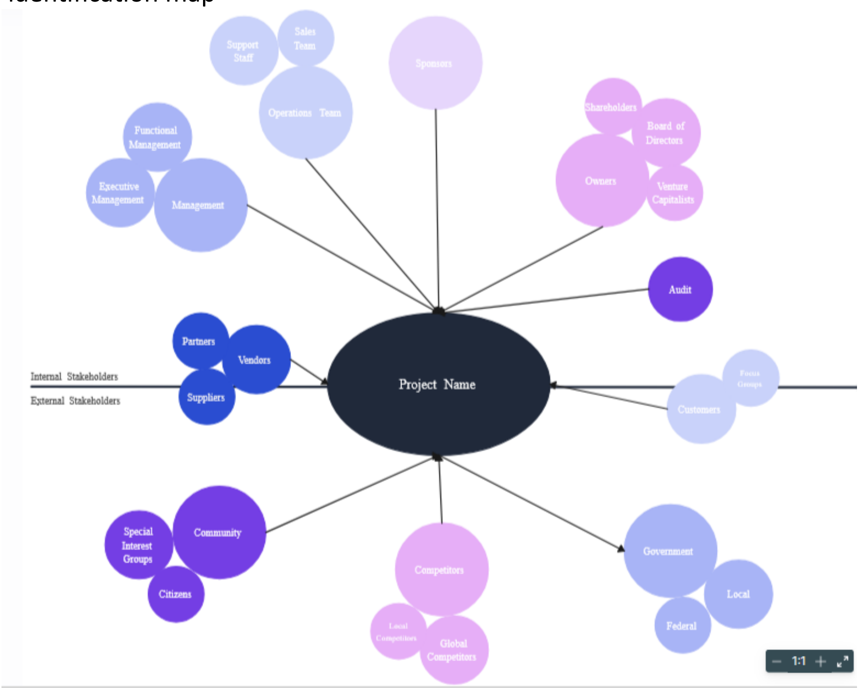
The starting point is to draw up a comprehensive list of internal and external stakeholders who may be interested in, affected by or influencing the activities of the SIM. Stakeholders can fall into a number of categories: institutions (local authorities, public services), associations with a social or environmental purpose, other companies, citizens (residents, citizens' collectives, informal leaders), company employees.

These stakeholders can have their own objectives and views, which may differ and conflict with each other. It is important to identify the issues that matter to each of them to better understand their needs and expectations and how they interact with each other.

Tools: Stakeholder identification map (see example 1 below)

Survey to gather input from a wide variety of stakeholders and interviews (see example 2 below)

Example 1: Stakeholder identification map



Stakeholder Identification Map Template

Source: https://creately.com/guides/stakeholder-diagrams/

Example 2: Example of the questions asked during the interview of stakeholder

- What is important to him/her/them?
- What are his/her/their expectations regarding the planned activities?
- How could he/she/they contribute to the activities?

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

- How does the successful completion of these activities benefit him/her/them?
- How could he/she/they block the activities?
- Are there negative consequences for him/her/them if the activities are not successfully implemented?
- Are there any other stakeholders that may conflict with his/her/their interests (and vice versa)?

3.2. Identifying key stakeholders

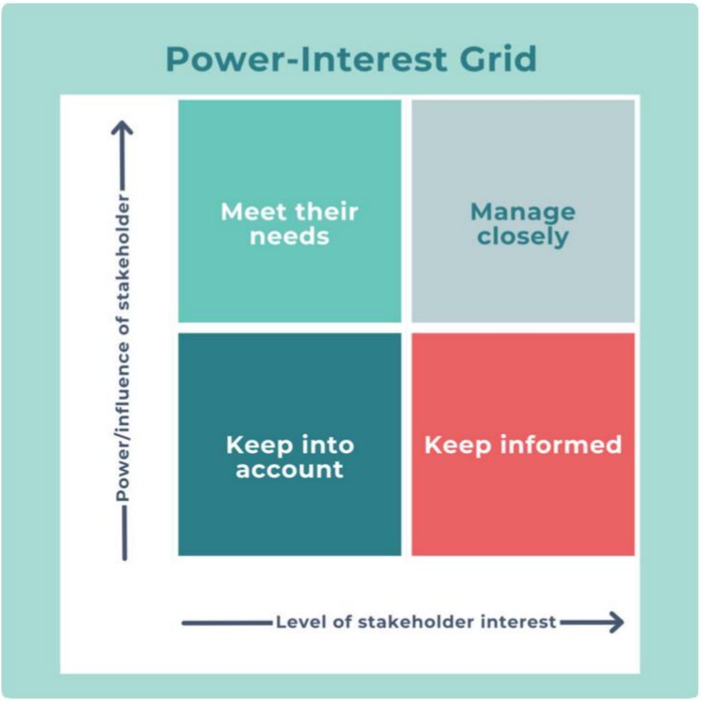
In order to strategically target SIM's action, stakeholders have to be classified according to their levels of interest and influence. Potential risks that could disrupt SIM's activities must also be taken into account.

Different stakeholder mapping models can be used, each with its own advantages and disadvantages. Graphics and descriptions below are taken from https://simplystakeholders.com/stakeholder-mapping/.

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

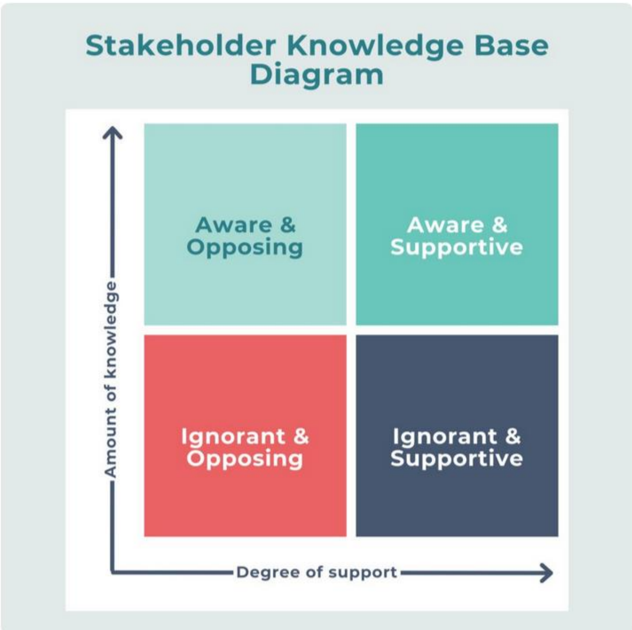
1. Power-Interest grid



Each quadrant requires different actions or levels of engagement :

- **High power / high interest** – Manage closely, regularly engage, and manage expectations
- **High power / low interest** – Meet their needs, keep them satisfied, and actively consult
- **Low power / low interest** – Monitor and provide information as needed
- **Low power / high interest** – Keep informed and maintain interest

2. Stakeholder Knowledge Base Chart

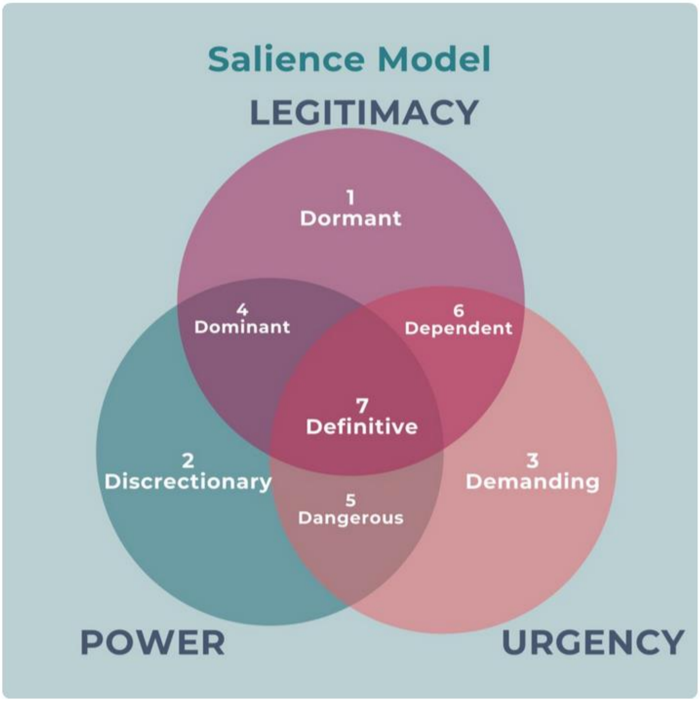


- **Aware & Opposition** – These stakeholders may be a risk and require management.
- **Aware & Support** – These stakeholders are worth keeping informed so they can continue to champion your project or work.
- **Ignorant & Opposition** – Increasing the understanding of these stakeholders may help to change their attitude.
- **Ignorant & Support** – Engaging with these stakeholders will help to keep them onboard and strengthen their support.

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

3. Salience model



Group	Attributes	Example	Priority
1. Dormant	High power, low legitimacy, low urgency	An executive not currently involved or interested in the project.	**Priority 3** With just one salient attribute, these stakeholders often require the least amount of attention, but should be monitored in case their situation changes.
2. Discretionary	High legitimacy, low power, low urgency	A local environmental group indirectly impacted by the work you're doing.	
3. Demanding	High urgency, low power, low legitimacy	Locals that feel strongly about the project even if it doesn't directly impact them.	
4. Dominant	High power, high legitimacy, low urgency	Council groups with the authority to approve or deny project plans.	**Priority 2** With two salient attributes, these stakeholders will benefit from regular communication and engagement to ensure the project stays on track.
5. Dangerous	High power, high urgency, low legitimacy	Individuals or groups that (while not directly connected to the project) may create trouble.	
6. Dependant	High urgency, high legitimacy, low power	Local residents that are unlikely to influence the project (without forming a group or connecting with another stakeholder who has more power).	
7. Definitive	High power,	Leaders of key organizations who are	**Priority 1**

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

	high legitimacy, high urgency	closely involved in the work or project.	As these stakeholders have all attributes, they are your core stakeholder group. Their involvement and communication should be prioritized.

Source: https://simplystakeholders.com/stakeholder-mapping/

This stakeholder analysis leads to the identification of key stakeholders, i.e. stakeholders that present higher potential risk or reward and are more critical to the success of the project. Identifying key stakeholders has the benefits of narrowing the list of stakeholders to engage with to a more manageable group, minimising risk by engaging with higher risk stakeholders early in the project to address potential issues, and securing the support of those stakeholders who will have the greatest impact on the success of the project.

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

Test your knowledge of Module 2 - Territorial analysis

1. True or False questions

	Question	Answer (True / False)
Q.1	The relevant territory for a company is necessarily the one in which it sells its products/services.	**F**
Q.2	Territorial analysis enables companies to position themselves within their ecosystem.	**T**
Q.3	Companies' contribution to local development is measured by job creation. Larger companies therefore contribute more to local development than smaller ones.	**F**
Q.4	The so-called 'stakeholders' are the partners with whom the company usually interacts.	**F**
Q.5	SWOT analysis is used to identify the key stakeholders in a project.	**F**

2. Multiple choice questions

	Question		Correct answer (a/b/c/d)
Q.1	What is the main objective of territorial analysis for the SIM?	a. Assess employee performance b. Identify international growth opportunities c. Understand the local ecosystem and social needs d. Reduce the company's operating costs	**c**
Q.2	What is the first step in stakeholder analysis?	a. Draw up a risk matrix b. Identify and understand stakeholders c. Draw up a partnership plan d. Measure social impact	**b**
Q.3	Which aspect is not taken into account in a PESTEL analysis?	a. Political b. Economic c. Sustainable d. Legal	**c**
Q.4	In the model of the territorial anchoring of companies, what type of anchoring corresponds to a company that actively collaborates with local players to innovate?	a. Passive b. Productive c. Contributory d. Interdependent	**d**

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

Q.5	Which tool can be used to identify the key players and their level of influence in the project?	a. SWOT analysis b. Stakeholder map c. Balance scorecard d. Benchmarking	**b**

Task. Defining and analysing a territory for action

Objective: Students will carry out a territorial analysis based on the case of an existing or fictitious company. The territory considered will be a real territory.

Guidelines:

1. **Choose a company and a territory:** Provide a brief description of the chosen company, which can be real or fictitious, specifying its sector of activity, size, age, etc. If the company is real, its location will constitute the study territory. If the company is fictitious, choose its location.
2. **Gather information on the territory**: Characterise the territory by gathering information in 4 areas: economic, social, societal and environmental.
3. **Analyse the information**: Identify the territory's main strengths and weaknesses by summarising them in a SWOT matrix.
4. **Propose an action plan**: Identify an area in which the company could meet the territory's needs. Propose 2-3 realistic ideas for action that are compatible with the company's objectives and resources. Choose an action and provide a rationale for this choice.
5. **Identify key stakeholders**: Draw up a stakeholder map using one of the models seen in class. Identify stakeholders who are most critical to the success of the action, explaining the contribution expected from each.

Deliverable: 10-15 page document summarising the analysis.

References

1. Cardebat, J., Eberhard Harribey, L. et Musson, A. (2014), Vers une gouvernance territoriale durable ? Une enquête sur le positionnement des PME. *Revue d'Économie Régionale & Urbaine,* octobre(3), 557-573. https://doi.org/10.3917/reru.143.0557
2. Diagnostic territoire, des ressources pour les acteurs de terrain, n.d., https://www.diagnostic-territoire.org/
3. OREE (2017), S'ancrer dans les territoires pour gagner en performance, 110 p, https://www.cerdd.org/Parcours-thematiques/Transitions-economiques/Ressources-transitions-economiques/S-ancrer-dans-les-territoires-pour-gagner-en-performance-OREE
4. Utopies, n.d., Empreinte socio-économique, https://utopies.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Empreinte-economique.pdf

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

MODULE 3: STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Description of Module 3	The module "Stakeholder engagement" helps to understand how to work in a partnership and how to successfully communicate and engage. Therefore, different strategies will be introduced. Another focus of this module lays on the stakeholder management as well as the monitoring and evaluation. By participating in this module, students will learn a wide range of concepts and acquire skills critical to understanding and participating in the management and direction of organisations.
Objectives	➢ Develop strategies and tools for engagement ➢ Manage stakeholders effectively ➢ Monitor and evaluate engagement efforts ➢ Learn from best practices
Learning Outcomes	➢ **Knowledge:** Identify appropriate form of partnership and engagement strategies ➢ **Skills:** Use tools for effective communication and engagement ➢ **Attitudes:** Foster positive stakeholder relationships
Duration	➢ 6 hours

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

SUBTOPIC 1: Working in partnership

Aim and scope	➢ Defining the partnership's objectives ➢ Identifying the appropriate form of partnership ➢ Defining the methods of action according to the objectives and resources available
Teaching tools	➢ ‘Magic square’ of partnership objectives ➢ Forms of partnerships
Learning Outcomes	➢ LO2: Demonstrate insights into critical conditions that provide a basis for developing and applying transformative planning and projects at the local level. ➢ LO4: Have the ability to use appropriate methodologies for data gathering and analysis, integrate various knowledge, handle complexity, and formulate proposals and solutions acknowledging the limits and constraints of specific territories and communities.

Making the project operational by working with local actors

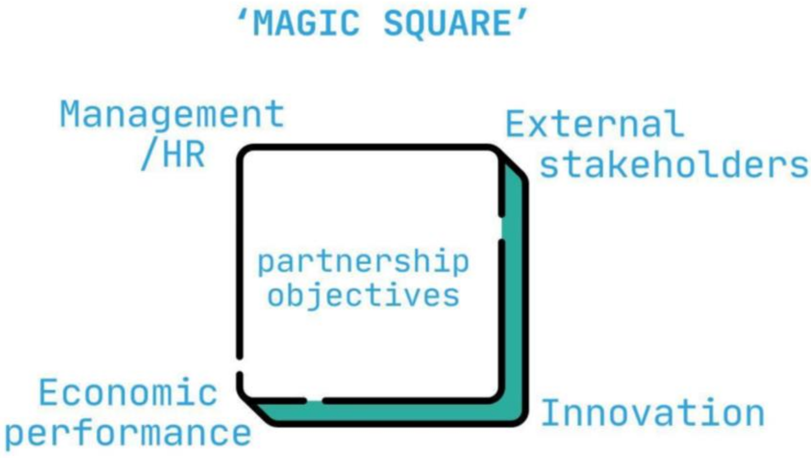
The ‘magic square’ of partnership objectives

The concept of the **‘magic square’ of partnership objectives** refers to a balanced framework that aligns the goals and interests of all partners involved in the project. The idea is that a successful partnership is one where the objectives are well-rounded, mutually beneficial, and attainable by leveraging each partner’s strengths and resources. This framework can be thought of as a square, with each of the four corners representing one key area to focus on.

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

Figure 1. *'Magic square' of partnership objectives*



Source: Le Rameau (https://www.canva.com/design/DAGW728d-XE/pOqA0hzMgHvzgBk4niiEAw/edit?ui=eyJBIjp7Ik8iOnsiQiI6dHJ1ZX19LCJGIjp7fX0)

The aim is to position the action project in this 'magic square' according to the different objectives:

- **Management/HR**: Involving human resources: motivation, team cohesion, improving skills,...
- **External stakeholders**: Strengthen the company's local presence, reinforce its network, enhance its image,...
- **Economic performance**: Optimising costs (particularly environmental), participating in public procurement contracts (particularly social clauses), ...
- **Innovation**: Drawing on the practices of public interest organisations (associations, local authorities, social integration structures) to develop management, governance, the value chain,...

Which form of partnership is appropriate for my objective?

Different forms of partnerships

The various forms of partnerships represent distinct ways of collaboration among organizations or individuals, with differing objectives, practices, and outcomes.

Responsible Practices Partnerships focus on ethical, sustainable, and socially responsible actions. These partnerships emphasize integrity, environmental stewardship, and societal respect. Key features include upholding high ethical standards, fostering social responsibility through community initiatives, and promoting sustainability by reducing environmental impacts. Examples include a corporation and NGO improving labor conditions in supply chains or a business collaborating with a local community on environmental conservation projects.

Economic Cooperation Partnerships aim at mutual economic benefit, fostering business development, profitability, and growth. These partnerships rely on resource sharing, such as pooling capital, skills, or infrastructure; expanding market access; and mitigating risks. Examples include two companies forming a joint venture to enter a foreign market or a manufacturer partnering with a logistics company to streamline operations and cut costs.

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

Societal Innovation Partnerships focus on developing solutions to pressing social challenges through innovation. They emphasize creating ground-breaking products or services, prioritizing positive social impact, and fostering cross-sector collaboration among governments, non-profits, businesses, and academia. Examples include a tech company partnering with a non-profit to provide digital education tools in underserved areas or a public-private partnership addressing climate change through sustainable urban infrastructure.

Sponsorship Partnerships involve financial or material support for events, projects, or organizations in exchange for promotional benefits. These partnerships prioritize brand promotion, mutual benefits, and enhanced visibility. Common examples include a company sponsoring a sports team for advertising opportunities or a business supporting a music festival to increase brand recognition within a target demographic.

Table 1. Summary of key differences of forms of partnerships

Form of Partnership	Objective	Focus	Examples
Responsible practices	Promote ethical, sustainable, and socially responsible actions	Ethical standards, sustainability, community impact	Business and NGO working on fair trade certification
Economic cooperation	Enhance economic benefits through resource sharing and joint efforts	Profitability, resource sharing, market expansion	Joint venture between two firms to enter new markets
Societal innovation	Address societal challenges through innovative solutions	Social impact, innovation, new technologies	Tech company and nonprofit partnering for digital education
Sponsorship	Provide financial/material support for visibility and promotional benefits	Brand exposure, marketing opportunities	Company sponsoring a sports event for brand visibility

Each of these partnership types serves distinct purposes, whether it is about shared responsibility, economic advantage, creating societal impact, or mutual promotional benefit. Choosing the right form of partnership depends on the specific goals of the involved parties, their resources, and the desired outcomes. In many cases, a business or organization may engage in multiple types of partnerships simultaneously to achieve a broader set of objectives.

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

SUBTOPIC 2: Strategy & tools for communication and engagement

Aim and scope	➢ Learn how to develop effective stakeholder communication strategies
Teaching tools	➢ Communication strategies and tools ➢ Stakeholder map ➢ Communication plan
Learning Outcomes	➢ LO7: Communicate with a variety of stakeholders, bridging across cultural differences.

How to communicate with and engage your stakeholders

The importance of effective communication and successful engagement

Effective communication with stakeholders is crucial for several reasons. Clear communication helps ensure that all stakeholders understand the goals, objectives, and expected outcomes, aligning everyone's efforts and expectations and reducing misunderstandings. Open, transparent communication builds trust, as stakeholders who feel informed and involved are more likely to support the project and collaborate effectively. Engaging stakeholders early and keeping them informed increases their commitment; they are more likely to contribute positively when they understand their role and feel valued. Regular updates allow for early identification of potential issues, enabling timely adjustments and providing opportunities for stakeholders to give input and feedback, which helps address challenges and improve outcomes. Additionally, effective communication equips stakeholders with the information they need to make informed decisions, whether it's allocating resources, adjusting timelines, or supporting new initiatives. Positive communication also enhances the organisation's reputation, as satisfied stakeholders are more likely to endorse future projects and promote your organisation to others.

Successfully engaging stakeholders is essential because it fosters their commitment, support, and active participation in your project. When stakeholders are meaningfully involved, they gain a sense of ownership, making them more likely to contribute positively and support project goals. This engagement helps build trust and establishes stronger relationships, which are key for collaboration and problem-solving. Engaged stakeholders provide valuable insights and feedback that can improve project outcomes, and their early involvement allows potential issues to be identified and addressed before they escalate.

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

Strategies and tools

There are several strategies and tools in order to better communicate with your stakeholders and to engage them actively.

Examples of **possible strategies** include understanding stakeholder needs and expectations by identifying their interests and tailoring communication to address their concerns. Setting clear goals and objectives ensures stakeholders understand the project's purpose and their role in its success. Transparency is key, with regular updates on progress, challenges, and achievements to build trust. Communication should be tailored to suit different preferences, such as detailed reports, concise summaries, or visuals. Engaging stakeholders early and maintaining consistent involvement throughout the project fosters commitment. Encouraging two-way communication creates an open dialogue for feedback and concerns, while recognizing and acknowledging contributions demonstrates appreciation and motivates continued support.

Examples of **possible tools** include stakeholder mapping and analysis, such as using a stakeholder matrix to prioritize communication efforts. Project management software like Asana or Trello centralizes task tracking and updates. Communication platforms such as Slack or Microsoft Teams enable real-time collaboration. Surveys and feedback tools like SurveyMonkey or Google Forms gather insights while showing stakeholders their opinions matter. E-mail newsletters provide structured updates, and webinars or virtual meetings enable live discussions and Q&A sessions. Stakeholder portals offer centralized access to project resources, and social media or blogs effectively share updates with broader audiences to maintain engagement.

Using a mix of these strategies and tools can create a comprehensive approach to engaging and communicating effectively with stakeholders, fostering a positive, collaborative environment that supports the project’s success.

Putting strategy into practice

By following the 3-steps-communication strategy, you can make sure that you successfully engage stakeholders who are – in the longer term – more likely to champion the project, enhancing its credibility and increasing the chances of long-term success.

Table 2. Steps to a successful stakeholder communication and engagement

Steps	Action/Purpose	Tools
1. Review the stakeholder map	Check how often you need to stay in contact with each stakeholder.	Stakeholder map
	Check how closely you should manage your stakeholders.	
	Check how to keep your stakeholders satisfied and/or informed.	
2. Develop a communication plan	Create a framework that ensures that stakeholders are involved and informed at every stage.	Communication plan
	Identify relevant stakeholders and understand what needs to be communicated, why it needs to be communicated and how often.	
	Identify the potential communication channels through which stakeholders are most likely to be engaged.	
3. Implement the communication plan	Set clear actions, deadlines, or intervals, and designate a responsible person if he/she has free personnel resources available for this task.	Communication with the stakeholders through the
	You or the person designated for the communication with the stakeholders should be proactive and check	

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

	the stakeholder map on a regular basis to make sure that you/he/she is continually meeting the needs of each stakeholder, especially of the prioritized key stakeholders. Ongoing activities include newsletters, social media posts, website updates, quarterly town hall meetings, phone calls, site visits etc.	previously identified channels
	Continue the communication with the stakeholders through the previously identified channels.	

By following these steps, you can maximise his/her resources by not communicating too much with groups that do not require the same level of attention as the high interest and high influence groups, and by ensuring that he/she engages more intensively with those two groups.

Figure 2. Stakeholder map

Source: Author (https://www.canva.com/design/DAGW75n43Ig/ILP5eOyGH1UDhfNxt-56Ng/edit)

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

Frame 1.

Low Interest & Low Influence: For interest groups with little interest and little influence, the one-sided transmission of essential information is sufficient in most cases.

Low Interest & High Influence: This group is more influential. Although they still have a low interest in regular communication, it is important to monitor this group regularly, keep them up to date with important information and anticipate their interests and needs.

High Interest & Low Influence: This group is more interested. Even if they are not as influential as other stakeholders, regular, solid communication should be maintained with this highly interested stakeholder group and two-way communication should be considered.

High Interest & High Influence (the KEY stakeholders): This group is both interested and influential and will require more resources to address effectively. This priority group of stakeholders requires regular, robust, two-way communication tactics to keep them satisfied.

Explanation of stakeholder map

Figure 3. *Communication plan*

COMMUNICATION PLAN

Name of stakeholder	Area of interest/influence	Engagement action	Channel	Frequency
Company A	• ...	• Manage closely	• Personal check-in meetings, • Phone calls • E-mail	• Daily
Company B	• ...	• Keep informed	• Memos • Agenda summaries	• Weekly
Company C	• ...	• Keep satisfied	• Top of the line emails about the overall budget/timeline progress	• Monthly
Company D	• ...	• Monitor	• Newsletter	• Quarterly

Source: Author
(https://www.canva.com/design/DAGW75f0quI/U8WfM6mlgzYj8sEE8mf8pg/edit?ui=eyJEIjp7IlAiOnsiQiI6ZmFsc2V9fX0)

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

SUBTOPIC 3: Stakeholder management

Aim and scope	➢ Learn how to build and maintain relationships with stakeholders
Teaching tools	➢ Key steps to establish/sustain relationships ➢ Best practices in managing stakeholder relationships ➢ Conflict resolution and negotiation techniques
Learning Outcomes	➢ LO5: Produce and transfer knowledge and understanding, including analysis and problem-solving abilities in unfamiliar contexts, considering the profile and resources of various stakeholders and environmental and socio-economic conditions. ➢ LO6: Link proposals, recommendations, and judgments with a reflection on the social and ethical responsibilities of stakeholders in the field.

How to build and maintain relationships with your stakeholders

Key steps to establish and sustain relationships effectively

Building and maintaining strong relationships with stakeholders is essential for the long-term success of any project.

To establish and sustain strong relationships, start by **understanding the unique needs, expectations, and concerns of each stakeholder**. Conduct stakeholder mapping to identify key players and their influence or interest levels, ensuring your communication demonstrates that you value their perspective. Establish clear communication channels using a variety of methods based on stakeholder preferences, such as meetings, emails, or newsletters, while fostering open, two-way communication for feedback and questions.

Engage stakeholders early in the project to build trust and foster a sense of ownership, and keep them involved with regular updates and opportunities for feedback. Be transparent and honest by sharing successes and challenges openly, setting realistic expectations, and demonstrating integrity in addressing setbacks. Active listening and showing appreciation for stakeholder input help strengthen relationships, especially when their suggestions are implemented or contributions are acknowledged.

Tailor communication styles to suit stakeholder preferences, whether they favor detailed reports, visual presentations, or concise summaries. Deliver on promises consistently, addressing delays or challenges openly while maintaining credibility.

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

Collaboration is key—invite stakeholders to participate in discussions, decision-making, or brainstorming sessions to foster a sense of partnership and teamwork.

Conflicts should be addressed promptly and respectfully, allowing stakeholders to voice concerns while working collaboratively toward solutions. Regularly monitor the strength of relationships by gathering feedback and reviewing engagement metrics, adjusting approaches as needed to maintain positive and productive interactions.

By implementing these strategies consistently, you can build and maintain strong, trust-based relationships with your stakeholders, creating a collaborative environment that supports project success and strengthens long-term partnerships.

Best practices (examples)

Example 1: Company X's sustainability initiative

Situation

Company X, a leading consumer goods company, launched a sustainability initiative aimed at reducing its carbon footprint. To drive the initiative's success, they engaged stakeholders across different levels. They began with a stakeholder analysis to identify key individuals and groups impacted by their operations. Following this, they hosted town hall meetings, focus groups, and surveys to gather feedback and understand stakeholder concerns. By actively involving stakeholders in the decision-making process, Company X gained valuable insights and support from employees, customers, and local communities. This collaborative approach not only helped them achieve their environmental goals but also boosted the company's reputation and brand value.

Learning

Carry out a comprehensive stakeholder analysis to identify all relevant stakeholders and understand their interests. This approach will allow you to customize your engagement strategies and prioritize your efforts effectively.

Example 2: Government project with community involvement

Situation

A local government planned to build a new park in a densely populated neighbourhood. Understanding the importance of community involvement in the decision-making process, they organized public consultations and workshops, giving residents a chance to share their opinions, concerns, and ideas about the park's design and features. Additionally, they set up a dedicated email address and helpline to encourage continuous feedback. By actively involving the community, the government addressed their concerns and fostered a sense of ownership and pride among residents. The park ultimately became a symbol of collaboration and community development.

Learning

Offer various channels for stakeholders to share feedback and participate in the process. This approach promotes inclusivity and encourages input from a wide range of perspectives.

Example 3: Non-profit organisation's fundraising campaign

Situation

A non-profit organisation set out to raise funds for a social cause, understanding that engaging donors and supporters was key to maximizing their impact. They used social media platforms, email newsletters, and personal outreach to keep stakeholders updated on their progress and achievements. Additionally, they organized fundraising events and volunteer opportunities to create a sense of community and involvement. Through effective stakeholder engagement, the organisation not only surpassed its fundraising goals but also built lasting relationships with donors and supporters.

Learning

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

Maintain regular communication with stakeholders to keep them informed about your project's progress and impact, helping to sustain their interest and commitment.

These examples demonstrate the impact of effective stakeholder engagement in driving project success. By understanding stakeholder needs and concerns and including them in decision-making, organisations can build trust, secure support, and achieve positive results. Tailor your engagement strategies to the unique context and stakeholders involved, and always consider the cost-benefit balance to ensure engagement is both efficient and impactful.

Conflict resolution and negotiation techniques

In stakeholder management, conflict resolution and negotiation are essential for maintaining positive relationships and ensuring project success.

Effective conflict resolution and negotiation with stakeholders involve several key techniques. Begin with active listening, allowing stakeholders to express their concerns without interruption while demonstrating empathy by acknowledging their feelings and perspectives. Restating or paraphrasing their points ensures mutual understanding and shows respect.

Identifying the root cause is essential to address underlying issues rather than surface symptoms. This often involves asking open-ended questions to uncover the true source of the conflict, such as miscommunication or differing expectations. Maintaining a collaborative attitude reinforces the idea of working together toward a solution, emphasizing shared goals and the importance of cooperation.

Remaining neutral and objective is crucial for fostering a professional atmosphere. Avoid taking sides or letting personal opinions influence the process, sticking to facts and ensuring stakeholders feel treated fairly. Clearly setting boundaries and expectations helps manage the resolution process by outlining what can and cannot be changed within project limitations, timelines, or resources.

Developing a win-win solution involves brainstorming with stakeholders to address everyone's needs, focusing on outcomes that satisfy all parties and build goodwill. After the resolution, following up with stakeholders demonstrates a commitment to their satisfaction, ensures the solution is effective, and helps prevent future issues.

Effective negotiation with stakeholders requires thorough preparation, understanding their priorities, potential objections, and alternatives. Anticipate resistance and prepare responses to present a well-informed and persuasive case. Define clear objectives by identifying non-negotiables and areas for compromise, and establish a "walk-away point" to maintain confidence while staying within project limits.

Building rapport and trust at the start of negotiations fosters a positive, cooperative environment, making stakeholders more receptive to solutions. Focus on underlying interests rather than rigid positions by exploring motivations and needs, which allows for creative problem-solving. Using objective criteria, such as timelines, budgets, or data, ensures negotiations remain fact-based and transparent, minimizing emotion-driven disputes.

Offering multiple options gives stakeholders flexibility to choose solutions that align with their interests while showcasing your willingness to accommodate their needs. Patience is essential, as negotiations may take time, especially with diverse stakeholders. Be open to compromise while confidently defending critical project aspects when necessary.

Finally, **document all agreements**, terms, and responsibilities to prevent misunderstandings and ensure accountability. Written records provide a reliable reference for decisions, confirming alignment among all parties.

By applying these conflict resolution and negotiation techniques, you can foster positive, productive relationships with stakeholders, resolve disagreements effectively, and drive successful project outcomes.

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

SUBTOPIC 4: Monitoring and evaluation

Aim and scope	➢ Learn how to monitor stakeholder engagement and evaluate the effectiveness of engagement strategies
Teaching tools	➢ Evaluation/monitoring approaches
Learning Outcomes	➢ LO4: Have the ability to use appropriate methodologies for data gathering and analysis, integrate various knowledge, handle complexity, and formulate proposals and solutions acknowledging the limits and constraints of specific territories and communities. ➢ LO5: Produce and transfer knowledge and understanding, including analysis and problem-solving abilities in unfamiliar contexts, considering the profile and resources of various stakeholders and environmental and socio-economic conditions. ➢ LO6: Link proposals, recommendations, and judgments with a reflection on the social and ethical responsibilities of stakeholders in the field.

Why is it important to monitor stakeholder engagement and evaluate engagement strategies?

Benefits of regular monitoring/evaluation

Monitoring stakeholder engagement and evaluating engagement strategies are essential for several reasons. Regularly assessing stakeholder engagement ensures the project remains aligned with the needs and expectations of those who have an interest in it. Stakeholders often have unique insights and feedback that can shape project goals and execution more effectively. When engagement is monitored, adjustments can be made in real time to address concerns, leading to higher satisfaction and trust. Satisfied stakeholders are more likely to continue supporting the project, which is crucial for long-term success.

Evaluation of engagement strategies provides data on what works and what doesn't, helping to inform decision-making and optimize resource allocation. This allows the team to focus on the most impactful engagement methods and make necessary improvements. Regular monitoring can also reveal potential issues or disengagement early on. By addressing these issues proactively, projects can reduce the likelihood of resistance or conflicts later, helping to keep timelines and goals on track.

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

Evaluating engagement effectiveness shows stakeholders that their input is valued and taken seriously. This transparency fosters a culture of accountability, where the project team demonstrates commitment to stakeholder interests. By understanding the effectiveness of different engagement strategies, projects can adapt to changing circumstances, whether due to shifts in stakeholder expectations, resource availability, or external factors.

Evaluation/monitoring approaches

To monitor stakeholder engagement and evaluate the effectiveness of engagement strategies, a **combination of approaches** can be used. Regular surveys and feedback forms provide insights into stakeholder satisfaction, concerns, and engagement levels, often yielding honest feedback when anonymity is maintained. Stakeholder meetings and check-ins offer real-time opportunities to discuss progress, address concerns, and gather input, showing stakeholders that their opinions are valued.

Engagement metrics, such as attendance at meetings, participation in discussions, and response times, help measure the level of stakeholder involvement. For digital engagement, tracking activity metrics like email open rates, responses, and participation in virtual events provides detailed insights into stakeholder interactions. Sentiment analysis, whether through tools or qualitative assessments, can gauge the tone and content of feedback, identifying trends in satisfaction or areas of concern.

Monitoring issues and conflicts can reveal the effectiveness of engagement efforts. A low frequency of conflicts suggests successful strategies, while recurring issues may indicate a need for adjustments. Evaluating the outcomes of engagement activities against specific goals ensures strategies are meeting their objectives. Additionally, conducting feedback sessions or focus groups on engagement practices allows stakeholders to share thoughts on the methods used and suggest improvements, ensuring future efforts are more tailored and effective.

By consistently applying a mix of these methods, you can maintain a clear picture of stakeholder engagement levels and adjust strategies to foster stronger, more effective relationships with them throughout the project.

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

SUBTOPIC 5: Best practices

Aim and scope	➢ Increase understanding of how to engage stakeholders by studying real life examples.
Teaching tools	➢ Case studies on successful stakeholder engagement. ➢ Lessons learned and practical insights.
Learning Outcomes	➢ LO2: Demonstrate insights into critical conditions that provide a basis for developing and applying transformative planning and projects at the local level. ➢ LO3: Demonstrate understanding of complex structures that influence sustainable development of a territory, such as resources, stakeholder networks, and power relations.

How do I maintain a good relationship with my stakeholders?

Relationships are based on trust

Building solid relationships with stakeholders is crucial for successful engagement. It is important to note that maintaining a 'good relationship' is no guarantee that all stakeholders will be consistently satisfied. Especially if the group of stakeholders is large and very diverse, the risk for potential conflicts of interest is real. However, positive stakeholder relationships are based on trust. Effective communication plays a key role and therefore it is important to create transparent and accessible communication channels where individuals feel valued and heard. In the following. we will have a look at real-life examples of companies that managed to successfully build solid relationships with their stakeholders although they faced conflicts of interest among their stakeholders.

Best practices (real-life companies)

Case study 1: Co-Operative Food Group, UK

Background

Co-operatives are owned by their members rather than shareholders, as seen in private or public limited companies. The UK's largest co-operative, The Co-operative Group, has over three million members, each with an equal say in decision-making. While managers handle daily business decisions, members guide the business's direction, especially its ethical focus, rather than shareholders. The Co-operative Group operates in a wide variety of sectors, including food, banking, travel, insurance, and legal services, as well as online shopping and funeral services.

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

Stakeholders

The Co-operative Group identifies the following groups of stakeholders:

- **Internal stakeholders**: Employees are one of the most important internal stakeholder groups for The Co-operative. Success in the retail food industry relies on having dedicated people who provide excellent customer service.
- **Internal or external stakeholders**: Suppliers can be considered either internal or external stakeholders, depending on the closeness of their partnership with the business. Members also form an important stakeholder group.
- **External stakeholders**: The Co-operative Group has various external stakeholders, such as customers, the government, and food standards organisations.

Situation/problem

In recent years, members of The Co-operative Group have expressed concern about its diet and health policies, as the UK government has also been working to raise awareness about the risks of obesity.

Strategy/actions taken

In this way the Co-operative Group tried to satisfy the needs of their stakeholders:

1. **Employees**: The Co-operative Group aims to retain employees by treating its staff ethically. One approach has been its "Good with Food" initiative, which involves engaging employees with the core values and principles of the Co-operative brand. Additional efforts include a training program designed to enhance employees' skills and product knowledge.
2. **Suppliers**: The Co-operative has been transitioning many of its products to Fairtrade suppliers, who are guaranteed a price that supports the sustainability of their businesses and allows for reinvestment. This approach also ensures that resources are preserved for future generations.
3. **Members:** The Co-operative Group implemented a food ethical policy backed by its members.
4. **Customers**: After consulting with its customers, The Co-operative Group introduced an honest labelling policy to help customers make informed choices about their purchases.
5. **Government**: The Co-operative Group has supported its Change4Life program by assisting in sharing the government's message.
6. **Food standard bodies**: The Co-operative Group has implemented the Food Standards Agency's (FSA) 'traffic light' labelling on its product packaging, making it easier for consumers to understand nutritional content and encouraging healthier eating habits.
7. **Other actions**: In response to this situation, The Co-operative Group has reformulated its own-brand products to lower salt, saturated fat, and sugar content. Additionally, a growing portion of its food range offers healthy options, with products featuring clear and honest labelling. The Co-operative Group also supports community and sports initiatives, such as a national charity that promotes sports for young people in disadvantaged communities. Through its 'From Farm to Fork' initiative, The Co-operative provides primary school children with educational visits to its farms across the UK, offering hands-on learning experiences.

Results/conclusion

Stakeholders are both internal and external to the organisation, and balancing their needs can be challenging. Conflicts of interest may arise in the company's behaviour or objectives. For example, shifting to Fairtrade suppliers benefits one stakeholder group – suppliers – while it may mean slightly higher prices for cost-conscious customers. Despite these potential conflicts, operating ethically supports The Co-operative Group's sustainability and helps establish a unique market position, offering a distinct competitive advantage.

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

Case study 2: Shell, international

Background

Shell is a global group of energy and petrochemical companies, aiming to meet society's energy needs in economically, socially, and environmentally sustainable ways, both now and for the future. Headquartered in The Hague, Netherlands, Shell's parent company, Royal Dutch Shell plc, is incorporated in England and Wales. Shell supplies 2% of the world's oil and 3% of its natural gas. With a fuel retail network of approximately 44,000 service stations, Shell serves 10 million customers daily, offering fuels and lubricants for various modes of transport, including cars, ships, airplanes, and trains.

Stakeholders

Shell identifies the following groups of stakeholders:

- **Internal stakeholders**:
  1. Shareholders: Shell is owned by shareholders, who play a vital role in the company's operations by providing much of the capital needed to establish and run the business. They receive a portion of the profits as dividends, depending on the number of shares they own. Shareholders elect a Board of Directors to represent them and guide the company's direction. The directors are responsible for implementing strategy and must produce an annual report for shareholders, presented each year at the Annual General Meeting.
  2. Employees: Shell employs over 100,000 people globally, including senior international managers, geologists, market researchers, site engineers, oil platform workers, office administrators, business analysts, and many others. The dedication and high standards of these employees, particularly in health, safety, and excellence, are crucial for maintaining Shell's leadership in the energy sector. Mistakes can be costly, impacting both Shell's reputation and the livelihoods of its employees.
  3. Suppliers: Suppliers are also internal stakeholders and serve as Shell's partners throughout the production chain, from extracting oil to delivering petrol to the pump. Shell's reputation relies on ensuring that its business actions align with its core values, and contractors and other supply chain partners are expected to uphold these values as well.
- **External stakeholders**:
  1. Customers: One of Shell's primary objectives is "to attract and retain customers by offering products and services that deliver value in terms of price, quality, safety, and environmental impact, backed by technological, environmental, and commercial expertise." Achieving this goal is challenging, as customers seek value for money, requiring Shell to provide top-quality fuels at competitive prices.
  2. Local communities: Shell's oil and gas operations strive to foster economic and social development while minimizing adverse impacts. The company aims to invest in lasting benefits for the community, with particular focus on local communities near oil refineries, who are key external stakeholders for Shell.
  3. Governments: Shell operates in numerous countries worldwide and requires approval from host governments to conduct business in each location.
  4. The business community: Shell engages in buying from and supplying to hundreds of other businesses.
  5. Other oil companies: Shell collaborates on projects with other international oil companies and government-owned oil companies in the countries where it operates. These partnerships have involved constructing new oil and gas supply lines as well as building new refineries.
  6. The media: For competitive companies like Shell, maintaining positive media coverage across newspapers, television, and magazines is essential. This strengthens its market position and helps attract new customers by building a positive reputation.
  7. NGOs: NGOs often aim to influence various entities, including major brands and large multinationals like Shell. Shell regularly engages and collaborates with a diverse range of NGOs.

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

Situation/problem

Safety and environmental impact are central to the research and development process. As customers become more concerned about pollution and environmental harm, there is growing demand for cleaner, more efficient fuels like biofuels. Local communities near oil refineries have also expressed safety concerns. Additionally, Shell's search for oil and gas often leads to regions with poor human rights records, presenting the company with the challenge of addressing these complex issues responsibly.

Strategy/actions taken

Shell believes that by engaging in stakeholder dialogue and balancing diverse stakeholder needs, it can continue to grow while helping to meet global energy demands. In making these decisions, Shell considers three key criteria to assess whether:

- The economic impact of the activity is expected to provide a strong return for shareholders.
- The social impact will be favourable for employees and communities.
- The long-term environmental effects of the activity will be minimized.

To prevent conflicts, Shell establishes minimum standards for each of the three areas before making any major decision or investment. For instance, when planning new activities on land previously used for purposes like timber or agriculture, Shell aims to balance social impact and opportunities with financial returns and risks.

Shell is committed to respecting human rights and supporting communities. If Shell avoids operating in regions with poor human rights records, it may leave room for less ethical competitors to exploit workers there. By remaining, Shell can contribute to positive change. However, Shell will only operate in countries where it can uphold its business principles, which define its values and guide its conduct.

In this way Shell tries to satisfy the needs of their stakeholders:

1. **Shareholders**: Shell believes it holds a key responsibility to protect shareholders' investments and deliver long-term returns competitive with other leading industry companies. Profits are used to reward shareholders through dividends and reinvested in research, developing new products, exploring future energy sources, and improving fuel reserve management.
2. **Employees**: Respect for people is a priority at Shell. The company strives to offer its staff safe working conditions and competitive employment terms, positively impacting employees by ensuring their safety and motivation.
3. **Customers**: Shell has adapted to changing customer perspectives and strives to anticipate future expectations. Its goal is to help customers reduce energy consumption and lower CO2 emissions.
4. **Local communities**: Shell aims to address local communities' concerns and build trust by implementing comprehensive safety measures, operating its facilities securely, and informing residents about plans and emergency procedures. Committed to enhancing community wellbeing, Shell has formed local partnerships, established health facilities, and supported the growth of local schools and universities.
5. **Governments**: To secure approval to operate in these countries, Shell has demonstrated to host governments that it operates responsibly, including creating jobs, paying taxes, and supplying essential energy. Additionally, Shell collaborates with governments to advocate for stronger CO2 emissions regulations.

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

6. **NGOs**: Shell collaborates with over 100 scientific and conservation organizations across 40 countries. These global partnerships enhance Shell's environmental approach. A 10-year partnership with the International Union for the Conservation of Nature, for example, has led to operational changes that reduce environmental impact.

Results/conclusion

Balancing stakeholder needs is challenging. To achieve this, Shell identifies five key areas of responsibility: shareholders, customers, employees, suppliers, and society. Continuous communication and dialogue with these groups are essential, allowing Shell to consider everyone's needs and expectations in both current and future decision-making. Shell addresses and reduces conflicts between its activities and stakeholders by adhering to clear strategies and corporate values. By balancing social, economic, and environmental factors, Shell aims to make decisions that maximize overall value.

Lessons learned

Balance needs and expectations

Large organizations have a variety of stakeholder groups, both internal, such as employees, and external, like government entities. Identifying and balancing these groups' needs and expectations, while acting responsibly toward each, is essential for maintaining the license to operate – a key requirement for successful business operations.

Communicate reasons behind decisions

When a business aims to meet the needs of diverse stakeholders, conflicts can arise as different groups may have varying priorities. For instance, company members may prioritize differently than customers. Ethical initiatives may not always align with commercial goals, and in these cases, managers must sometimes make decisions that not all members will favour. Communicating the reasons behind such decisions is essential, as it helps members understand the rationale behind them.

Stick to corporate values

It is also possible to resolve and minimise conflicts between your activities and stakeholders through making strategies clear to everyone and by committing to your own corporate values. That is a sign of authenticity and makes it clearer and more understandable for everyone.

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

Test your knowledge of Module 3 – Stakeholder engagement

1. True or False Questions

	Question	Answer (True / False)
Q.1	The ‘magic square’ of partnership objectives consists of the four ‘corners’ Management/HR, external stakeholders, economic performance and development.	
Q.2	The four different forms of partnership are: Responsible practices, Economic cooperation, Societal innovation and sponsorship.	
Q.3	One strategy to better communicate with your stakeholders and to engage them actively is to identify stakeholder needs and expectations.	
Q.4	It is better to only use one tool/strategy for the communication with your stakeholders instead of mixing the strategies and tools.	
Q.5	Building and maintaining strong relationships with stakeholders is essential for the long-term success of any project.	
Q.6	Effective stakeholder engagement has no impact on the project success.	
Q.7	For the monitoring of stakeholder engagement it is sufficient to assess the stakeholder engagement at the beginning of the project.	
Q.8	The evaluation of engagement strategies provides data on what works and what doesn’t, helping to inform decision-making and optimize resource allocation.	
Q.9	Maintaining a ‘good relationship’ is a guarantee that all stakeholders will be consistently satisfied.	
Q.10	You should stick to your own corporate values in order to to resolve and minimise conflicts between your activities and stakeholders.	

Correct answers: True Q2, Q3, Q5, Q8, Q10; False Q1, Q4, Q6, Q7, Q9

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

2. Multiple choice questions

	Question	Answers offered	Correct answer (A/B/C/D)
Q.1	Think about the 'magic square' of partnership objectives – which objectives correspond to the 'corner' of the external stakeholders?	A) Involving human resources B) Reinforcing the company's network C) Optimising costs D) Enhancing the company's image	
Q.2	What are the key features of a Responsible Practices Partnership?	A) Innovative solutions B) Market access & expansion C) Ethical standards D) Brand promotion	
Q.3	Which of the following actions are **not** linked to the Stakeholder map?	A) Check how often you need to stay in contact with each stakeholder. B) Check how closely you should manage your stakeholders. C) Check how to keep your stakeholders satisfied and/or informed. D) Identify the potential communication channels through which stakeholders are most likely to be engaged	
Q.4	Which elements should be part of a communication plan?	A) Area of interest/influence B) Engagement action C) Channel D) Frequency	
Q.5	Which of the following is **not** a key step to establish and sustain relationships effectively?	A) Understand stakeholder needs and interests B) Be intransparent and dishonest C) Establish clear communication channels D) Engage stakeholders early and often	
Q.6	Carrying out a comprehensive stakeholder analysis will help to…	A) identify all relevant stakeholders B) understand the stakeholder's interests C) customize your engagement strategies D) prioritize your efforts effectively	
Q.7	Which approaches are part of the monitoring of stakeholder engagement and the evaluation of the effectiveness of engagement strategies?	A) Regular surveys and feedback Forms B) Economic cooperation C) Stakeholder sentiment analysis D) Pooling resources	
Q.8	Which track activity metrics can you use for the digital engagement tracking (as part of the stakeholder engagement monitoring/evaluation	A) e-mail newsletters B) e-mail open rates B) participation in virtual events C) interactions in project management tools	

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

	of the effectiveness of engagement strategies)?		
Q.9	What are typical internal stakeholders?	A) Shareholders B) Customers C) NGOs D) Employees	
Q.10	What are typical external stakeholders?	A) HR (human resources) B) Governments C) Other companies/competitors D) Project managers	

Correct answers: Q1: B, D; Q2: C; Q3: D; Q4: A, B, C, D; Q5: B; Q6: A, B, C, D; Q7: A, C; Q8: B, C, D; Q9: A, D; Q10: B, C

Task

Objective: Students will design a stakeholder engagement strategy for a fictional or real organisation, integrating the concepts learned about how to work in a partnership, how to successfully communicate with and engage stakeholders and how to monitor and evaluate their actions taken. The students are free to choose their preferred method of work in order to fulfil this task.to

Guidelines:

1. **Your organisation and stakeholders:** Think of the organisation you have chosen in Module 1 and the stakeholders you have identified in Module 2.
2. **The 'magic square' of partnership objectives**: What are the goals and interests of all partners involved in the project? Make a little sketch.
3. **Handling conflicts/negotiation techniques:** Think of real or fictional conflicts with your stakeholders and choose the conflict handling/negotiation techniques that are most suitable in your opinion.
4. **Lessons learned:** Think about the Case Studies of The Co-operative Group and Shell and try to write your own Case Study. What kind of challenge/difficult situation did your real/fictional organisation face in the past and what strategy/actions did you take/could you have taken? Are there any „lessons learned“ that will help you in the future?

References

1. Business Case Studies (2024): *Stakeholders as partners, Business Case Studies*. Available at: https://businesscasestudies.co.uk/stakeholders-as-partners/ (Accessed: 13 November 2024).
2. Business Case Studies (2024a): *Balancing stakeholder needs*, *Business Case Studies*. Available at: https://businesscasestudies.co.uk/balancing-stakeholder-needs/ (Accessed: 13 November 2024).
3. *Case studies in effective stakeholder engagement* (no date): *FasterCapital*. Available at: https://fastercapital.com/topics/case-studies-in-effective-stakeholder-engagement.html (Accessed: 12 November 2024).
4. Le Rameau (2023): *Guide pratique*. Available at: https://www.lerameau.fr/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/Livret-Cooperer-Efficacement-VF.pdf (Accessed: 7 January 2025)

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

MODULE 4: PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Description of Module 4	The fourth module, "Project Management," focuses on the principles and practices essential to planning, executing, and monitoring projects effectively. This module introduces the project lifecycle, planning and scheduling techniques, financial management, and the unique challenges of managing social impact projects. Students will develop key skills to organise, manage, and deliver successful projects that align with both operational objectives and societal goals.
Objectives	➢ Introduce the fundamentals of project management, including the project lifecycle and key methodologies. ➢ Equip learners with the tools and techniques needed for effective project planning and scheduling. ➢ Develop financial management skills to create budgets, plan costs, and control expenditures. ➢ Explore methods for monitoring progress, managing scope, and ensuring successful project completion. ➢ Address the specific complexities of social impact projects, including stakeholder engagement and impact measurement.
Learning Outcomes	➢ **Knowledge:** Understand project management principles, including lifecycle phases, planning methods, and financial management techniques. ➢ **Skills:** Apply project planning tools, manage resources efficiently, and monitor progress using appropriate methodologies and software. ➢ **Attitudes:** Foster a proactive mindset, adaptability, and commitment to achieving results in diverse and dynamic environments.
Duration	➢ 6 hours

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

SUBTOPIC 1: Introduction to Project Management

Aim and scope	➢ **Understanding the Role of Project Management in Social Impact Initiatives:** Examine how structured project management frameworks enable effective planning, execution, and evaluation of social impact projects to address complex socio-economic and environmental challenges. ➢ **Exploring the Project Lifecycle in the Context of Social Impact:** Analyse the five phases of the project life cycle—initiation, planning, execution, monitoring and control, and closure—highlighting their unique application to driving sustainable and meaningful change.

Teaching tools	➢ **Lectures:** Delivered by project management professionals and social impact experts, providing theoretical knowledge and practical applications.
	➢ **Guest Speakers:** Engage with experienced project managers and social impact leaders who share insights on managing challenges and achieving impactful results.
	➢ **Interactive Activities:**
	    ➢ Workshops on risk assessment, resource allocation, and stakeholder engagement.
	➢ Role-playing exercises to simulate decision-making during the project lifecycle.
	➢ **Multimedia Content:**
	➢ Videos and infographics illustrating project management tools like Gantt charts and Trello.
	    ➢ Case study simulations showcasing real-world applications of the project lifecycle in social impact settings.

Learning Outcomes	➢ LO2: Demonstrate insights into critical conditions that provide a basis for developing and applying transformative planning and projects at the local level. ➢ LO4: Have the ability to use appropriate methodologies for data gathering and analysis, integrate various knowledge, handle complexity, and formulate proposals and solutions acknowledging the limits and constraints of specific territories and communities.

Project management is a structured, disciplined approach that involves planning, executing, and overseeing projects to achieve specific objectives within set constraints. It is a critical tool across diverse domains, and in the realm of social impact projects, it becomes an indispensable framework for driving meaningful and sustainable change. Effective project management in this context addresses multifaceted socio-economic and environmental challenges, enabling managers to balance short-term deliverables with long-term developmental goals.

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

For social impact managers, project management provides a foundation for addressing the complex socio-economic and environmental challenges inherent in sustainability and development work. Understanding and applying project management fundamentals allows them to balance short-term goals with long-term impacts, align stakeholder needs, and adapt to shifting social dynamics.

Project Lifecycle

The project lifecycle comprises five distinct phases that form a structured pathway to project completion: initiation, planning, execution, monitoring and control, and closure. Each phase plays a unique role in guiding a project from conception to successful completion, providing checkpoints that help keep the project on track, especially amid the unpredictability often present in social impact initiatives.

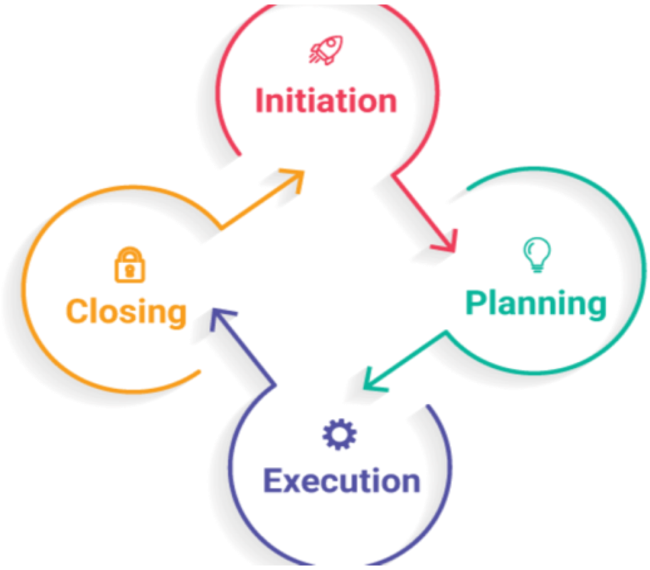


Figure 1. Phases of a project

The first phase, **initiation**, sets the foundation by defining the project's purpose, objectives, and initial feasibility. In social impact contexts, this stage is particularly critical, as it involves assessing community needs, identifying stakeholders, and understanding the socio-economic, cultural, and environmental context within which the project will operate. Social impact managers must go beyond surface-level analysis, often conducting thorough community assessments, surveys, and initial meetings with stakeholders to establish a shared understanding of the project's goals and challenges. Engaging with community members at this early stage builds trust, ensures that the project aligns with local values, and helps prevent potential conflicts later. The feasibility of a social impact project must consider not only available resources but also the potential long-term impacts on the community. Managers must ask:

- Will this project genuinely benefit the community?
- Are the resources sustainable over time?
- Are there any cultural or ethical considerations that might affect project implementation?

Effective initiation transcends superficial analysis. For instance, an LGBTQ+ inclusion initiative aimed at enhancing workplace diversity should commence with comprehensive needs assessments, including anonymous employee surveys, stakeholder focus groups, and policy reviews to identify areas of exclusion or bias. Engaging directly with LGBTQ+ employees and advocacy groups builds trust and ensures the initiative addresses the specific challenges faced by the community. This

Co-funded by the European Union
Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

participatory approach not only aligns project goals with stakeholder needs but also mitigates potential resistance, enhances buy-in, and ensures the initiative resonates with its intended beneficiaries.

Planning is the second critical phase, where detailed organisation and structure are established. In this phase, project managers develop a comprehensive plan that includes specific tasks, timelines, resource allocation, budgets, and risk management strategies. This is the stage where social impact managers must consider the intricate socio-economic dynamics at play and address potential cultural sensitivities that could affect the project's success. A well written and clear project plan acts as a roadmap, guiding the team towards each milestone and helping to coordinate efforts. For example, creating a timeline with Gantt charts can offer a visual representation of the project schedule, making it easier to identify dependencies between tasks, manage resources effectively, and anticipate potential bottlenecks. Social impact managers must also think beyond traditional planning by integrating risk mitigation strategies that account for local socio-political dynamics, environmental factors, and any constraints specific to the region or population they are working with. Financial planning in social impact projects also requires close attention, as funding often comes from limited grants, donations, or governmental programs, making it essential to prioritise expenses that directly contribute to the project's impact.

The third phase, **execution**, brings the project plan to life. This phase is action-oriented, where project managers coordinate resources, implement activities, and maintain open channels of communication with the team and stakeholders. Execution in social impact projects requires flexibility and adaptability, as managers often encounter unforeseen challenges. Whether due to changing community dynamics, political issues, or environmental factors, these unexpected obstacles can affect timelines and outcomes. Social impact managers must be prepared to adjust plans quickly, reallocating resources or modifying activities to keep the project moving forward. Active stakeholder engagement is essential during this phase, as it helps sustain community interest and participation. Communication is also paramount; clear, regular updates to stakeholders foster transparency and trust, encouraging community members to feel a sense of ownership in the project's success. Moreover, using collaborative tools like Trello or Asana can facilitate efficient task management and keep everyone informed, which is particularly beneficial for teams working across multiple locations or with diverse backgrounds.

Monitoring and control, the fourth phase, ensures the project remains aligned with its goals. This phase is about tracking progress, assessing performance, and implementing adjustments as needed. In social impact projects, monitoring must include both quantitative and qualitative metrics to capture the full scope of the project's impact. Quantitative metrics, such as the number of people reached or resources distributed, provide a measurable perspective, while qualitative assessments—like feedback from community members or team observations—offer valuable insights into the project's effect on community morale, attitudes, and future behaviours. Using project management software like MS Project can assist in tracking progress, highlighting deviations from the plan, and allowing for real-time adjustments to resource allocation or task timelines. In addition, a structured feedback mechanism with stakeholders helps project managers gather continuous input, ensuring that any emerging issues are addressed promptly. Monitoring and control activities not only support the project's short-term goals but also allow social impact managers to document successes and challenges, contributing to the broader field of social impact by building a repository of lessons learned.

The final phase, **closure**, formally concludes the project, encompassing the completion of all activities, final evaluations, and an assessment of the project's impact. For social impact managers, closure is more than an administrative process; it is a period for reflection, community feedback, and documentation of lessons learned. This phase involves evaluating the project's outcomes against its initial objectives and, crucially, examining the project's impact on the community's quality of life, well-being, and long-term sustainability. Closure includes final reports and evaluations that serve not only as a record of project outcomes but also as a resource for future projects. Social impact managers often conduct debriefing sessions with community leaders, local authorities, and team members to discuss what went well, what challenges arose, and what

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

could be improved in future initiatives. Successful project closure builds a foundation of trust with the community, reinforcing positive relationships that will be valuable for any subsequent efforts. This process contributes to the transparency and accountability of social impact work, highlighting the importance of ethical, sustained engagement with the communities served.

The role of project managers

Project managers play a vital role in each phase of the project lifecycle, acting as coordinators, leaders, and problem solvers. In social impact projects, their responsibilities expand to include an emphasis on stakeholder engagement, cultural sensitivity, and risk management tailored to complex social contexts. Effective stakeholder engagement involves building and maintaining relationships with a diverse array of individuals and organisations, including community members, local authorities, partner organisations, and donors. This requires strong interpersonal skills and the ability to communicate the project's vision and goals in ways that resonate with different audiences. Cultural sensitivity is also essential; project managers must ensure that project activities respect the community's values and norms, as culturally inappropriate actions can quickly derail a project. Managing limited resources efficiently is another critical responsibility, particularly in social impact contexts where financial and material resources may be scarce. Project managers must prioritise and allocate resources carefully, ensuring that they are used effectively to achieve the intended outcomes. Finally, proactive risk management is necessary to anticipate and mitigate potential challenges, such as socio-political changes or environmental disruptions.

Utilising appropriate tools can greatly enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of project management. Gantt charts are valuable tools for visualising project timelines and task dependencies, allowing teams to understand the flow of activities and anticipate any bottlenecks. MS Project is a more comprehensive software that offers advanced features for scheduling, resource allocation, and tracking, making it ideal for larger, more complex projects. For smaller teams or projects, web-based platforms like Trello and Asana provide flexibility, allowing team members to manage tasks, update progress, and communicate in real time, fostering transparency and coordination.

Mastering these project management fundamentals is essential for social impact managers who aim to drive sustainable development and positive change. By understanding the project lifecycle, taking on key roles and responsibilities, and effectively using management tools, social impact managers are better equipped to navigate the unique challenges of their work. Such mastery not only contributes to the success of individual projects but also builds the manager's capacity to create lasting, meaningful impacts in the communities they serve.

Effective project planning, scheduling, and risk assessment are the cornerstones of successful project management, particularly for social impact initiatives that often navigate complex and unpredictable environments. By employing structured methodologies, leveraging stakeholder insights, and utilising practical tools like Gantt charts, Trello, and Asana, project managers can create robust frameworks that drive projects toward their objectives. Integrating risk management into the planning process ensures resilience and adaptability, allowing teams to address uncertainties proactively and seize opportunities for positive outcomes. Ultimately, these practices enable the delivery of impactful, sustainable change, fostering trust among stakeholders and creating a lasting legacy in the communities served. Through continuous learning, collaboration, and the strategic use of technology, project managers can confidently navigate challenges and ensure the success of their initiatives.

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

SUBTOPIC 2: Project Planning and Scheduling

Aim and scope	➢ **Understanding the Role of Planning and Scheduling in Social Impact Projects:** Explore how strategic planning and scheduling serve as critical foundations for ensuring that social impact projects are delivered effectively, even in challenging environments. ➢ **Integrating Risk Management and Stakeholder Engagement in Planning:** Analyse the importance of proactive risk assessment and collaborative stakeholder involvement in creating adaptable and resilient project plans.
Teaching tools	➢ **Lectures:** Delivered by project management experts focusing on planning methodologies and real-world examples of scheduling in social impact initiatives. ➢ **Guest Speakers:** Hear from professionals who have successfully navigated complex planning and scheduling scenarios in diverse project settings. ➢ **Interactive Activities:** Workshops on developing Work Breakdown Structures (WBS) and Gantt charts. Role-playing exercises to simulate stakeholder engagement during the planning phase. ➢ **Multimedia Content:** Video tutorials on tools like Trello, Asana, and Gantt charts. Infographics demonstrating risk prioritisation and milestone tracking.
Learning Outcomes	➢ LO2: Demonstrate insights into critical conditions that provide a basis for developing and applying transformative planning and projects at the local level.

Project planning and scheduling are essential steps in project management that involve developing a detailed roadmap to ensure that a project progresses smoothly toward its objectives. Think of planning as the foundation of your project. Without it, everything else risks crumbling. At its core, planning defines what needs to be done, when, how, and by whom. It's where the big-picture ideas get turned into actionable steps. Effective planning isn't just about tasks; it's about creating alignment. When everyone knows what the goals are and how their work contributes, it's easier to stay focused and productive.

For social impact projects, planning is even more critical. These initiatives often have unique challenges—like navigating community expectations, limited resources, or external pressures like seasonal changes. Starting with a clear understanding of the project's objectives and context is vital. Planning also benefits from engaging stakeholders early, so their needs and insights shape the approach. Social impact managers often operate in unpredictable environments, strong planning and scheduling skills can mean the difference between success and failure. This section dives into how thoughtful planning, smart time scheduling, and effective management can bring a project to life, even in challenging conditions.

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

Building a plan step by step

1. **Define the Scope**

Every successful project begins with clearly defining its scope. This step is all about stating what the project aims to achieve and setting clear boundaries on what's included—and what isn't. Think of it as creating a roadmap that ensures everyone involved, whether they're project managers, team members, or stakeholders, understands the project's purpose and direction.

A well-defined scope can help you avoid one of the most common project pitfalls: *scope creep*. This happens when extra tasks or deliverables sneak in without proper consideration or approval, potentially throwing the whole project off track. As the Project Management Institute (PMI, 2017) highlights, a clear scope forms the bedrock of effective planning, making it easier to allocate resources and prioritise tasks efficiently. For example, in a community health project, defining the scope might mean deciding whether you're focusing on infrastructure development, training programmes, or both. Getting this clarity early on prevents misunderstandings and ensures everyone is pulling in the same direction.

2. **Break It Down: The Work Breakdown Structure (WBS)**

Once you've nailed down the scope, the next step is to break the project into smaller, manageable pieces. This is where the Work Breakdown Structure (WBS) comes in. A WBS is essentially a step-by-step breakdown of the project's tasks and deliverables into more manageable chunks. It's like turning a big, daunting puzzle into smaller pieces so you can tackle them one at a time.

As Kerzner (2017) explains, a WBS works like a blueprint, dividing a project into smaller components that can be assigned, tracked, and completed independently. For instance, in an educational project, the WBS might split the work into areas like curriculum design, teacher training, and student outreach, each with its own detailed sub-tasks and deadlines. Organising the project this way ensures nothing is overlooked, while making it easier to manage and measure progress along the way.

3. **Identify Milestones**

Milestones are like key landmarks on your project journey. They serve as checkpoints that help you track progress and celebrate small wins along the way. Each milestone represents a significant accomplishment, such as completing a key phase or delivering an important output.

Milestones are essential for keeping a project on track and flagging potential delays or risks before they become major issues. Take a software development project as an example. Milestones might include completing the design phase, finishing coding for key features, or conducting user testing. Reaching each of these points gives the team a chance to assess progress, recalibrate if necessary, and build momentum as the project advances.
Planning is never a one-person job. It's a collaborative process that benefits immensely from diverse perspectives. Engaging your team and stakeholders during the planning phase ensures the project reflects their insights, builds their commitment, and fosters a shared sense of ownership.

As Freeman (2010) points out, effective stakeholder engagement is vital for project success. Stakeholders often bring unique knowledge and resources to the table, so it's important to include their input early on. Regular check-ins with stakeholders can help surface concerns, gather ideas, and align everyone's expectations. For instance, in a public infrastructure project,

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

consulting with local community leaders during the planning phase can reveal needs or challenges you might not have anticipated, ultimately increasing the project's chances of success.

It's also important to involve your team in the planning process. When team members have a voice in decision-making, they're more likely to feel motivated and accountable for achieving the project's goals. Collaborative planning can also help build trust and uncover potential roadblocks before they escalate. This way, the team can work together to find proactive solutions and ensure the project stays on track.

Risk Assessment and Management in Project Management

An integral part of the planning process is risk assessment. In any project, particularly in social impact work, potential risks must be identified early to minimise their impact on the project timeline and outcomes. Risk assessment involves evaluating external and internal factors that might disrupt project progress, such as limited resources, logistical challenges, or unforeseen socio-political issues. For each risk identified, a project manager can and should create a back-up plan. For instance, if a project involves conducting outside activities in remote locations during rainy seasons, the manager might plan to stock resources nearby or schedule critical tasks during dry months, such as in spring or autumn (Greens, 2016). Including risk considerations directly in the planning and scheduling stages increases project resilience, enabling smoother adaptation to unexpected changes.

Understanding the nature of risks

In project management, risks are uncertainties that could impact project objectives. These risks may manifest as obstacles (negative risks) or opportunities (positive risks). For social impact projects, risks tend to be more complex due to the intricate socio-economic and cultural environments in which they operate (Fortunato, 2012). A nuanced understanding of risks is essential. Risks can arise from technical challenges, environmental conditions, human errors, or organisational constraints. Social impact initiatives often contend with less predictable variables, such as fluctuating community support, regulatory changes, or resource scarcity (Nilsen, 2018). Recognizing these multifaceted risks equips project teams with the foresight necessary to mitigate their effects effectively.

Identifying risks through a structured approach

The process of identifying risks requires creativity, critical thinking, and systematic methodologies. Common tools such as SWOT analysis, brainstorming, and stakeholder analysis are instrumental in pinpointing risks across various project dimensions (AACE, 2011). For instance, a SWOT analysis might reveal organisational weaknesses, such as insufficient staffing or outdated technology, which could escalate into project risks. Stakeholder analysis can uncover external risks, such as regulatory changes or community resistance. A well-facilitated risk identification session, where team members share insights and experiences, ensures a comprehensive assessment (Greens, 2016). These discussions aim to categorise risks by their sources—technical, environmental, financial, or human factors—enabling targeted management strategies (Uppal, 2013).[1]

[1] For more information and a graphic example on SWOT analysis, you can check out this video.

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

Risk prioritisation based on likelihood and impact

Not all risks are created equal, and effective project management requires prioritising risks based on their likelihood and impact. Qualitative and quantitative risk analysis methods can be used to determine which risks warrant immediate attention. A qualitative approach often involves assessing risks using descriptive scales, such as high, medium, or low likelihood and impact. This method is useful for quickly identifying critical risks but may lack precision. Quantitative analysis, on the other hand, provides numerical estimates of risk probabilities and their potential costs. Tools such as Monte Carlo simulations and decision trees can offer detailed insights, making quantitative analysis particularly valuable for large-scale or high-stakes projects. Combining both methods ensures a balanced approach to risk prioritisation, allowing project managers to focus resources where they are needed most.

Stakeholders as a part of risk assessment

A successful risk assessment process relies on steady stakeholder engagement. Stakeholders bring diverse perspectives that enrich the understanding of potential risks and their impacts. For example, local community leaders might highlight cultural sensitivities that could influence project outcomes, while financial backers might focus on risks related to resource allocation. By fostering open communication with all stakeholders, project managers can ensure a more comprehensive risk analysis. Techniques such as brainstorming sessions, interviews, and stakeholder workshops provide valuable forums for uncovering risks that might otherwise go unnoticed. This collaborative approach not only strengthens the risk assessment process but also builds trust and alignment among stakeholders, which are critical for project success.

Incorporating risk assessment practices into the planning process is essential for the success of any project, particularly those with a social impact focus. By identifying, analysing, and addressing risks early, project managers can create resilient plans that withstand uncertainties and deliver meaningful outcomes. The integration of stakeholder insights, structured identification methods, and ongoing monitoring ensures that risks are managed comprehensively and adaptively. Ultimately, effective risk assessment is not just about mitigating negative outcomes; it is about enabling projects to navigate challenges confidently and achieve their full potential.

Useful tools and apps

An essential tool in scheduling is the Gantt chart, which provides a timeline view of project tasks, allowing project managers to organise work efficiently and foresee any points where tasks may overlap or require specific sequences. Its use is described below. Gantt charts are especially useful for ensuring that all stakeholders have a shared understanding of timelines, as they visually demonstrate how the project will unfold. For example, in a community health project, a Gantt chart could help visualise the sequence from initial consultations with local leaders to setting up facilities, followed by community outreach and training sessions. These timelines are adjustable, making them well-suited to projects where flexibility is key.

In addition to Gantt charts, software like MS Project provides advanced tools for complex scheduling needs. MS Project offers options for creating detailed task lists, allocating resources, tracking completion rates, and adjusting schedules as necessary. This software is beneficial in projects that involve multiple phases or large teams, where detailed oversight and resource management are crucial for maintaining progress and addressing challenges efficiently.

For those seeking simpler, more flexible scheduling solutions, Trello and Asana are valuable alternatives. Trello, with its board and card system, allows users to organise tasks into workflows that can be easily customised, making it intuitive for

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

teams to track tasks and progress. Asana similarly offers a platform for task management, with features that support clear visualisation of project steps, timelines, and team responsibilities. Both platforms offer real-time updates, enabling teams to communicate effectively and adapt swiftly to changing project needs, which is particularly beneficial in social impact projects where conditions can shift rapidly.

Trello is a user-friendly, web-based project management tool that employs a board-and-card system to organise tasks. Each project is represented as a board, with lists and cards indicating tasks and their statuses. This visual approach allows teams to track progress, assign responsibilities, and set deadlines efficiently. Trello's flexibility makes it suitable for various project types, enabling managers to customise workflows according to specific needs. Its collaborative features facilitate real-time updates and communication among team members, ensuring everyone stays informed and aligned.

Asana is another robust project management platform that offers a range of features to streamline project planning and execution. It provides multiple views, including list, board, and timeline formats, allowing managers to choose the most effective way to visualise their projects. Asana supports task assignments, due dates, and progress tracking, helping teams stay organised and focused on their objectives. Its integration capabilities with other tools enhance productivity by centralising project-related information. Asana's user-friendly interface and comprehensive functionalities make it a valuable asset for managing complex projects with multiple stakeholders.

Both Trello and Asana offer free versions with substantial features, making them accessible options for social impact managers working with limited budgets. By incorporating these tools into their project management practices, managers can create adaptable schedules, monitor progress effectively, and facilitate collaboration among team members. This proactive approach to planning and scheduling increases the likelihood of project success, ensuring the delivery of sustainable, impactful change in the communities they serve.

Video tutorials: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EGXPQXmS-o4
ASANA: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=87YlaMG2rtw
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e_ZfheZ4oIc
TRELLO: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=geRKHFzTxNY
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TTyt48pw7j4

Gantt chart: a simple way to visualise a project

A Gantt chart, such as the one outlined below, is a great introductory visual tool for project management that provides a structured way to track tasks and timelines. It represents the duration of activities or actions against a defined timeline. Each row corresponds to a specific task or action, while the columns represent time periods, in this case, months.

The Gantt chart shown below is a simplified structure with the following features:

1. **Action items:** Each row corresponds to a specific action or task required for the project. For example, these could be activities like planning, implementation, monitoring, or evaluation.
2. **Time periods:** The columns represent months, from month 1 to month 12, offering a full-year view of the project timeline.

Co-funded by the European Union
Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

3. **Task timeline:** The timeline for each action is visually marked across the corresponding months. For example, if a task spans from month 2 to month 5, it will be highlighted or indicated on the respective cells in the row for that task.

Essential elements for a comprehensive Gantt Chart

To make the Gantt chart fully functional and useful for project management, it should include:

1. **Task descriptions:** Clearly label each row with a detailed task or action item.
2. **Start and end dates:** Indicate the start and end date for each task by marking the appropriate columns (months) to show its duration.
3. **Dependencies:** Highlight any dependencies between tasks, indicating which actions must be completed before others can start.
4. **Milestones:** Add key milestones, such as critical deadlines or checkpoints, to ensure the project stays on track. Keep in mind that you can mark these milestones however you like! You can use letters, symbols or even emojis!
5. **Deliverables:** Specific outputs, products, or services that must be produced during a project, typically at the conclusion of a phase or milestone.[2]
6. **Resources assigned:** Optionally, include the names or roles of individuals responsible for each task to clarify accountability.
7. **Progress tracking:** Incorporate a mechanism to track the progress of each task (e.g., shading or colour-coding completed portions of the timeline).
8. **Risk and buffer periods:** Allow for additional time in the schedule to account for potential delays or risks.

How to use this chart effectively

- **Planning Phase:** Use the Gantt chart to outline all planned tasks and assign realistic timelines based on available resources and priorities.

- **Execution Phase:** Track the status of each task against its timeline to ensure timely progress.

- **Monitoring:** Regularly update the chart to reflect completed actions and adjust timelines if needed.

- **Communication:** Share the Gantt chart with stakeholders to provide a clear, concise view of project timelines and progress.

[2] These might include documents, reports, software, products, or any other agreed-upon outcomes. In project planning, deliverables align closely with a Gantt chart, which visualises the timeline and sequence of activities leading to these outputs. In a Gantt chart, deliverables are often marked as critical points, frequently linked to milestones, and act as indicators of progress and task completion. Incorporating deliverables into a Gantt chart ensures clear organisation of the project, providing a visual overview of the schedule and helping to guarantee timely delivery of key results (PPM Express, 2023).

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

Figure 2. Example of a gantt chart.

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

SUBTOPIC 3: Financial Aspects of Project Management

Aim and scope	➢ **Understanding the Role of Financial Management in Project Success:** Explore how effective financial management contributes to achieving project objectives while ensuring sustainability and resource efficiency. ➢ **Examining Budgeting, Financial Planning, and Cost Control as Core Components:** Analyse how these financial management pillars enable project managers to allocate resources wisely, prevent financial disruptions, and maintain alignment with project goals.
Teaching tools	➢ **Lectures:** Delivered by financial management experts from academia and industry, offering both foundational knowledge and real-world case studies. ➢ **Guest Speakers:** Hear insights from experienced project managers and financial analysts on managing budgets and financial risks effectively. ➢ **Interactive Activities:** Workshops on creating project budgets and financial plans. Role-playing exercises simulating cost control and financial decision-making in dynamic scenarios. ➢ **Multimedia Content:** Use of video tutorials, infographics, and tools (e.g., Google Sheets, Notion) to enhance understanding of financial management tools and techniques.
Learning Outcomes	➢ LO4: Have the ability to use appropriate methodologies for data gathering and analysis, integrate various knowledge, handle complexity, and formulate proposals and solutions acknowledging the limits and constraints of specific territories and communities. ➢ LO5: Produce and transfer knowledge and understanding, including analysis and problem-solving abilities in unfamiliar contexts, considering the profile and resources of various stakeholders.

In project management, financial management is fundamental to achieving project objectives within set constraints. Managing finances effectively involves creating a detailed budget, planning for future costs and cash flow, and actively controlling expenses to ensure the project remains on track financially. Each component—budgeting, financial planning, and cost control—contributes to a project's success by ensuring resources are allocated appropriately, expenditures are monitored, and potential financial issues are addressed promptly.

Budgeting: The Foundation of Financial Management

Budgeting is the first and foundational step in managing a project's finances. It involves estimating all costs associated with the project to create a comprehensive spending plan that outlines anticipated expenses and sets limits for each expenditure category. A carefully developed budget helps project managers prioritise spending according to project goals and serves as a baseline for financial planning and cost control.

Co-funded by the European Union
Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

A typical project budget includes categories such as:

- **Personnel costs**: Salaries, benefits, and stipends for project team members and, if applicable, consultants or contractors.
- **Materials and supplies**: Resources necessary to carry out project activities, such as office supplies, production materials, or technology.
- **Travel and transportation**: Costs for travel required by the project, including local and long-distance transportation of personnel or resources.
- **Facilities and equipment**: Costs related to facility rental, utilities, or any specialised equipment required.
- **Contingency funds**: An allocation set aside to cover unexpected expenses, acting as a financial buffer for unforeseen changes or challenges.

Accurate budgeting requires collecting reliable cost estimates and assessing each expense in detail. This process often involves consulting past project budgets, researching market rates, and obtaining vendor quotes. Once costs are estimated, the budget allocates funds across categories and defines spending limits, supporting accountability and clear financial expectations.

Financial Planning: Structuring Costs Over Time

While budgeting provides a snapshot of the project's costs, financial planning structures these costs over time to manage cash flow and allocate resources as needed at different stages. Effective financial planning considers the timing of expenditures and ensures funds are available for each phase, preventing cash shortages that could disrupt the project. (PMI, 2008)

Financial planning involves creating a roadmap that details when specific expenses will occur. For instance, initial costs such as equipment purchase or staff training may be concentrated at the project's start, while recurring costs like salaries may be spread across the duration. Additionally, certain expenses, such as final evaluations or reporting, may occur near the project's end. By strategically timing these expenditures, financial planning supports project continuity and helps prevent delays caused by funding gaps.

Financial projections, which estimate future spending based on the project's budget and timeline, are an essential part of financial planning. Projections enable project managers to identify potential cash flow issues in advance and adjust allocations accordingly. This structured approach to planning ensures resources are distributed effectively, helping maintain project momentum and alignment with overall goals.

Cost Control: Monitoring and Adjusting Finances

Cost control is an ongoing process that involves comparing actual expenses to budgeted amounts, identifying variances, and making necessary adjustments. Through consistent monitoring, project managers can catch potential financial issues early, take corrective action, and avoid overruns. (Pinto, 2009; Wilson & Schwartz, 2011)

Key aspects of cost control include:

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

- **Tracking Expenses**: Regularly updating expense records to ensure accurate financial tracking. This can be done using tools like **Excel** or **Google Sheets**, where budget and expenditure data can be stored, compared, and updated easily.
- **Analysing Variances**: Identifying and evaluating any differences between projected and actual expenses. For instance, if material costs exceed the budget, the project manager may need to reassess supply options or negotiate with vendors.
- **Making Adjustments**: Reallocating funds or adjusting activities as needed to keep the project within budget. If certain tasks cost less than expected, saved funds might be redirected to cover higher-than-anticipated costs elsewhere or to enhance other areas.

Cost control also involves setting up regular financial reviews, such as monthly or quarterly check-ins, where the project team examines spending trends and assesses budget adherence. These reviews provide valuable insights into financial performance and facilitate adjustments that prevent financial issues from escalating. Regular cost control is essential for keeping projects financially sound, particularly for longer-term projects where costs and priorities may shift over time.

Budgeting: The Foundation of Financial Management

Budgeting serves as the cornerstone of financial management in project settings. It entails estimating all costs associated with a project and creating a comprehensive spending plan. This plan sets clear expenditure limits for various categories, helping project managers prioritise spending in alignment with project goals while establishing a baseline for financial planning and cost control (Pinto, 2009).

Key budget categories typically include:

- **Personnel costs**: Salaries, benefits, and stipends for team members and contractors.
- **Materials and supplies**: Necessary resources such as office or production materials.
- **Travel and transportation**: Expenses for staff or resource movement.
- **Facilities and equipment**: Costs for rentals, utilities, or specialised equipment.
- **Contingency funds**: Reserves to cover unforeseen expenses.

Accurate budgeting requires collecting reliable cost estimates, often derived from historical project data, market research, and vendor quotes (Wilson & Schwartz, 2011). A well-prepared budget ensures accountability and creates clear financial expectations.

Tools for Financial Management

Several tools and methods can support effective financial management in project settings, especially for beginners:

1. **Google Sheets**: Google Sheets is a free, web-based spreadsheet tool that's easy to use and perfect for beginners. It allows users to create and edit spreadsheets online and includes basic functions that can help track budgets, calculate totals, and perform simple financial analyses. Google Sheets' real-time collaboration feature is especially helpful for projects with multiple stakeholders or team members, allowing everyone to stay up-to-date on budget changes and updates. Simple functions like SUM for adding costs, basic charting options, and real-time updates make it accessible for beginners. Google Sheets Budget Tutorial for Beginners provides a great starting point.

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

2. **Trello**: Trello is a simple visual tool that helps beginners manage tasks and expenses. Although primarily a task manager, Trello can be adapted for budgeting by using lists for different expense categories and cards for specific items. This board-and-card structure makes budgeting easy to organise and less intimidating, especially for visual learners. Adding due dates, checklists, and basic cost information to each card helps track individual expenses. Trello's flexibility and ease of use make it ideal for first-time project budgeters. For a basic introduction to Trello, see Trello for Beginners.

3. **Money Manager**: Money Manager is a straightforward mobile app designed for tracking expenses, which can be adapted for project budgeting, especially for simple or small projects. The app allows users to categorise and input expenses and provides visual summaries of spending trends. This makes it easy for beginners to track project expenses on a day-to-day basis without needing extensive budgeting knowledge. Money Manager App Guide offers a quick overview for new users.

4. **Notion (Using Budgeting Templates)**: Notion is a free, all-in-one workspace that combines notes, tasks, and databases. Notion offers budgeting templates that can be easily customised for project budgeting and allows users to add columns for categories, descriptions, costs, and status. The simplicity of Notion's database structure makes it easy to track expenses and keep financial notes in one place. A beginner tutorial like Notion Budgeting Tutorial can help users get started.

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

SUBTOPIC 4: Project Monitoring and Control

Aim and scope	➢ **Understanding the Importance of Monitoring and Control in Project Management:** Explore how regular assessment of progress, scope, and resources ensures project alignment with goals and prevents delays or overruns. ➢ **Developing Proficiency in Tools and Methods for Real-Time Monitoring:** Equip participants with the skills to use practical tools like Excel, Slack, and Bitrix24 for tracking schedules, budgets, and team productivity.
Teaching tools	➢ **Lectures:** Delivered by experienced project managers to introduce the principles of monitoring and control, illustrated with examples from diverse industries. ➢ **Guest Speakers:** Insights from professionals who have implemented monitoring and control strategies in challenging environments. ➢ **Interactive Activities:** Workshops on creating project dashboards and tracking templates in Excel. Case studies for identifying deviations and applying corrective actions. ➢ **Multimedia Content:** Tutorials on using Slack and Bitrix24 for communication and task management. Infographics demonstrating the application of monitoring methodologies.
Learning Outcomes	➢ LO6: Link proposals, recommendations, and judgments with a reflection

Project monitoring and control are essential to managing the progress, scope, and resources of a project to ensure that it meets its goals on time and within budget. Monitoring involves regularly assessing project activities, identifying any deviations from the plan, and making adjustments to keep the project aligned with its original objectives. Control involves actively managing the project's scope, timelines, and expenses to avoid common pitfalls, such as delays, budget overruns, and scope creep (unapproved additions or changes to the project's goals). Together, these processes are vital for achieving successful project outcomes. In this section, we will explore key methods and tools for monitoring and controlling projects, focusing on practical applications in a project setting.

1. **Tracking Progress**: Monitoring progress requires establishing clear metrics and milestones to evaluate the status of tasks, phases, and the overall project. This tracking process allows project managers to detect any issues early and adjust the plan as needed to avoid delays.

2. **Managing Scope**: Scope management ensures that the project remains aligned with its initial goals. It involves regularly confirming that all tasks and activities directly contribute to the defined objectives. Any additions or changes to the project scope should be carefully evaluated to avoid extra costs, resource strain, or delays.

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

3. **Ensuring Timely and Budget-Compliant Completion**: Monitoring progress against the project timeline and budget is essential. By tracking milestones and expenses, project managers can address potential risks that might threaten timely or cost-effective project completion, ensuring that all resources are used efficiently.

Methodology and Tools for Project Monitoring and Control

To build proficiency in monitoring and controlling projects, we can use practical methodologies like tools such as **Excel**, **project dashboards**, **Slack**, and **Bitrix24**. Each tool provides unique benefits for managing timelines, expenses, and team collaboration.

For example, participants might work with a sample project, such as planning a community outreach program, and identify major milestones—such as “material preparation,” “training,” “event launch,” and “follow-up.” Each group would then create a timeline using Excel, where they plot start and end dates for each milestone, along with columns for tracking completion status (e.g., on track, delayed, completed) and a notes section for comments. Through regular updates and reviews of milestone status, participants can learn to identify and address potential delays early on. By focusing on real-time adjustments and corrective actions, this hands-on exercise builds critical tracking and problem-solving skills, enabling participants to keep projects aligned with the timeline.

Using Excel for Tracking Project Schedules and Budgets

Excel is one of the most accessible and versatile tools for project monitoring, especially for beginners. It can be used to create tracking templates for project schedules, budgets, and milestones, helping managers keep a close eye on progress and financials. Excel’s flexibility and customization options allow managers to set up unique tracking systems that match the specific needs of each project.

A simple Excel-based tracking system may include a **schedule template** with columns for tasks, deadlines, assigned team members, and status updates. By updating this schedule regularly, project managers can spot any tasks that are behind schedule and adjust resources or timelines as needed. For budget tracking, an Excel template can help monitor actual expenses against budgeted amounts. This setup typically includes categories for different types of costs (e.g., personnel, materials, travel) and automatically calculates total spending. If costs exceed budgeted limits in any category, the template can be adjusted to flag these discrepancies, making it easier for project managers to make timely financial adjustments.

Excel can also be used to create **simple Gantt charts** that visually represent tasks over time, showing task dependencies and anticipated completion dates. This helps teams understand how each task aligns with the project timeline and gives managers a high-level overview of project progress. These basic Excel setups offer effective ways to manage schedules and budgets without requiring advanced technical skills.

Project Dashboards for Real-Time Status Updates

Project dashboards are an essential tool for real-time project monitoring, as they consolidate important data into an easy-to-read format that provides a snapshot of the project’s current status. Dashboards display project metrics—such as the percentage of completed tasks, budget status, milestone achievements, and team workload—in one place, enabling project managers to quickly assess overall project health and make informed decisions.

A basic dashboard in Excel, for example, can include:

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

- **Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)**: Metrics like percentage of tasks completed, budget utilisation, or tasks delayed.
- **Visualisations**: Simple charts, such as bar graphs for task completion and pie charts for budget distribution, provide a visual representation of project metrics.
- **Milestone progress**: A section showing the progress of major milestones, allowing managers to see if they are on track.

Project dashboards can be updated weekly or monthly, depending on the project's timeline, and serve as a central point of reference for both the project team and stakeholders. By providing a high-level overview of the project's performance, dashboards help project managers address any deviations from the plan and adjust resources or timelines accordingly. They also improve transparency, as stakeholders can quickly grasp project progress without needing to dive into detailed reports.

Communication and Instant Updates with Slack

Slack is a messaging tool that enhances team communication, allowing for real-time updates on project progress. It's particularly useful for project monitoring and control because it facilitates instant sharing of updates, task completion statuses, and quick discussions about any issues that arise.

In Slack, project managers can create dedicated **channels** for specific parts of the project, such as #Project-Status, #Budget-Updates, and #Milestones. Within each channel, team members can share updates, discuss challenges, and make collaborative decisions. For instance, if a team member encounters a delay, they can post an update in the relevant Slack channel, allowing the team to collectively discuss solutions.

Slack's notification system ensures that all team members are informed promptly about changes or urgent updates, reducing communication delays. Additionally, Slack integrates with tools like Google Drive and Bitrix24, allowing teams to share documents, reports, or tracking sheets directly in the app. This functionality ensures that all project-related information is accessible in one place, supporting seamless collaboration and enabling rapid responses to any project changes.

Task Management and Status Reporting with Bitrix24

Bitrix24 is a versatile project management platform that combines task management, time tracking, and status reporting. This tool provides project managers with an organised way to assign tasks, set deadlines, and monitor team productivity in real-time. Its robust features make it ideal for managing complex projects with multiple tasks and dependencies.

Key features of Bitrix24 that support project monitoring include:

- **Task Assignment and Deadlines**: Project managers can assign tasks to team members and set deadlines. The system tracks each task's status and sends reminders as deadlines approach, helping teams stay on track.
- **Time Tracking**: Bitrix24's time-tracking feature allows team members to log hours spent on each task. This information helps project managers monitor productivity and identify tasks that are taking longer than anticipated.

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

- **Status Reporting**: Project managers can generate regular status reports, which summarise completed, ongoing, and upcoming tasks. This provides a comprehensive view of the project's progress and allows for quick adjustments if certain tasks are delayed.

Bitrix24 serves as a centralised hub for all project activities, allowing project managers to monitor tasks, deadlines, and team productivity in one place. By streamlining task management and time tracking, Bitrix24 supports effective project monitoring, ensuring that projects remain aligned with their timelines and resource allocations.

Effective project monitoring and control require a combination of consistent tracking, real-time communication, and adaptable tools. By integrating tools like **Excel** for tracking schedules and budgets, **project dashboards** for real-time updates, **Slack** for communication, and **Bitrix24** for task management, project managers can stay informed about every aspect of the project, from progress and timelines to costs and team productivity. Through these structured methods and user-friendly tools, project teams can improve collaboration, enhance decision-making, and ensure that project objectives are achieved within the defined scope and constraints.

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

SUBTOPIC 5: Special aspects of social impact projects

Aim and scope	➢ Examine how social impact initiatives are integral to long-term success and ethical responsibilities. ➢ Understand the deeper connection between the specific aspects of a social impact project and the community through project management processes.
Teaching tools	➢ **Lectures:** Delivered by experts from both the academic community and the private sector, providing theoretical and practical insights. ➢ **Guest Speakers:** Engage with industry leaders and social entrepreneurs who have successfully implemented impactful projects. ➢ **Interactive Activities:** ➢ Workshops focusing on real-world social impact challenges. ➢ Role-playing exercises to simulate stakeholder negotiations and impact planning. ➢ **Multimedia Content:** Use videos, infographics, and digital simulations to illustrate key concepts and enhance engagement.
Learning Outcomes	➢ LO6: Link proposals, recommendations, and judgments with a reflection

Social impact projects are designed to address critical societal issues, foster positive change, and enhance the well-being of communities. Unlike conventional projects that focus on financial profitability, social impact projects prioritise the creation of social value. This distinct focus requires specific management practices to navigate unique challenges, such as engaging complex stakeholder groups, measuring intangible impacts, and ensuring the sustainability of project outcomes. Successfully managing these projects involves specialised methodologies, frameworks, and tools that ensure the intended impact is both measurable and meaningful.

Stakeholder engagement in Social Impact Projects

One of the main challenges in social impact project management is handling diverse stakeholder dynamics. Unlike traditional projects, which often involve a narrow range of stakeholders—such as investors, customers, and team members whose primary interests align with financial outcomes—social impact projects require engaging with a broad and diverse set of stakeholders. These include beneficiaries, funders, government agencies, NGOs, community organisations, and local residents. Each of these groups brings its own unique goals, values, and expectations, making it challenging to unify them under a single vision. For instance, while beneficiaries may prioritise immediate improvements in their quality of life,

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

funders often focus on measurable outcomes or the long-term sustainability of the project. Government agencies may emphasise regulatory compliance and alignment with broader policy goals, whereas community organisations may prioritise inclusivity and social cohesion (Vanclay et al., 2015). Recognizing, respecting, and balancing these differing perspectives are essential for the project's success.

Impact measurement in social impact projects

Impact measurement is another core challenge in managing social impact projects. While traditional projects can measure success through clear financial metrics and SMART goals, social impact projects aim to achieve outcomes like improved quality of life, community cohesion, or educational access, which are more complex, less concrete. These goals often require a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods to capture the project's full impact. Quantitative data, such as the increase in school attendance rates for an educational project, can provide measurable evidence of success, while qualitative data, like interviews and testimonials, offers deeper insights into the personal and community-level changes resulting from the project.

Defining impact indicators

Defining clear and measurable impact indicators is one of the most critical steps in social impact project management. These indicators serve as the foundation for evaluating the success of a project and determining whether its resources are being used effectively to achieve desired outcomes (IFC, 2010). Impact indicators provide tangible benchmarks that help project managers assess progress over time, identify areas that need adjustment, and validate the value delivered to stakeholders. The process of selecting these indicators is not just technical but also strategic, requiring alignment with the overarching goals of the project and the diverse expectations of its stakeholders.

For instance, in a project focused on promoting LGBTQ+ inclusion, impact indicators could include measurable factors such as an increase in the number of organisations adopting inclusive workplace policies, a reduction in reported instances of discrimination, and an improvement in community attitudes toward LGBTQ+ individuals as reflected in surveys. These indicators offer both quantitative and qualitative insights into the project's effectiveness. An increase in inclusive workplace policies clearly demonstrates progress in structural change, while improved community attitudes reflect the project's success in fostering a more accepting and supportive environment. Indicators such as these also ensure that resources are allocated toward interventions with the greatest potential to reduce discrimination and promote equality.

The selection and application of these indicators are enhanced by structured measurement frameworks like the Theory of Change and Social Return on Investment (SROI). The Theory of Change provides a detailed roadmap that outlines the logical sequence of inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes, and long-term impacts. By visually mapping this sequence, project managers can identify the causal relationships between actions and their effects. This structured approach ensures that every step of the process is intentional, evidence-based, and geared toward achieving the desired impact (IFC, 2013).

Additionally, the Theory of Change is a powerful communication tool. By clearly illustrating the connections between activities and outcomes, it allows stakeholders to see how their interests align with the project's goals. This transparency builds trust and fosters collaboration, ensuring that everyone involved has a shared understanding of what constitutes success. It also serves as a guide for decision-making, helping project teams anticipate challenges and adjust strategies as needed. (UNSDG, 2017)[3]

---

[3] The Theory of Change is a methodological framework that outlines the logical sequence through which a project or initiative is expected to achieve its intended outcomes. It identifies the assumptions, activities, and intermediary steps that connect an intervention to its ultimate impact. This approach not only facilitates

Co-funded by the European Union
Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

Defining impact indicators also involves addressing challenges related to data collection and analysis. For many social impact projects, obtaining reliable data can be a significant hurdle, particularly in under-resourced or marginalised communities. This is where stakeholder involvement becomes crucial. Engaging with the target population during the indicator selection process ensures that the metrics chosen are relevant, realistic, and culturally appropriate. For example, in a project aimed at improving educational outcomes, indicators like school attendance rates and literacy levels might be supplemented by qualitative data, such as student or teacher feedback, to provide a more comprehensive picture of the impact.

The process of defining indicators should also account for unintended outcomes, both positive and negative. Projects may lead to unexpected ripple effects that extend beyond their original scope. For instance, a program designed to improve access to clean water might also result in economic benefits, such as reduced healthcare costs and increased productivity, which can be captured through secondary indicators. On the contrary, unintentional displacement of local businesses or changes in community dynamics must also be monitored to ensure that the project does not inadvertently cause harm.

Finally, a critical component of defining impact indicators is ensuring their adaptability over time. Social impact projects often operate in dynamic environments where needs, challenges, and opportunities can shift rapidly. Frequent review and refinement of indicators are essential to maintaining their relevance and effectiveness. Incorporating feedback loops into the project design allows teams to learn from ongoing activities and make data-driven adjustments to their strategies.

Useful tools to measure social impact

Survey tools like Google Forms and SurveyMonkey serve distinct yet complementary functions in data collection and feedback for social impact projects. **Google Forms** is highly versatile and accessible, allowing project managers to create custom surveys quickly, with a wide range of question types like multiple-choice, checkboxes, and linear scales. Its integration with Google Sheets enables seamless data analysis and visualisation, making it easy to track responses in real-time. Google Forms is particularly useful for capturing straightforward, quantitative data, such as satisfaction ratings, demographic information, and organising it in a format that can be easily shared and interpreted by team members.

For more information on Google Forms you can also check the tutorial videos:

Google Forms: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BtoOHhA3aPQ

On the other hand, **SurveyMonkey** offers advanced survey customization options and in-depth analytics that can be beneficial for more complex projects. With SurveyMonkey's robust features, project managers can incorporate advanced logic into surveys, creating a more personalised experience for respondents by tailoring questions based on their previous answers. This tool also provides detailed reporting options and data export capabilities, making it ideal for gathering both quantitative data and richer, qualitative insights through open-ended questions. SurveyMonkey's analytics dashboard further helps managers identify patterns in feedback, facilitating deeper analysis of stakeholder responses. By using such tools, project managers can create a well-rounded approach to feedback collection, leveraging Google Forms for efficient, large-scale data gathering and SurveyMonkey for more strategic insights that drive project adaptation and long-term improvement.

For more information on SurveyMonkey you can also check the tutorial videos:

---

strategic planning but also serves as a tool for monitoring progress and evaluating effectiveness, ensuring alignment with both stakeholder expectations and project goals.

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

SurveyMonkey: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l-Vfhevy7g0

Managing social impact projects presents unique challenges, especially regarding stakeholder engagement and impact measurement. Using communication systems, survey tools, and structured frameworks like Theory of Change and SROI enables project managers to effectively navigate these complexities. By learning from case studies, establishing comprehensive engagement plans, and maintaining transparent communication, social impact projects can achieve measurable, lasting outcomes that positively affect communities. This combination of methodologies, tools, and adaptive strategies is essential to ensure that social impact projects make a tangible difference, addressing societal challenges and improving the quality of life for their beneficiaries. Through these approaches, project managers can maximise the value and sustainability of their projects, creating a meaningful impact that resonates within and beyond the communities they serve.

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

Test your knowledge of Module 4 - Project Management

1. True or False Questions

	Question	Answer (True / False)
Q.1	The project lifecycle consists of initiation, planning, execution, monitoring, and closure.	
Q.2	Stakeholder engagement is only required during the initiation phase of a project.	
Q.3	Social impact projects require specific strategies for managing cultural and ethical considerations.	
Q.4	A well-crafted project plan does not need to account for potential risks.	
Q.5	Financial management in projects includes budgeting, financial planning, and cost control.	
Q.6	Monitoring and evaluation of a project focus solely on quantitative metrics.	
Q.7	Gantt charts are a tool used to visualise project timelines and task dependencies.	
Q.8	During the closure phase, reflecting on lessons learned is an important activity.	

Correct Answers:

True: Q1, Q3, Q5, Q7, Q8

False: Q2, Q4, Q6

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

2. Multiple choice questions

	Question	Answers offered	Correct answer (A/B/C/D)
Q.1	What is the key purpose of the initiation phase in the project lifecycle?	A) Create a project schedule B) Define the project's purpose and feasibility C) Execute project activities D) Assess stakeholder feedback	
Q.2	Which tool helps visualise a project's timeline and task dependencies?	A) Trello Board B) Pie Chart C) Gantt Chart D) Kanban Diagram	
Q.3	What is a primary focus of the closure phase?	A) Planning future milestones B) Conducting final evaluations and reflecting on lessons learned C) Allocating resources for the next project D) Building a Gantt chart for pending tasks	
Q.4	What does financial planning in social impact projects involve?	A) Ignoring risk management B) Structuring costs over time to manage cash flow C) Focusing only on contingency funds D) Prioritising team salaries exclusively	
Q.5	Which tool is particularly useful for task coordination in remote teams?	A) MS Word B) Trello C) Photoshop D) Canva	
Q.6	What is a key benefit of stakeholder engagement in social impact projects?	A) Avoiding project delays B) Building trust and transparency C) Increasing financial profit D) Reducing project milestones	
Q.7	What is the main purpose of risk assessment during project planning?	A) To eliminate project phases B) To anticipate and mitigate potential challenges C) To reduce the budget D) To skip stakeholder involvement	
Q.8	Which software is commonly used for creating detailed project schedules and task lists?	A) Photoshop B) MS Project C) Slack D) Canva	
Q.9	During the execution phase, project managers must prioritise:	A) Adjusting the project budget B) Coordinating resources and maintaining communication C) Finalising the Gantt chart D) Completing the project evaluation	

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

Q.10	What is one way to measure qualitative outcomes in social impact projects?	A) Using numerical data only B) Conducting interviews and collecting personal stories C) Avoiding stakeholder input D) Tracking financial expenses exclusively	

Correct Answers:

Q1: B, Q2: C, Q3: B, Q4: B, Q5: B, Q6: B, Q7: B, Q8: B, Q9: B, Q10: B

The following two tasks are based on the **"Embracing diversity: LGBTQ+ inclusion for thriving workplaces"** project. This initiative is designed to promote awareness, equity, and inclusion for LGBTQ+ individuals in the workplace, aiming to create an environment where diversity is celebrated, and all employees can thrive. By completing the tasks, participants will engage with key aspects of project management, including risk assessment and planning, which are critical for the success of such initiatives.

Task 3: Risk Identification and Mitigation Activity

Objective:

Participants will identify potential risks that could impact the success of the LGBTQ+ inclusion project, evaluate the likelihood of these risks (low, medium, high), and propose strategies to mitigate or address each risk.

Instructions:

1. Review the project details and think about potential risks that could arise during its implementation.
2. Identify at least **three to four risks** related to project activities, such as stakeholder engagement, funding, or employee training.
3. Assess the likelihood of each risk occurring (low, medium, high).
4. Propose a specific mitigation strategy for each risk, ensuring it is practical and aligned with the project objectives.

Example:

Risk	Likelihood	Mitigation strategy
Resistance from employees	High	Conduct awareness campaigns and provide training on inclusivity.

You can use the following template:

Risk	Likelihood	Mitigation strategy

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

Task 4: Gantt Chart Completion Activity

Objective:
Participants will create a Gantt chart to outline the timeline for the LGBTQ+ inclusion project, scheduling key activities and milestones over six months. This exercise will enhance planning and scheduling skills, providing a visual framework for project implementation.

Instructions:

1. Review the project description and key components outlined in the analysis.
2. Fill in the provided Gantt chart template by assigning specific tasks to timeframes (e.g., months or weeks).
3. Identify milestones and ensure they are marked clearly (e.g., "Policy updates approved" or "First training workshop delivered").
4. Ensure dependencies between tasks are considered. For example, workshops cannot begin until policy updates are completed.
5. Highlight a buffer period (optional) to account for potential delays.

Here is an example you can take a look at! (Please open in full screen)

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

You can use the following template

TIMELINE

		2023			2024												2025								
		OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP
	MONTHS	M1	M2	M3	M4	M5	M6	M7	M8	M9	M10	M11	M12	M13	M14	M15	M16	M17	M18	M19	M20	M21	M22	M23	M24
PROJECT ACTIVITY*																									
WP1 - Project Management & Evaluation																									
Development of the management toolkit of the project		DELIVERY																							
Draft and signature of bilateral partner agreements		DELIVERY																							
Creation of a shared folder and online environment		DELIVERY																							
Online meetings		MEETING		MEETING			MEETING		MEETING		MEETING		MEETING		MEETING				MEETING		MEETING				MEETING
TPM			MEETING														MEETING							MEETING	
Financial monitoring							REVIEW					REVIEW							REVIEW						REVIEW
Development of the evaluation plan			DELIVERY																						
Evaluation of TPMs			MEETING														MEETING							MEETING	
Evaluation of OM		ONLINE			ONLINE		ONLINE		ONLINE		ONLINE		ONLINE				ONLINE		ONLINE		ONLINE				
Evaluation of the activities							MATERIALS						MATERIALS												
Web evaluation										REPORT															
Evaluation of the management and communication between partners							REPORT					REPORT							REPORT						REPORT
Quality control of the project																									
Interim and Final Report							REPORT					REPORT							REPORT						REPORT
WP2 - Background Analysis																									
T2.1 Research Methodology					DELIVERY																				
T2.2 Engagement																									
T2.3 CSR & Community Development Analysis																									
WP3 - Social Impact Manager Education Programme																									
T3.1 SIM Programme Co-Design																									DELIVERY
T3.2 SIM Programme Delivery							DELIVERY																		
T3.3 International SIM School (M29-31)																									
WP4 - Impact Assessment																									
T4.1 Impact Framework					DELIVERY																				
T4.2 Impact monitoring & assessment (M4-M35)																									
T4.3 Development of the project's impact report (M31-M35)																									
WP5 - Dissemination and Communication																									
T5.1 Initiating the dissemination and communication of the project (M1-M3)				DELIVERY																					
T5.2 Social Media accounts launch and management (M4-M36)																									
T5.3 Press relations (M4-M36)																									
T5.4 Development of printable and digital promotional material (M3-M36)																									
T5.5 Upscaling (M20-M36)																									
T5.6 Development of Policy Recommendations (M31-M35)																									
T5.7 Organisation of the Final Conference (M32-M36)																									

	YEAR									
	MONTHS	M1	M2	M3	M4	M5	...	M13	...	M24
PROJECT ACTIVITY										

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

References

1. AACE International. (2011). *Cost engineering and risk management: Practices and principles.* AACE International.
2. Freeman, R. E. (2010). *Strategic management: A stakeholder approach.* Cambridge University Press.
3. Greens, J. (2016). Risk management in social impact projects: Methods and tools. *Journal of Sustainable Development, 14*(3), 23–35.
4. International Finance Corporation (IFC). (2013). *The theory of change: A practical guide.* International Finance Corporation.
5. Kerzner, H. (2017). *Project management: A systems approach to planning, scheduling, and controlling* (12th ed.). John Wiley & Sons.
6. Nilsen, S. (2018). *Project risk management in development initiatives: A practical guide.* Development Studies Press.
7. Pinto, J. Â. C. (2009). Financing the project. Paper presented at PMI® Global Congress 2009—EMEA, Amsterdam, North Holland, The Netherlands. Newtown Square, PA: Project Management Institute.
8. PPM Express. (2023). What are project deliverables (with examples and templates). Retrieved November 22, 2024, from https://ppm.express/blog/project-deliverables/.
9. Project Management Institute (PMI). (2008). *A guide to the project management body of knowledge (PMBOK® guide)* (4th ed.). Newtown Square, PA: Project Management Institute.
10. Project Management Institute (PMI). (2017). *A guide to the project management body of knowledge (PMBOK® guide)* (6th ed.). Project Management Institute.
11. United Nations Sustainable Development Group (UNSDG). (2017). *Theory of change: Practical tips for sustainable development projects.* Retrieved from https://unsdg.org.
12. Vanclay, F., Esteves, A. M., Aucamp, I., & Franks, D. M. (2015). *Social impact assessment: Guidance for assessing and managing the social impacts of projects.* International Association for Impact Assessment.
13. Wilson, S., & Schwartz, C. (2011). Powerful project financials. Paper presented at PMI® Global Congress 2011—North America, Dallas, TX. Newtown Square, PA: Project Management Institute.
14. Asana. (2022). *Tutorial video*. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=87YlaMG2rtw.
15. Bitrix24. (2021). Full Demonstration. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yJ0c5jQ64mk
16. Google Forms. (2019). *Tutorial video*. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BtoOHhA3aPQ.
17. SurveyMonkey. (2023). *Tutorial video*. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l-Vfhevy7g0.
18. Trello. (2021). *Tutorial video*. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=geRKHFzTxNY.

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

MODULE 5: IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING

Description of Module 5	➢ Impact theory and scenarios: triple bottom line, impact and sustainability. ➢ Impact framework to cluster and understand impact value chain. ➢ Data gathering strategy and tools for impact management. ➢ Monetisation methodologies: Social Return on Investment (SROI). ➢ Sustainability Strategy and Reporting: bridging impact measurement and sustainability.
Objectives	➢ Understand impact theory (LO1, LO3). ➢ Develop an impact framework (LO4). ➢ Design a data gathering strategy (LO4, LO5). ➢ Utilise monetisation methodologies (SROI) (LO6). ➢ How to bridge impact measurement and sustainability disclosures (LO5, LO8).
Learning Outcomes	➢ **Knowledge:** Define impact theory and frameworks (LO1). ➢ **Skills:** Gather data and report impact (LO4, LO5). ➢ **Attitudes:** Value the importance of impact assessment (LO6).
Duration	➢ 6 hours

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

SUBTOPIC 1: Impact theory

Aim and scope	➢ Understand the impact value chain, learn and apply basic impact assessment categories (outcome areas, outcome, indicator, stakeholders, target) to develop an impact framework.
Teaching tools	➢ **Lectures and Discussions**: Overview of fundamental theoretical concepts on how to structure an impact framework. ➢ **Visual content**: Powerpoint showing diagrams and images to help visualise the theoretical concept presented during the discussion. ➢ **Project work:** development of an impact framework on Excel Sheets per every student. ➢ **Quizzes and Tests:** Assessments to reinforce understanding of key concepts, such as inputs, outputs, outcomes, and impact.
Learning Outcomes	➢ **LO1:** Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the complexity of sustainability dimensions in social and economic terms, and implications in relation to diverse territorial and socio-economic development and planning issues. ➢ **LO3:** Demonstrate understanding of complex structures that influence sustainable development of a territory, such as resources, stakeholder networks, and power relations.

Social impact. What are we talking about?

In recent years, the concept of **social impact** has gained increasing attention as organizations—particularly those operating in the third sector and hybrid business models—seek to measure and demonstrate the **value** generated by their activities beyond traditional financial metrics. This has led to the development of various methodologies and tools aimed at quantifying and evaluating **non-economic changes** brought about by interventions, giving rise to the discipline of **Social Impact Assessment (SIA)**.

Defining Social Impact

The literature offers a wide range of definitions of social impact, each emphasizing specific aspects:

- **Contribution to Change**: Social impact refers to the capacity of an organization to produce a change in the status quo of individuals or communities targeted by its activities (Perrini & Vurro, 2013).
- **Attribution of Results**: It reflects the long-term outcomes of an organization's activities and their contribution to overall social results (EVPA, 2015).

Co-funded by the European Union
Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

- **Non-Economic Change**: It captures non-economic transformations, both direct and indirect, arising from organizational activities (Emerson et al., 2003; Epstein & Yuthas, 2014).
- **Net Outcomes**: Social impact isolates the portion of outcomes that can be **attributed directly** to the intervention, excluding what would have occurred anyway (Clark et al., 2004).
- **Sustainable Change**: It is defined as long-term, sustainable improvements (positive or negative, primary or secondary) in people's conditions or the environment, partially attributable to the intervention (Zamagni et al., 2015).
- **Comprehensive Effects**: It includes both **positive and negative** effects, intentional or unintentional, arising directly or indirectly from an intervention (OECD, 2015).

Synthesizing these perspectives, **social impact** can be understood as the measurable difference that an intervention makes in improving people's lives and the broader community, while accounting for the counterfactual scenario—what would have occurred in its absence.

Social Impact in Literature

The evolving nature of social impact assessment is reflected in its rich academic and practical exploration. A study by Corvo et al. (2021) identified **98 distinct social impact assessment models**, underscoring the dynamic development of this field. The analysis highlights:

- **22 newly developed models** that integrate sustainability, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) criteria.
- **52 validated models**, which have been empirically tested and confirmed as effective for measuring social impact.
- **24 renamed models**, maintaining consistency with prior methodologies while evolving in terminology.

This diversity of models reflects a broader recognition of the **complexity and multidimensionality** of social impact, where **qualitative** and **quantitative** approaches coexist to provide a comprehensive understanding of the value generated by interventions.

In conclusion, social impact represents long-term**, measurable change**—both positive and negative—attributable to an intervention, grounded in robust methodologies that account for external factors and sustainability. As organizations increasingly align their practices with **sustainability frameworks** and **ESG criteria**, the importance of credible and transparent social impact assessment continues to grow.

Characteristics of Impact Evaluation

Impact evaluation models can be broadly categorized into two main types: **monetization models** and **non-monetization models**. Monetization models, such as the **Social Return on Investment (SROI)**, aim to convert social and environmental impacts into **financial terms**, enabling the quantification and communication of their value. These models provide a structured way to present the outcomes of interventions in monetary terms, facilitating comparison and decision-making, particularly for stakeholders accustomed to financial metrics. In contrast, non-monetization models rely on **key performance indicators (KPIs)** to measure the change generated by an intervention without assigning it a financial value. These models focus on tracking and analyzing outcomes through qualitative and quantitative data, offering insights that complement monetized assessments. Together, these approaches provide a comprehensive understanding of the impact of interventions, addressing both measurable financial outcomes and broader qualitative changes

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

What does measuring impact mean?

Measuring impact involves a shift from focusing on outputs to outcomes. The process starts with inputs, which are the resources available for a project, such as investments, facilities, and personnel. These resources are used to carry out activities, like training sessions or workshops, to achieve specific goals. The immediate results of these activities are the outputs, such as the number of trained teachers. However, the key focus should be on outcomes, which are the long-term changes that occur, like improved teaching methods and increased student engagement. Ultimately, the impact reflects the broader and more lasting changes, such as the enhanced quality of public education.

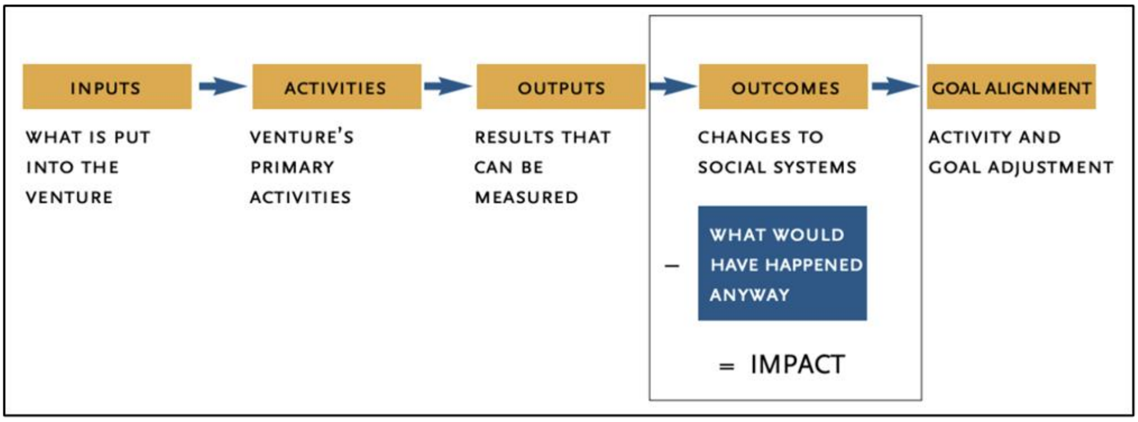


Figure 5.1: Impact Value Chain. Source: Clark et. al (2004)

The Impact Value Chain is composed by five elements:

1. **Inputs**: The resources required to implement an intervention, such as financial investments, personnel, and infrastructure.
2. **Activities**: The specific actions undertaken with those inputs to achieve project goals (e.g., workshops, training sessions).
3. **Outputs**: The immediate, **tangible results** of the activities, such as the number of participants trained or services delivered.
4. **Outcomes**: The **long-term changes** resulting from the intervention, such as improved skills, behavioural changes, or reduced emissions. Outcomes are often **qualitative** and measure shifts in attitudes, knowledge, or conditions.
5. **Impact**: The portion of outcomes **directly attributable** to the intervention, excluding changes that would have occurred **without** the project. Impact reflects the net contribution of the intervention to the broader social, environmental, or economic landscape

Measuring Impact is a Cycle, Not a Linear Process

Impact measurement is a **dynamic and iterative process**, conceptualized as **Impact Cycle Management (ICM)**. Rather than being a linear task, ICM represents a continuous cycle that encompasses several key stages. The process begins with the **prediction of expected impacts**, where the anticipated social and environmental outcomes of a project are estimated. This is followed by a **collaborative design phase**, involving active engagement with stakeholders to ensure alignment with shared goals and priorities.

Co-funded by the European Union

Figure 5.2: Impact management cycle

Throughout the implementation of the project, **indicators are monitored**, allowing for the identification of deviations and the implementation of necessary adjustments to optimize outcomes. At the conclusion of the intervention, the **net social and environmental impacts** are rigorously evaluated to determine the effectiveness and overall value generated. The final step involves **communicating the results** to relevant audiences, ensuring transparency and fostering accountability.

ICM provides organizations with a structured framework for **informed decision-making**, enabling them to **maximize positive impacts** while proactively **mitigating potential negative effects**. This cyclical approach underscores the importance of flexibility, continuous learning, and stakeholder engagement in achieving sustainable and meaningful change.

Three temporal dimensions of impact evaluation

Impact assessment can occur across three different time dimensions: ex-ante (predictive assessment before an intervention), in itinere (ongoing measurement during the intervention), and ex-post (evaluation after the intervention has concluded). Three key characteristics guide this process: intentionality (analyzing the intended impact), additionality (identifying the value added specifically by the project), and measurability (quantifying the measurable share of the generated value).

Why measuring impact matters?

The measurement of social, economic, and environmental impact is crucial in today's world. It informs better decision-making, enhances transparency, and fosters accountability. By understanding the long-term outcomes of our actions, we can drive meaningful change and invest in a sustainable future. As we move forward, the challenge lies in refining these metrics to accurately capture and amplify the positive effects of our initiatives.

In essence, moving from mere outputs to measurable outcomes and impacts represents a paradigm shift that is crucial for achieving sustainable development. By leveraging advanced digital tools and impact frameworks, Open Impact continues to lead the way in transforming how we assess and create value in society.

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

SUBTOPIC 2: Impact framework

Aim and scope	➢ Understand the different typologies of data, how to design and implement data gathering strategies with appropriate tools.
Teaching tools	➢ **Lectures and Discussions**: Overview of fundamental theoretical concepts on how to structure an impact framework. ➢ **Visual content**: Powerpoint showing diagrams and images to help visualise the theoretical concept presented during the discussion. ➢ **Project work:** development of an impact framework on Excel Sheets per every student.
Learning Outcomes	➢ **LO4:** Have the ability to use appropriate methodologies for data gathering and analysis, integrate various knowledge, handle complexity, and formulate proposals and solutions acknowledging the limits and constraints of specific territories and communities.

Introduction

An **impact monitoring framework** is a systematic approach designed to assess and document the effects and outcomes of projects, particularly those targeting **social, economic, environmental, or cultural change**. By providing a structured methodology, this framework enables project managers, policymakers, and stakeholders to ensure that the intended benefits of an initiative are effectively **planned, linked, and tracked** over time. It not only measures specific outcomes but also evaluates their alignment with broader project objectives, offering a comprehensive view of the initiative's overall impact.

The core strength of an impact monitoring framework lies in its ability to connect various elements, including **project resources and activities** (often defined through a Theory of Change) with **stakeholders**, **outcome clusters**, **indicators**, and broader taxonomies for **impact reporting** (e.g., SDGs, GRI, ESG). These connections are essential for ensuring transparency, accountability, and alignment with internationally recognized standards of impact accounting.

To be effective, the framework must be clearly defined from the outset and aligned with the project's overarching goals. Its development involves several interconnected components:

1. **Outcome Definition and Aggregation**: Clearly defining the objectives of the project and clustering related outcomes to streamline monitoring and evaluation.

Co-funded by the European Union
Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

2. **Stakeholder Identification**: Identifying the individuals, groups, or entities that will perceive or experience the effects of project outcomes.
3. **Indicator Selection**: Choosing specific, measurable metrics that provide evidence of progress toward achieving desired goals.
4. **Alignment with Official Taxonomies**: Linking outcomes to established frameworks like the **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**, **Global Reporting Initiative (GRI)**, or **Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG)** criteria to ensure compatibility with international standards.
5. **Means of Verification**: Selecting appropriate data collection tools, such as surveys, focus groups, and interviews, to monitor indicators and gather evidence.

By integrating these components, an impact monitoring framework ensures that project impacts are not only measurable but also communicable to diverse audiences. This alignment enhances the credibility of the project and supports informed decision-making, fostering a culture of accountability and continuous improvement

Outcome mapping and clustering

Outcome mapping and clustering are fundamental steps in developing an impact monitoring framework, as they allow for the identification, organization, and prioritization of the desired effects of a project. This process begins by listing all the outcomes your initiative aims to generate, focusing on the **short- to medium-term changes** that are necessary to achieve the project's ultimate goals. These "step changes" form the building blocks of the overall impact strategy.

Case Study: SIM Project

To illustrate this process, we can consider the **SIM (Social Impact Manager) project**, which seeks to foster community development through corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives by training a new professional profile: the Social Impact Manager. The project is structured in four phases:

1. **Engage**: Needs assessment and stakeholder engagement to build local SIM networks.
2. **Design**: Co-designing educational programs for the Social Impact Manager role in five countries.
3. **Empower**: Delivering educational programs to build capacities for community engagement.
4. **Evaluate & Exploit**: Assessing project impacts and scaling up through partnerships and alliances.

The SIM project generates a diverse set of outcomes across these phases, including:

- Enhanced skills and knowledge for professionals in CSR and community engagement.
- Creation of sustainable partnerships between companies and local communities.
- Increased resilience and social cohesion within communities.
- Development of innovative educational models and tools for CSR.
- Strengthened EU-level collaboration on societal challenges.

Steps for Outcome Mapping

1. **List Outcomes**: Begin by listing all the potential outcomes your project aims to achieve. This step may involve brainstorming with colleagues or drawing inspiration from existing outcome databases. For example, in the SIM project, key outcomes might include building networks, equipping professionals with new skills, and fostering sustainable community initiatives.
2. **Define Outcome Logic**: Outcomes should represent measurable changes that contribute to the project's ultimate objectives. For instance, in the SIM project, short-term outcomes might include the creation of local SIM networks,

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

while medium-term outcomes could involve the implementation of community initiatives driven by trained professionals.

3. **Cluster Outcomes**: Once a comprehensive list of outcomes is created, group them into **logical clusters** based on shared themes or goals. These clusters may align with project phases, stakeholder groups, or impact areas. For the SIM project, clusters could include "Educational Outcomes," "Community Development Outcomes," and "Policy-Level Outcomes."
4. **Prioritize**: Narrow down the list to a manageable number of outcomes, ideally no more than ten, unless the project is highly complex. This ensures a clear focus and avoids overcomplicating the monitoring process.

Outcome Mapping as a Strategic Tool

Mapping and clustering outcomes serve not only to organize the project's objectives but also to clarify its **theory of change**—the pathway through which activities lead to desired impacts. This process ensures alignment between the project's activities, stakeholder needs, and broader societal goals. By structuring outcomes effectively, projects like SIM can better measure, monitor, and communicate their impact, fostering transparency and accountability among stakeholders.

Outcome area	Outcome	....
	Increased access to job	
	Improved CSR strategies	
	Increased awareness	
	Improved soft skills	
	Increased hard skills	
	Educational Innovation	
	Improved private/public sector engagement	
	Improved community engagement	
	Creation of local projects	

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

	Network building	
	Replicability and Scale-up	
	Impactful research on CSR	

Figure 5.3: Impact frameworking, step 1

After creating a visual map of the expected outcomes, the next step is to organize them into a **logical and qualitative order** by clustering them into **outcome areas**. Outcome areas can be defined as **"groups of outcomes that share similar characteristics based on specific criteria of similarity."**

This process resembles the principles of basic set theory, where a larger set of outcomes is divided into smaller, more focused subsets. Each subset, or outcome area, is populated by outcomes that are closely related in purpose, scope, or nature. The final result provides a structured and systematic representation of the project's expected impacts, making it easier to monitor and analyze progress.

The clustered outcomes should be presented in a clear and coherent format, ensuring that each outcome area reflects a specific theme or goal, as demonstrated in the example below.

Outcome area	Outcome	.....
Economic Development / Employment	Increased access to job	
	Improved CSR strategies	
Education	Increased awareness	
	Improved soft skills	
	Increased hard skills	
	Educational Innovation	

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

Local Development	Improved private/public sector engagement	
	Improved community engagement	
	Creation of local projects	
	Network building	
Research, Innovation and Scale-up	Replicability and Scale-up	
	Impactful research on CSR	

Figure 5.4: Impact frameworking, step 2

At this stage you have the backbone of your impact framework, and you can start working on the following aspects, stakeholders and indicators.

Quantify and qualify, stakeholder identification and outcome selections

Outcomes are not abstract entities, but actual and measurable effects that are experimented by some specific stakeholder.

As stakeholders we define *"those entities (es: people, organization, ecosystem) who/which will benefit or be damaged from the display of a given outcome".*
As shown in the previous lesson, every outcome can affect:

- a person (individual)
- community/group (i.e.: a local context or an organization)
- collectivity, broader system such as public policy

Now, your duty is to identify at least 1 stakeholder for every outcome of your impact framework. The result should look like this:

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

Outcome area	Outcome	Stakeholders
Economic Development / Employment	Increased access to job	Beneficiaries
	Improved CSR strategies	Enterprises
Education	Increased awareness	Citizenship Employees PA Enterprises NGOs
	Improved soft skills	Beneficiaries Employees
	Increased hard skills	Beneficiaries Employees
	Educational Innovation	Collectivity (Educational system, enterprises)
Local Development	Improved private/public sector engagement	Enterprises, NGOs, PA
	Improved community engagement	Local community
	Creation of local projects	Local community Beneficiaries
	Network building	Enterprises Partner Local community
Research, Innovation and Scale-up	Replicability and Scale-up	Education Providers Policy makers Funds Managing authorities
	Impactful research on CSR	Policy makers Funds Managing authorities SEOs Education Providers

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

At this stage the first part of your impact framework is almost completed; you have determined the outcomes of your initiative, associated them into areas and identified who will experiment it.

The next step is to add a quantitative dimension that can make your impact monitorable, measurable and communicable: indicators.

Indicators are necessary to provide linkages to quali-quantitative dimensions that guarantee measurability. As you can notice, the stakeholder that experiments the outcome often influences each indicator. Each outcome can have multiple indicators. After completing this task your impact framework has reached a very advanced stage.

Outcome area	Outcome	Stakeholders	KPIs
Economic Development / Employment	Increased access to job	Beneficiaries	N. of beneficiaries who start an internship or a professional collaboration or a job contract N of entreprises willing to open positions after participating in the project
	Improved CSR strategies	Enterprises	N of people / enterprises that declare an improved quality of their CSR strategy N of people hired in CSR sections
Education	Increased awareness	Citizenship Employees PA Enterprises NGOs	N of people / stakeholders that declare to increase awareness on community needs
	Improved soft skills	Beneficiaries Employees	N of people that improves soft skills (set of item TBD) Variety and diversity of people trained (i.e.: sex, national background, age, salary level)
	Increased hard skills	Beneficiaries Employees	N of people that improves hard skills (set of item TBD) Variety and diversity of people trained (i.e.: sex, national background, age, salary level)

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

	Educational Innovation	Collectivity (Educational system, enterprises)	Quality perceived by participants N of new content / methodologies applied N of application
Local Development	Improved private/public sector engagement	Enterprises, NGOs, PA	N of companies engaged in project activities + degree of engagement N of local NGOs engaged in project activties + degree of engagement N of PA engaged in project activities + degree of engagement
	Improved community engagement	Local community	N of people of the local community engaged in project activities + degree of engagement N of people that persist in social active participation
	Creation of local projects	Local community Beneficiaries	N of local projects launched
	Network building	Enterprises Partner Local community	N of formal network created N of informal network created
Research, Innovation and Scale-up	Replicability and Scale-up	Education Providers Policy makers Funds Managing authorities	Propensity of stakeholders to replicate the training N of stakeholder that insert the course in official program N of certificate acquired N of member states that recognize the certificate
	Impactful research on CSR	Policy makers Funds Managing authorities SEOs Education Providers	N of stakeholders claiming to have reached a deeper understanding/awareness of CSR N of stakeholders engaged though dissemination activities n of new research areas or training/knowledge gaps identified as a result of the research

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

			N of citations of the project and project intellectual outputs (news, policy reports, papers...) N of project and initiatives in network with the project

Figure 5.5: Impact frameworking, step 3

Linkage to official impact accounting and reporting taxonomies

Creating an impact framework for an initiative is a very useful activity *per se* as you will be provided with a strategic document that permits you to map and monitor the impact of your activity. Nonetheless, if you aim to communicate it to an external context or give value to your projects by inserting them into an official accounting report, you have a further task to fulfil: identify official accounting and reporting taxonomies to be inserted into your impact framework. The taxonomies available are many (SDGs, GRI, EU programme objectives, ESG, SASB) and you should select some according to your specific interest. What they have in common are subsets of objectives, targets, goals and so on.

As you did for your own initiative, you have now to select specific dimensions of a taxonomy and link them to your outcome areas or outcome.

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

Outcome area	Outcome	Stakeholders	KPIs	SDG
Economic Development / Employment	Increased access to job	Beneficiaries	N. of beneficiaries who start an internship or a professional collaboration or a job contract N of entreprises willing to open positions after participating in the project	☐ 8. Decent work and economic growth
Economic Development / Employment	Improved CSR strategies	Enterprises	N of people / enteprises that declare an improved quality of their CSR strategy N of people hired in CSR sections	☐ 9. Industry, innovation and infrastructure
Education	Increased awareness	Citizenship Employees PA Enterprises NGOs	N of people / stakeholders that declare to increase awareness on community needs	☐ 4.Quality education
Education	Improved soft skills	Beneficiaries Employees	N of people that improves soft skills (set of item TBD) Variety and diversity of people trained (i.e.: sex, national background, age, salary level)	☐ 4.Quality education
Education	Increased hard skills	Beneficiaries Employees	N of people that improves hard skills (set of item TBD) Variety and diversity of people trained (i.e.: sex, national background, age, salary level)	☐ 4.Quality education ☐ 8. Decent work and economic growth
Education	Educational Innovation	Collectivity (Educational system, enterprises)	Quality perceived by participants N of new content /	☐ 4.Quality education

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

			methodologies applied N of application	
Local Development	Improved private/public sector engagement	Enterprises, NGOs, PA	N of companies engaged in project activities + degree of engagement N of local NGOs engaged in project activities + degree of engagement N of PA engaged in project activities + degree of engagement	☐ 9. Industry, innovation and infrastructure ☐ 11. Sustainable community
	Improved community engagement	Local community	N of people of the local community engaged in project activities + degree of engagement N of people that persist in social active participation	☐ 11. Sustainable community
	Creation of local projects	Local community Beneficiaries	N of local projects launched	☐ 11. Sustainable community
	Network building	Enterprises Partner Local community	N of formal network created N of informal network created	☐ 11. Sustainable community
Research, Innovation and Scale-up	Replicability and Scale-up	Education Providers Policy makers Funds Managing authorities	Propensity of stakeholders to replicate the training N of stakeholder that insert the course in official program N of certificate acquired N of member states that recognize the certificate	8. Decent work and Economic Growth

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

Co-funded by the European Union

	Impactful research on CSR	Policy makers Funds Managing authorities SEOs Education Providers	N of stakeholders claiming to have reached a deeper understanding/awareness of CSR N of stakeholders engaged though dissemination activities n of new research areas or training/knowledge gaps identified as a result of the research N of citations of the project and project intellectual outputs (news, policy reports, papers...) N of project and initiatives in network with the project	4. Quality Education

Figure 5.6: Impact frameworking, final version

The impact framework is almost completed. It has an internal logical and qualitative order, it has indicators that ensure quantification, and it is linked to official external taxonomy to be communicable to the outer context. The final step is to ensure that data about our outcomes are collected, by choosing the means of verification.

Decision of means of verification (data gathering tools)

As highlighted in Section 3, **indicators** are essential for making outcomes quantifiable and measurable. However, indicators alone are insufficient without **data gathering**, and data gathering is impossible without appropriate **means of verification**. A means of verification is defined as **"the source of information that must be collected to qualify and/or quantify the defined indicators."** It requires careful consideration of how the information will be collected, who will be responsible for collecting it, and the frequency with which the information should be provided.

The choice of means of verification varies depending on the specific **outcomes** and **stakeholders** involved. These tools must align with the characteristics of the data required and the context in which it is collected. Examples of means of verification include surveys, interviews, focus groups, observation matrices, and organizational records.

At this stage, the **impact framework** is considered complete, as it provides a structured pathway for measuring outcomes. In the next subtopic, the focus will shift to developing a **customized data gathering strategy** for your project, including the creation of an operational plan to effectively implement the listed means of verification

Conclusion

The impact framework methodology is designed to assess and document the effects of projects, particularly for social, economic, environmental, and cultural impact. It helps project managers, policymakers, and stakeholders align and track project benefits over time.

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

Its core elements are:

1. Outcome definition and aggregation: clearly define project outcomes, group them into thematic clusters (outcome areas), and map their logical structure.
2. Stakeholder identification: identify specific stakeholders (individuals, communities, or systems) who will be affected by each outcome.
3. Indicator selection: choose measurable indicators for tracking progress towards each outcome, providing a quantitative dimension to the impact.
4. Alignment with official taxonomies: link outcomes to official frameworks (e.g., SDGs, ESG) to facilitate reporting and external validation.
5. Means of verification: determine data collection methods (surveys, interviews, etc.) to quantify each indicator, ensuring reliable measurement.

This framework equips project teams with the tools to monitor impact methodically, making outcomes both measurable and reportable.

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

SUBTOPIC 3: Data gathering strategy

Aim and scope	➢ Understand the different typologies of data, how to design and implement data gathering strategies with appropriate tools.
Teaching tools	➢ **Lectures and Discussions**:Theory of data and of data gathering methodologies. ➢ **Visual content**: Powerpoint showing diagrams and images to help visualise the theoretical concept presented during the discussion. ➢ **Case studies:** presentation of real data gathering strategy ➢ **Tools**: provision, discussion and use of already existing data gathering tools (i.e.: internal register, structured interview, survey, network analysis matrix etc..) ➢ **Project work:** development of data gathering tools and strategies.
Learning Outcomes	➢ **LO4**: Have the ability to use appropriate methodologies for data gathering and analysis, integrate various knowledge, handle complexity, and formulate proposals and solutions acknowledging the limits and constraints of specific territories and communities. ➢ **LO5:** Produce and transfer knowledge and understanding, including analysis and problem-solving abilities in unfamiliar contexts, considering the profile and resources of various stakeholders and environmental and socio-economic conditions.

The ability to collect, analyze, and effectively communicate data is an essential competence for any social impact manager. Within the context of social impact initiatives, data serve as a cornerstone for making informed and evidence-based decisions, while also fostering consensus and engagement among stakeholders and the wider community. This subtopic equips participants with the theoretical knowledge and tools to understand the basics of theory of data, and data management, describe accurately how to select proper data collection tool to build an effective data gathering applicable to conduct impact assessment on project, service and programs.

Introduction to data supply chain

First, it is necessary to give a specific definition of data and explain why they are useful. By data we mean *"what is immediately present to knowledge, prior to any form of processing"* while a statistical data is *"it measure of a collective phenomenon resulting from the observation of the individual phenomena that comprise it, that is, the set of statistical units related to individual cases* (for example, the number of births in a year or the population of a country)". (Translation from Treccani Italian dictionary).

Data are therefore necessary to be gathered for several reason (research, internal investigation, reporting or communication), but what they substantially abilities is the quantifiability and communicability of qualitative processes and

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

results. Data can be interpreted as the raw material of a supply chain, namely the data supply chain. The concept of the data supply chain provides a comprehensive framework for understanding the flow and management of data within social impact initiatives. Similar to a traditional manufacturing supply chain, the data supply chain encompasses the lifecycle of data, from its initial collection at the "raw material" stage to its eventual transformation into actionable insights or tangible products for decision-making. This approach emphasizes the value-added at each stage of the chain, offering a structured way to assess, quantify, and enhance the utility of data.

Figure 5.7: data pathway

1. Identify data by determining the exact data needed to assess a project's impact. This involves aligning intended outcomes with measurable indicators to ensure relevance. Decisions about data types—quantitative (e.g., statistics) or qualitative (e.g., feedback)—and potential sources, such as participants or databases, are made to guide the collection process effectively.
2. Select tools by choosing the appropriate tools for data collection. Tools' options will be described below.
3. Develop and implement a data gathering strategy plan for collecting data outlining timelines, responsibilities, and tools. This ensures the process clear and manageable.
4. Clean data by addressing errors, inconsistencies, or gaps. Tasks include removing duplicates, standardizing formats, and resolving anomalies to maintain data integrity.
5. Analyse data and deliver a final product converting data into actionable insights. Analysis reveals the results of your impact assessment or research, producing outputs like reports or dashboards that can be disseminated to various stakeholders.

Identify data sources and select data gathering tools

Before you collect data elements, you must determine which data can be collected from what sources. For each indicator, you need at least one data source. Data sources might be all members of the target group and other stakeholders, as well as internal and external documents. Once you've identified a data source, you must identify the method by which you'll collect the information, connecting the source of data to the proper data gathering tools.

The variety of data collection methods available makes the selection process both complex and crucial and consulting experts or representatives from similar projects or organizations can provide valuable insights. The decision should be based on the relevance and meaningfulness of the data to the organization's goals and the evaluation's objectives.

The first decision to made is to choose in between collecting new data, utilise existing data or collect both:

Co-funded by the European Union
Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

- Utilising Existing Data: effective data collection planning begins with assessing the availability and usability of existing data. Additionally, it is fundamental to investigate if the organisation already possesses some data on which to base the analysis on.
- Collecting new data: If the existing data isn't enough, or no relevant data yet exists, you'll have to create your own. The approach you choose will depend on the resources available to you, but also particularly on the scope and level of detail you need for the information about impact.

Data gathering tools

Several data gathering tools exist. They are described below specifying its key characteristics and best context of use.

1. **Monitoring form**s act as systematic tools to capture key data points and observations throughout the implementation of a project. These forms are tailored to track activities, resources, and results and provide an ongoing update of progress and allow for consistent documentation, making it easier to identify patterns or irregularities that may require attention.
   Type of data: quantitative, qualitative

2. **Databases** serve as the central repository for all data collected during the project. This tool ensures that information from various sources—whether quantitative metrics, qualitative feedback, or operational data—is organized, accessible, and interconnected. For each project a specific database can be created as a simple Excel sheet, inserting in it all the necessary information and indicators.
   Type of data: quantitative

3. **Network Analysis Matri**x is a powerful tool to map and evaluate the relationships, connections, and influence among various actors involved in the project. By visualizing the interactions between stakeholders, the matrix highlights the flow of resources, information, and collaboration within the network.
   Type of data: quantitative, qualitative

4. **Individual surveys** administered to a specific targets direct and measurable feedback on their experiences, perceptions, and the impact they experimented thanks to the the project. Designed with both closed and open-ended questions, these questionnaires provide highly valuable quantitative data while allowing respondents to share their personal insights.
   Type of data: quantitative, qualitative

5. **Interviews** with key stakeholders or project coordinators provide in-depth insights into the experiences, perceptions, and outcomes associated with the initiative. These interviews delve into the nuances of project implementation, offering context that quantitative data alone cannot capture
   Type of data: qualitative

6. **Focus group** is useful for gathering qualitative insights through facilitated discussions among a small group of participants. This method allows for a deeper understanding of collective perceptions, shared experiences, and group dynamics related to a project or intervention.
   Type of data: qualitative

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

7. **Direct observation** involves systematically monitoring and recording behaviors, interactions, and activities in real-time within the project's context. Observational methods are particularly useful for capturing non-verbal cues, group dynamics, and environmental factors that might not be reported through other means.
Type of data: qualitative

8. **Official statistics** and policy documents serves as an authoritative source of data collected and published by government or other reputable institutions. They provide standardized, aggregated information on demographics, economics, health, or education, offering a foundational understanding of the broader social or economic context in which a project operates
Type of data: quantitative, qualitative

9. **IoT Sensors** are advanced tools for collecting real-time, objective data, especially useful in environmental impact projects. They can track environmental metrics, resource use, or activity levels in specific areas, providing precise, continuous data
Type of data: quantitative

TOOL	QUANTITATIVE	QUALITATIVE
Monitoring forms	x	x
Databases	x	
Network Analysis Matrix	x	x
Individual surveys	x	x
Interviews		x
Focus group		x
Direct observation		x
Official statistics	x	
IoT Sensors	x	

Figure 5.8: Synopsis of data gathering tools

Develop and Implement a Data Gathering Strategy

Data collection is a critical component of any evaluation process and a systematic and well-structured approach ensures that the data gathered is reliable, relevant, and useful for analysis. The process involves three main steps: creating a data collection plan, identifying appropriate data sources, and gathering the data itself. A data gathering strategy describes the exact steps as well as the sequence that needs to be followed in gathering the data. The document ensures that everyone on the project team is on the same page with regards to the data plan while and that information is correctly transmitted to the people that will actually provide for the data. Generally, it is fundamental to clarify when, how and by who data should be collected. It provides a masterplan in GANTT chart format that highlights which means of verification will be used, who is responsible for its issuing and in which time span is it supposed to be activated. Here is the typical structure of a data collection strategy.

Co-funded by the European Union
Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

12	Responsible	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP
Databases	To be defined									
Monitoring forms	To be defined									
Survey - Students (*ex ante*)	To be defined									
Survey - Students (*ex post*)	To be defined									
Network Analysis	To be defined									
Interviews	To be defined									

Figure 5.9: The data-collection strategy helps you structure, plan and oversee your data collection process.

Data analysis and interpretation

Once your data are available you can proceed to data analysis that is the process of extracting insights from raw information to deliverable tangible products such as report ad. It involves summarizing data, identifying patterns, and reason the key findings, which are essential for every evaluation process. The two primary approaches to data analysis are quantitative and qualitative methodologies, each serving distinct but complementary purposes.

- **Quantitative analysis** uses numerical data and often employs descriptive statistics, forecasting models, and inferential tests. It is numerical and can be counted or expressed mathematically, be analysed using statistical tests and computations and its results are often visualized through tables and graphs, making findings accessible and interpretable.
- **Qualitative analysis**, in contrast qualitative analysis focuses on understanding underlying behaviours, motivations, and experiences. Qualitative data enhances quantitative findings by adding context, texture, and depth. It is particularly valuable for defining problems, generating new research ideas, and providing rich insights for program evaluation.
- **Quanti-qualitativ**e analysis is also possible, and highly recommended, and consist in a mixture of the two previous and by combining quantitative and qualitative approaches, organizations can ensure a comprehensive evaluation that captures both measurable outcomes and the nuanced experiences of stakeholders.

The results of your analysis can then be disseminated and communicated to external stakeholders such as policy makers, funding authorities and citizenships through different final products such as impact report and dashboards An impact report is a detailed document that narratively presents the outcomes and value generated by a project or organization. It typically includes the methodology used to measure impact, key findings, data analysis, and insights. An impact dashboard, on the

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

other hand, is an interactive, visual tool that displays data on the project's activities, outputs, and outcomes; it mostly evaluates quantitative results.

Data visualisation

Data visualization is a critical phase in the data analysis process, as it translates raw data into visual formats such as graphs, charts, or maps, enabling audiences to **quickly grasp insights** and draw meaningful conclusions. By modeling and presenting data in an easily interpretable way, visualization supports informed decision-making and enhances the communication of complex information.

In the context of impact assessment, data visualization serves as a tool to present **impact data** effectively, helping organizations understand which outcome areas need improvement, identify variables affecting beneficiaries' social or economic status, and refine or reorient services and activities. For example, a social enterprise may use visualizations to determine whether a particular service needs additional resources or modification, while a foundation might evaluate whether a project or organization is meeting social impact expectations.

Interactive and user-friendly dashboards are particularly useful for impact data visualization, as they allow real-time monitoring of data and reveal patterns that might otherwise remain unnoticed. Such tools simplify decision-making by providing clear and actionable insights

What kind of chart have you used to present your data?

The following graph, developed by Andrew Abela from [Extreme Presentations](), provides a good representation of different types of charts that can be used to visualise data.

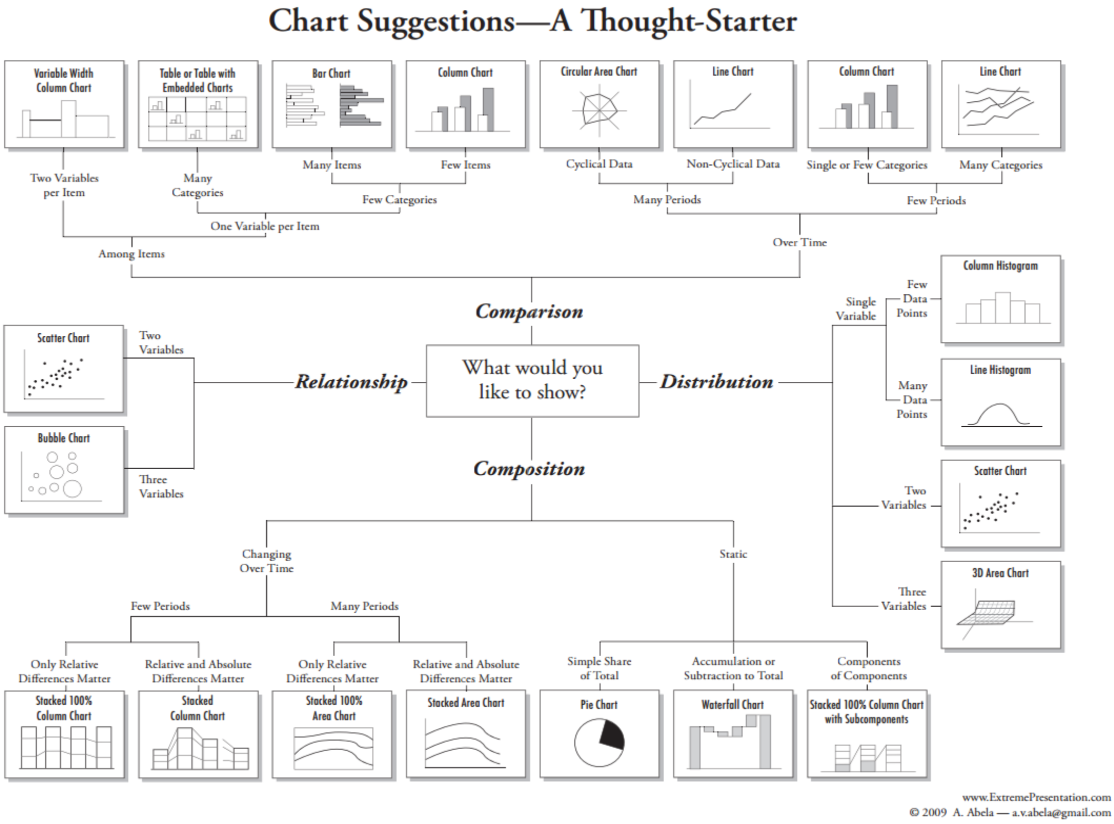


Figure 5.10: source: “The presentation”: A Story About Communicating Successfully With Very Few Slides. (Abela, 2009)

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

Benefits of Visual Impact Data for Decision-Making

Impact data visualizations offer decision-makers—such as social enterprises or funding organizations—a clear understanding of the outcomes generated by projects. By analyzing trends and patterns through visual representation, organizations can prioritize resources more effectively, focus on areas with the highest impact potential, and communicate findings to stakeholders in a compelling manner. For instance, a dashboard might highlight trends that suggest reallocating resources to maximize the success of a particular program. Modern data visualization relies on advanced digital tools to create compelling graphics and dashboards. Popular tools include:

- Tableau
- Microsoft Power BI
- Google Charts
- Excel
- Zoho Analytics
- Infogram
- Looker

These tools are designed to provide intuitive interfaces and real-time analytics, making data presentation accessible to a wide range of users, from beginners to advanced analysts. Visual representations of data enhance understanding and engagement, especially for stakeholders with diverse levels of expertise. Well-designed visualizations can communicate insights **effectively and credibly**, ensuring that the findings are both digestible and impactful. By applying thoughtful design principles and leveraging the right tools, organizations can maximize the value of their impact data and strengthen their decision-making processes.

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

SUBTOPIC 4: Monetisation methodologies (SROI)

Aim and scope	➢ Introducing principle of Social Value International, theory and calculation of Social Return on Investment (SROI) applied to socio/environmental impact initiatives, projects and programs.
Teaching tools	➢ **Lectures and Discussions**:Theory of data and of data gathering methodologies. ➢ **Tools**: provision, discussion and use of already existing matrixes to calculate SROI. ➢ **Academic literature:** lists of selected learning materials to deepen the concept described during lectures. ➢ Practicing sensitivity analysis and financial modeling to evaluate the robustness of SROI calculation
Learning Outcomes	➢ **LO6:** Link proposals, recommendations, and judgments with a reflection on the social and ethical responsibilities of stakeholders in the field. ➢ Demonstrate the ability to conduct an SROI analysis by mapping inputs, outputs, outcomes, and applying monetization techniques to measure social value. ➢ Effectively communicate the results of an SROI analysis to stakeholders, ensuring transparency and accountability

Social Return on Investment (SROI): A Theoretical and Methodological Framework

The Social Return on Investment (SROI) is a comprehensive methodological framework designed to measure the ***extra-financial value*** generated by an intervention, while accounting for the resources invested and the counterfactual scenario, that is, what would have occurred in the absence of the intervention. Rooted in the traditional cost-benefit analysis paradigm, SROI expands this approach by quantifying *social value* through a set of well-defined indicators that are directly associated with the outcomes achieved (Gupta, 2020).

The SROI methodology can be conceptualized as a systematic process aimed at understanding, measuring, managing, and effectively communicating the social, environmental, and economic value generated by an organization or project. Its ultimate objective is to provide a rigorous qualitative and quantitative examination of the processes underpinning the creation of social value, highlighting.

The methodological robustness of the SROI model is grounded in **eight foundational principles,** which collectively inform a structured six-phase analytical process.

1. **Involve stakeholders**: Ensure meaningful engagement of stakeholders throughout the process to capture their perspectives and experiences.

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

2. **Understand what changes**: Identify and articulate the pathways of change and the outcomes resulting from the intervention.
3. **Value the things that matter**: Assign appropriate monetary values to outcomes that stakeholders perceive as significant.
4. **Only include what Is material:** Focus on information and outcomes that are critical to an accurate and fair representation of value.
5. **Do not overclaim:** Avoid inflating results by attributing outcomes solely to the intervention, recognizing other contributing factors.
6. **Be transparent:** Document and disclose all methodological choices, assumptions, and limitations to maintain credibility and reproducibility.
7. **Verify the result:** Subject the analysis to external validation to ensure the accuracy and robustness of findings.
8. **Be responsive:** Use the insights generated to adapt, improve, and inform decision-making processes.

Such principles have to be applied all along a path that started with impact frameworking and develops through data gathering. Once you have all your quantitative and qualitative data stored and properly interpreted, SROI analysis can be started. The Social Return on Investment monetised the social value generated by an intervention through seven key stages:

Stage 1: Scope and stakeholder identification:

The initial phase of an SROI analysis focuses on addressing fundamental planning considerations by defining the purpose, objectives, and context of the analysis while identifying and consulting stakeholders to ensure all significant changes are included.

This phase also establishes the temporal scope of the analysis and determines whether it will be **evaluative (ex-post) or forecasting (ex-ante) i**n nature (Human Foundation, 2012; SROI Guide, 2012).

A critical component of Phase 1 involves the identification and engagement of stakeholders, defined as individuals or organizations who experience change—either positive, through value creation, or negative, as destroyed value—as a result of the intervention. This step confirms that no significant stakeholders are omitted and that all material changes are appropriately identified, adhering to the principle of materiality. According to the SROI framework, a material aspect—be it social, economic, or environmental—is one that significantly impacts an organization’s ability to generate value in the short, medium, or long term and influences stakeholders' decision-making.

This initial steps the active participation of stakeholders to ensure that all significant changes are accounted for, qualitative dimension are taken into consideration and that key stakeholders are aware of which elements will be part of the SROI calculation.

Stage 2: Mapping outcomes

Outcome mapping secures that SROI analysis lays on the previous impact assessment tools used if existing, or that any SROI calculation starting from scratch is based on a structured impact map.

By correctly assigning outcomes or chains of events to specific stakeholder categories, the analysis maintains **rigour and accuracy**, ensuring a transparent and comprehensive representation of the value generated.

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

If an ex-post analysis after an entire impact assessment is being conducted, then you can just select the outcome inserted in you impact framework.

If you are on a scenario of an ex-ante or ex-post analysis without previous impact assessment you should create a synthetic ToC or Impact Framework.These tools are typically presented as a table (e.g., an Excel file) organized into columns by stakeholder group, detailing key project-related information such as:

- **Inputs** represent the resources—monetary, time, or in-kind contributions—provided by stakeholders to enable the implementation of activities. Non-monetized inputs, such as volunteer time or donated services, are assigned **financial proxies** to reflect their value (e.g., equivalent to an average hourly wage or based on standardized conversion tables for volunteer work). This ensures consistency in quantification.

- **Outputs** are the **immediate, tangible, and measurable results** of activities, often described in quantitative terms. These include deliverables such as products, services, or other direct outputs generated by the intervention.

- It is essential to distinguish **outputs** from **outcomes**, as outcomes form the **core of the SROI analysis**. Outcomes capture the actual changes—positive or negative, intended or unintended—that occur as a result of the intervention. They provide evidence of whether and to what extent meaningful change has occurred for stakeholders. The **identification of outcomes** requires the **active participation of stakeholders** to ensure that all significant changes are accounted for. If intermediate outcomes are identified, they should be organized into a **"chain of events"**, also referred to as the **theory of change**, to reflect the causal pathway leading to the final outcomes. This process ensures clarity and avoids **double counting**—the erroneous attribution of the same outcome to multiple stakeholder groups.

It is important to ensure a balanced selection of indicators, which may include:

- **Subjective indicators**: Self-constructed measures suggested directly by stakeholders.
- **Objective indicators**: Observed phenomena or measurable changes occurring during the intervention.

If you the process is starting from the beginning it is central to figure out and from which sources data will be gathered. Data collection can utilise various research methods, described in the previous subtopic, but the decision on which to use depends on whether the SROI analysis is forecasting (predictive) or evaluative (retrospective):

- In a **forecast analysis**, identifying data sources and collection methods provides organizations with a framework for capturing outcomes during project implementation.
- In an **evaluative analysis**, data must be drawn from pre-existing records or other reliable sources, reflecting outcomes already achieved.

Stage 3: Evidencing outcomes and giving them a value

To proceed SROI analysis involves a series of structured activities aimed at mapping and selecting cashable outcomes of the project. Cashable outcomes are those that are translated in monetary value, by assigning them a financial proxy. This leads to **monetisation**, which involves assigning a monetary value (or **financial proxy**) to each selected outcome. By doing this SROI estimates the social value of these non-marketed assets and expresses it in monetary metrics.
Several techniques can be applied for monetisation, according to the context and availabilty of data, and time for research.

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

- **Contingent valuation**: Stakeholders are directly asked to assign a monetary value to the benefits they perceive.
- **Revealed preference**: The value is inferred from comparable goods or services with an established market price (e.g., leisure, health-related benefits).
- **Travel cost method**: Estimates the amount users are willing to spend (in time and resources) to access a specific good or service.
- **Average household spending**: Assesses household spending patterns on non-essential activities, such as leisure, personal well-being, or hobbies.

Once this process is completed, each outcome (or one of its indicators) is linked to a financial item (proxy) that represents a (possible) monetary value of the outcome itself. While selecting proxies it is fundamental to provide their **sources** to ensure accountability.

By systematically implementing these steps, this phase ensures that outcomes are not only evidenced but also appropriately valued, enabling a rigorous quantification of social value within the SROI framework.

Once the financial proxies are selected, the next step is to calculate each outcome's and overall Gross Social Value (GSV). This involves a single multiplication:

1. multiplying the quantity of the indicators for each outcome (e.g., the number of stakeholders experiencing the change) by its assigned monetary value (financial proxy).
2. add every single outcome GSV to calculate overall GSV

Stage 4: Establishing Impact by define Mitigators to establish Net Present Value (NPV)

To prevent overestimation of impact, four key elements must be analysed and quantified for each outcome: deadweight, displacement, attribution, and drop-off. By accounting for external factors, mitigators refine the attribution of outcomes to the intervention, preventing overestimation or misrepresentation.

1. **Deadweight r**epresents the proportion of the outcome that would have occurred regardless of the intervention. It is estimated using comparison groups or benchmarks. For instance, if participants in a job training program would have found employment without attending, that probability is deadweight.
2. **Displacement a**ssesses whether the positive outcome for one group has resulted in negative effects for others. This captures substitution effects and unintended consequences.
3. **Attribution** measures the contribution of external factors—other organizations, projects, or actors—to achieving the outcome. It identifies the share of the outcome attributable specifically to the intervention.
4. **Drop-off r**eflects the decrease in the intensity of the outcome over time. Applied to outcomes lasting more than one year, drop-off quantifies the progressive decline in impact. It is applied only to NPV of outcomes that have a duration higher than 1 year (see phase 7)

Apart from mitigators an essential aspect of outcome measurement is determining the **duration** of the effect. Some outcomes may continue to generate value beyond the end of the intervention. Duration can be estimated using two approaches:

Co-funded by the European Union
Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

1. Direct consultation with beneficiaries to assess the longevity of the outcome.
2. Reference to existing studies on similar beneficiary groups to approximate outcome duration based on comparable data.

The final calculation of impact involves multiplying the financial proxy of each outcome by its quantity and subtracting the respective percentages of deadweight, displacement and attribution. The adjusted outcomes are then aggregated to determine the **net impact generated or NPV.**

NPV = GSV filtered by MITIGATORS

Stage 5: calculating SROI

Finally, the SROI can be calculated; delving deeper into the analysis, it is helpful to recall the SROI formula, which is expressed as a ratio. The numerator represents the total quantification of Net Social Value (NPV), while the denominator reflects the investment made to fund the activities . The final result represents the SROI indicator.

Present value / Input value (budget) = SROI

SROI calculation example from scientific paper "Social Return on Investment" (adapted form Busacca & Caputo, 2019)

If an x number of outcomes has an **duration** of 4 years, the calculation of the value of the x number of outcomes in the years following the first is calculated as follows:

1. Impact in the first year: € 1,539.00 (A)
2. Impact in the second year: Impact in year 1 minus the drop-off; € 1,539.00 less 10%; € 1,539.00 × 0.9 = € 1,385.10 (B)
3. Impact in the third year: Impact of year 2 minus drop-off; € 1,385.10 less 10%; € 1,385.10 × 0.9 = € 1,246.59 (C)
4. Impact in the fourth year: Impact of year 3 minus the drop-off; € 1,246.59 less 10%; € 1,246.59 × 0.9 = € 1,121.93 (D)

Final NPV for the x number of outcomes is the sum of A+B+C+D = 5.292.62 €

The final step involves calculating the SROI which is the result of a ratio between the discounted value of the benefits and the total investments, that we assume being of 2800,00 €

5.292.62 € / 2800,00 € = 1.89

The summarized result obtained is a SROI of 1.89. That means that, for every euro invested, 1.89 € of social return was generated.

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

Stage 6 of SROI: Reporting, Using, and Embedding

This phase is critical for ensuring that the analysis achieves its ultimate purpose: fostering transparency, accountability, and strategic decision-making.

The **reporting** aspect involves compiling the results of the SROI analysis into a clear, comprehensive, and accessible format. The report typically includes an overview of the project's objectives, the methodology employed, the stakeholders engaged, and the outcomes measured. The report also addresses assumptions, limitations, and sensitivity analyses to validate the findings and demonstrate their robustness.

In the **using** phase, the insights gained from the SROI analysis are applied to inform decisions, refine strategies, and optimize resource allocation. This could involve prioritizing activities that deliver higher social returns, redesigning underperforming interventions, or identifying areas where additional resources are needed. Sharing results with stakeholders not only validates their contributions but also encourages collective ownership of the outcomes.

Embedding involves integrating the lessons learned into the organization's culture, policies, and practices. By institutionalizing SROI as a framework for evaluation and planning, organizations can ensure ongoing accountability and improvement. Embedding also fosters a culture of learning, encouraging staff and stakeholders to align their efforts toward achieving sustained social value.

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

SUBTOPIC 5: Sustainability strategy and reporting

Aim and scope	➢ Provide knowledge of the regulatory framework and the national and international initiatives relative to sustainability reporting in order to connect materials topic and outcome measurement and communicate impact to stakeholders.
Teaching tools	➢ **Lectures and Discussions**: theory on the principal sustainability reporting system (CSRD, GRI - double materiality matrix) and their link with impact assessment. ➢ **Case studies:** presentation of best practices in impact reporting ➢ **Academic literature:** lists of selected learning materials to deepen the concept described during lectures.
Learning Outcomes	➢ **LO5:** Produce and transfer knowledge and understanding, including analysis and problem-solving abilities in unfamiliar contexts, considering the profile and resources of various stakeholders and environmental and socio-economic conditions ➢ **LO8:** Link proposals, recommendations, and judgments with a reflection on the social and ethical responsibilities of stakeholders in the field.

Theory of Reporting: European Regulations and Their Evolution

The European regulatory framework on sustainability reporting has significantly evolved in recent years, aiming to enhance corporate transparency and accountability in environmental, social, and governance (ESG) areas. Initially guided by the Non-Financial Reporting Directive (NFRD) of 2014, the framework required large companies to disclose non-financial information on topics like environmental protection, social responsibility, employee treatment, human rights, and anti-corruption efforts. However, in response to growing demands for detailed, reliable ESG data, the European Union introduced the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD) in 2021.

The CSRD expands reporting requirements to a broader range of companies, including listed small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), and mandates compliance with the European Sustainability Reporting Standards (ESRS). It also emphasises "double materiality," requiring companies to report both on how ESG factors affect their financial performance and on the impact of their operations on society and the environment. This approach aligns with the EU’s overarching goals under the Green Deal and Sustainable Finance Disclosure Regulation (SFDR), fostering comparability and reliability in corporate sustainability disclosures across the Union. The framework is seen as instrumental in driving Europe toward a sustainable, transparent economy, setting a high standard for corporate ESG accountability globally.

Reporting Frameworks: ESRS, GRI, TCFD, SASB

In the landscape of sustainability reporting, several frameworks have emerged to guide organisations in disclosing their environmental, social, and governance (ESG) performance. Each framework offers unique perspectives and methodologies,

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

addressing different aspects of ESG transparency, stakeholder engagement, and financial relevance. Familiarity with these frameworks—TCFD, GRI, SASB, and ESRS—enables organisations to create comprehensive, standardised reports that meet regulatory expectations, investor demands, and broader societal interests.

TCFD (Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures)

The TCFD framework, established by the Financial Stability Board, is designed to help companies disclose information on climate-related financial risks. It focuses on how climate change impacts business strategy and financial performance, providing specific recommendations in four core areas: governance, strategy, risk management, and metrics & targets. TCFD is particularly valuable for investors, as it promotes a forward-looking approach through scenario analysis, encouraging companies to consider potential climate scenarios and prepare for long-term impacts. TCFD's emphasis on financial implications makes it highly relevant for sectors vulnerable to climate risks, such as energy, transportation, and agriculture.

GRI (Global Reporting Initiative)

The GRI Standards are among the most widely used frameworks for sustainability reporting worldwide, designed to help companies communicate their impact on critical issues such as climate change, human rights, governance, and social well-being. Unlike other frameworks, GRI takes a broad stakeholder-centric approach, focusing on impacts that matter to society as a whole. The framework includes detailed standards for materiality assessment, stakeholder engagement, and reporting across diverse areas like environmental impact, labor practices, and community relations. The GRI Standards are modular and flexible, making them suitable for organisations across industries and countries aiming to achieve greater transparency on their sustainability initiatives.

SASB (Sustainability Accounting Standards Board)

SASB Standards provide industry-specific guidance focused on financially material ESG issues that are most likely to affect a company's financial performance. Developed for 77 industries, the SASB Standards identify key topics and metrics that are tailored to sector-specific risks and opportunities, helping investors evaluate ESG-related factors in the context of financial relevance. Unlike GRI, which has a broad, societal focus, SASB is tailored primarily to the needs of investors and capital markets, making it highly relevant for companies looking to communicate sustainability efforts with a clear focus on financial outcomes. Its concise, industry-specific approach supports comparability and relevance, especially within the financial sector.

ESRS (European Sustainability Reporting Standards)

The ESRS, developed under the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD) by the European Financial Reporting Advisory Group (EFRAG), is a new set of standards specifically for companies operating within or connected to the European Union. These standards are designed to meet the EU's regulatory requirements, focusing on "double materiality," meaning companies must report on how sustainability issues affect their business and how their business impacts society and the environment. ESRS standards are comprehensive, covering a wide range of ESG topics, including climate change, biodiversity, human rights, and anti-corruption. The ESRS framework aligns closely with EU sustainability objectives under the Green Deal, setting a high standard for transparency and compliance across European markets.

Case Studies: Focus on Double Materiality and Impact Reporting

This section leverages real-world case studies to deepen participants' understanding of applying double materiality and impact reporting concepts in practical scenarios. Double materiality—a distinctive feature of the ESRS and other emerging

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

standards—enables companies to evaluate not only how ESG issues impact their financial performance but also the broader effects their operations have on society and the environment. Participants will review case studies that demonstrate how leading companies conduct double materiality assessments to identify priority issues and transparently report their impacts, both financial and non-financial.

The module also covers practical techniques for conducting materiality assessments, such as stakeholder engagement processes, impact mapping, and scenario analysis. Each case study highlights key steps in developing the double materiality matrix, from data collection to prioritising material issues for different stakeholder groups. Additionally, participants will explore innovative methods for measuring and reporting environmental and social impacts, including quantitative and qualitative metrics that communicate an organisation's role in sustainable development. These case studies provide actionable examples of how organisations can ensure compliance, enhance credibility, and respond to growing demands for accountability from investors, customers, and regulators.

Academic Literature: Key Scientific Articles on the Topic

Concluding the module is a review of key academic literature, offering participants an advanced and evidence-based perspective on the latest research in sustainability reporting. Participants will engage with scientific articles on several themes, including the role of ESG disclosure in corporate governance, the financial performance impacts of sustainability reporting, and comparative analyses of global reporting frameworks' effectiveness.

This segment also addresses critical discussions from recent literature on the unintended consequences of ESG disclosures, such as greenwashing risks and issues related to the standardisation of metrics across diverse industries. Specific studies on the impact of ESG transparency on investor behaviour and corporate resilience in crises (e.g., the COVID-19 pandemic) will illustrate the real-world implications of robust sustainability reporting practices. By reviewing these studies, participants gain a nuanced understanding of the academic debates and data-driven insights that shape current and future trends in sustainability reporting. This theoretical foundation not only complements the practical knowledge acquired throughout the module but also enables participants to approach reporting challenges with a critical and research-informed perspective.

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

Test your knowledge of Module 5 – Impact assessment and reporting

1. True or False Questions (5 questions)

	Question	Answer (True / False)
Q.1	Social impact represents short-term, measurable change—both positive and negative—attributable to an intervention	**False**
Q.2	Outcome areas can be defined as “groups of outcomes that share similar characteristics based on specific criteria of similarity.”	**True**
Q.3	Survey are merely quantitative data gathering tools	**False**
Q.4	SROI is a ratio between Net Present Value and Budget	**True**
Q.5	Double materiality is a distinctive feature of the ESRS and other emerging standards	**True**

Correct answers: True Q2, Q3, Q5; False Q1, Q3

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

2. Multiple choice questions (5 questions)

	Question	Answers offered	Correct answer (A/B/C/D)
Q.1	*Why is ToC a prerequisite of impact evaluation?*	a. It provides a connection among activities, outcome and impact b. It clarifies the expected outputs and outcomes c. Guarantee a proper stakeholder and context analysis d. All of the above	D
Q.2	*Which are the key components of impact frameworking?*	a. Stakeholder engagement, outcome, proxy, means of verification b. Theory of change, project activities, indicators, reporting taxonomy c. Outcome, indicators, stakeholders, reporting taxonomies, and means of verification d. Activity, input, output, outcomes, long term impact	C
Q.3	*What does SROI indicator measure?*	a. The total number of beneficiaries. b. The financial value of social benefits created relative to the investment made. c. The increase in GDP. d. The monetary return on investment	B
Q.4	*Which are the main phases for calculating SROI?*	a. Data collection, qualitative analysis, quantitative analysis, reporting. b. Identification of stakeholders, mapping of outcomes, data collection, calculation, and interpretation of SROI. c. Planning, management, evaluation, review. d. None of the above	B

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

Q.5	*Which data collection method is primarily used for qualitative impact analysis?*	a. Surveys. b. Interviews and focus groups. c. IoT sensors. d. Administrative data.	B

Correct answers: Q1: D, Q2: C, Q3: B, Q4: B; Q5: B

Task 2. Developing a Social Impact Strategy

Objective: Students will design a social impact evaluation strategy for a fictional or real organisation, integrating the concepts learned about social impact evaluation of firm's social impact project of the territory

Guidelines:

1. Choose an Organisation
2. Select a project or initiative
3. Apply the Theory of Change to the project
4. Develop an impact framework
5. Develop data gathering tools
6. Define a data gathering strategy
7. Select proxies
8. Calculate SROI

References

1. Arvidson, M. and Lyon, F. (2014) 'Social impact measurement and non-profit organisations:compliance, resistance, and promotion', Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary andNonprofit Organizations, Vol. 25 No. 4, pp. 869-886.
2. Bozeman, B. (2007) Public values and public interest: Counterbalancing economic individualism. Georgetown University Press.
3. Bryson, J.M., Crosby, B.C. and Bloomberg, L. (2014) 'Public Value Governance: Moving Beyond Traditional Public Administration and the New Public Management'. Public Admin Rev, 74: 445-456.
4. Busacca & Caputo, (2019) Valutazione, apprendimento e innovazione nelle azioni di welfare territoriale. Lo SROI-Explore per i Piani Giovani in Veneto, Edizioni Ca' Foscari
5. Busch, T., Bauer, R., and Orlitzky, M. (2016) 'Sustainable Development and Financial Markets: Old Paths and New Avenues'. Business & Society, 55(3), pp. 303–329. https://doi.org/10.1177/0007650315570701

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

6. Clark, C. and Brennan, L. (2012) 'Entrepreneurship with social value: A conceptual model for performance measurement.' Acad. Entrep. J.2012,18, 17.
7. Corvo, L., Pastore, L., Mastrodascio, M. and Cepiku, D. (2022), "The social return on investment model: a systematic literature review", Meditari Accountancy Research, Vol. 30 No. 7, pp. 49-86. https://doi.org/10.1108/MEDAR-05-2021-1307
8. Corvo, L., Pastore, L., Manti, A. and Iannaci, D. (2021) 'Mapping social impact assessment models: a literature overview for a future research agenda', Sustainability, Vol. 13 No. 9, p. 4750, doi:10.3390/su13094750.
9. Dart, R. (2004) 'The legitimacy of social enterprise', Nonprofit Manag. Leadersh. 2004,14, pp. 411–424.
10. Donati, P., & Archer, M. (2015) The relational subject. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
11. Esposito, P., and Ricci, P. (2015) 'How to turn public (dis)value into new public value? Evidence from Italy' Public Money & Management, 35(3), pp. 227-231, DOI: 10.1080/09540962.2015.1027499.
12. Esteves, A.M., Franks, D.M., and Vanclay, F. (2012) 'Social impact assessment: The state of the art' Impact Assess. Proj. Apprais.2012,30, pp. 34–42.
13. Grieco, C., Michelini, L. and Iasevoli, G. (2015) 'Measuring value creation in social enterprises: A cluster analysis of social impact assessment models'.Nonprofit Volunt. Sect. Q.2015,44, pp. 1173–1193.
14. Hervieux, C. and Voltan, A. (2019), 'Toward a systems approach to social impact assessment', Social Enterprise Journal, Vol. 15 No. 2, pp. 264-286, doi:10.1108/SEJ-09-2018-0060.
15. Klemelä, J. (2016) 'Licence to operate: social return on investment as a multidimensional discursive means of legitimating organisational action',Social Enterprise Journal, Vol. 12 No. 3,pp. 387-408, doi:10.1108/SEJ-02-2015-0004.
16. Maiolini R., Rullani F., and Versari P. (2013) 'Rendere sociali le imprese. Impatto sociale, confini dell'impresa e rete di stakeholder', Impresa Sociale, 0-2013, pp. 3-20.
17. Manetti, G. (2014) 'The role of blended value accounting in the evaluation of socio-economic impact of social enterprises', Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations,Vol. 25 No. 2, pp. 443-464.
18. Mintzberg, H. (2015) Time for the plural sector. Stanford social innovation review, available at:https://mintzberg.org/sites/default/files/article/download/ssir_summer_2015_timeforthepluralsector.pdf
19. MSCI. (2011) Integrating ESG into the investment process. New York, NY: MSCI ESG Research.
20. Porter, M.E. and Kramer, M.R. (2011) 'The Big Idea: Creating Shared Value. How to reinvent capitalism—And unleash a wave of innovation and growth', Harvard Business Review 2011,89, pp. 62–77.
21. Richmond, B.J., Mook, L. and Jack, Q. (2003) 'Social accounting for nonprofits: Two models', Nonprofit Manag. Leadersh. 2003,13, pp. 308–324.
22. Sancino, A., Rees, J., and Schindele, I. (2018) 'CrossSector collaboration for public value co-creation: A critical analysis'. In From Austerity to Abundance? Permanent Link to This. pp. 59-73, document: https://doi.org/10.1108/S2045-794420180000006003.
23. Zamagni S., Venturi P., and Rago S. (2015) 'Valutare l'impatto sociale. La questione della misurazione nelle imprese sociali', Impresa Sociale, 6.2015, pp. 77-97. DOI: 10.7425/IS.2015.6.05

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)

IN LIEU OF A CONCLUSION

In 2025, the SIM programme will launch as a Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP) across five countries—Italy, Austria, Greece, Croatia, and France—catering to a diverse audience, from university students to experienced SME owners. The curriculum combines lectures, case studies, and interactive projects to address real-world challenges.

With a learner-centred, outcomes-based approach, the programme integrates theory and practice through unique activities like hackathons for co-creating innovative community engagement solutions and partnerships with local businesses to tackle regional issues. Participants will conclude the programme by presenting final projects that propose comprehensive solutions to social and environmental challenges, guided by feedback from mentors.

Graduates of the SIM programme will acquire expertise in governance, territorial analysis, stakeholder engagement, and project management for community-driven initiatives. They will also learn to assess the socio-economic impacts of their actions and align business goals with community needs. By training Social Impact Managers, the programme aims to build resilient, inclusive communities and businesses that thrive on sustainability and ethical responsibility, setting new standards for leadership in CSR and sustainability.

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. (Project no.: 101111120)