## ABOUT THE TOOL

Every purpose-led business and non-profit exists to achieve **impact**. This is central to their mission, to the value they create, and to changes they bring about for society .

Impact is expressed through **outcomes**; changes that occur in the lives of people, families, communities or the environment.

An Impact Canvas provides a powerful tool that organizations can use to quickly identify the main outcomes and impacts they aspire to, and determine what and how to measure their contribution to these.
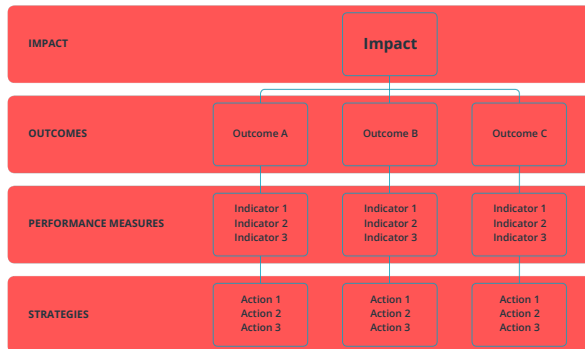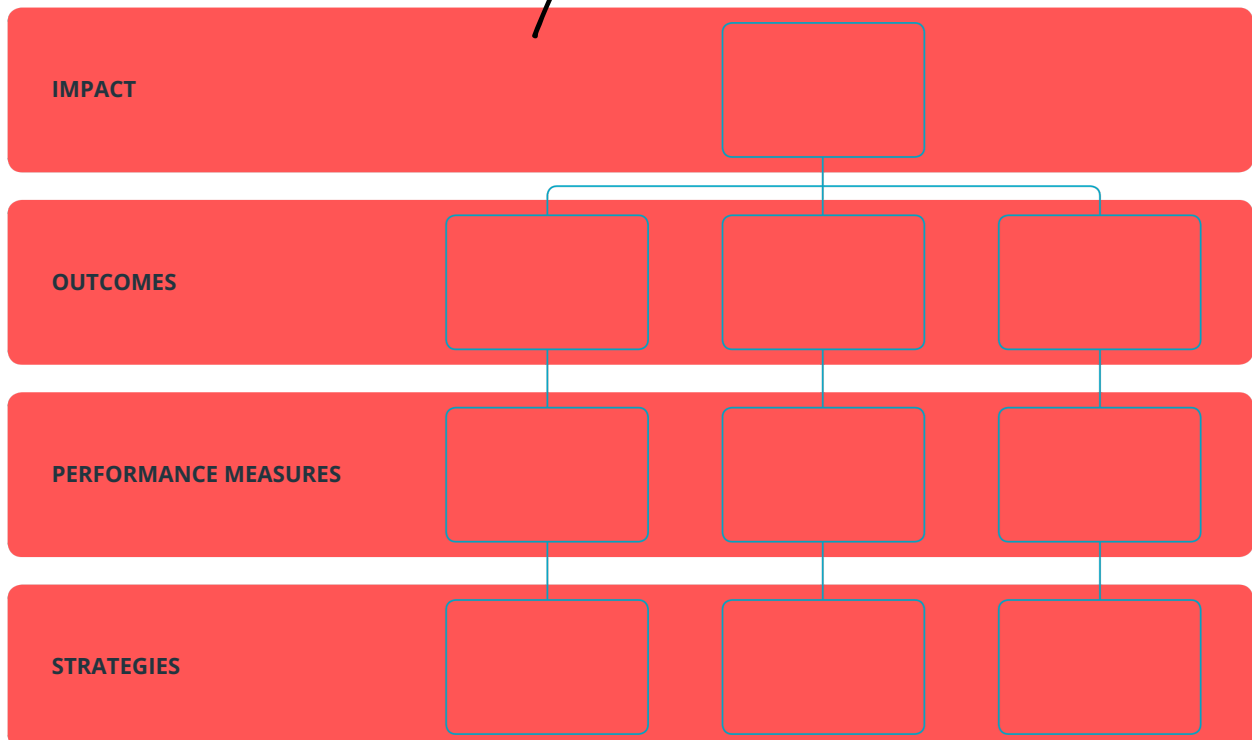

HOW TO USE IT

There are four steps to completing an Impact Canvas:

1. Start off by describing your **impact**, the end result that your organization is working towards.

2. Break down your intended impact into a number of main outcomes. Your **outcomes** are the changes or effects that are most important to achieving your intended impact.

3. Define the **performance measures** (or indicators) that will help you quantify and track progress towards your identified outcomes. Your performance measures are the results that you will measure and work towards.

4. List the **strategies** that you will employ. These are the combination of actions necessary to achieve your intended results.

Consider preparing your Impact Canvas collaboratively, by involving the people you hope will benefit from your work, the team members that will serve them, and the people or groups you are accountable to (such as funders or other key stakeholders). These different perspectives can help ensure that everyone is clear on what you want to change, how you will bring about change, and how you will measure it.

IMPACT

OUTCOMES

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

STRATEGIES

EXAMPLE

IMPACT		Children from low income communities achieve improved literacy skills	
OUTCOMES	More children in low income areas have access to books	Children's aspirations and interests in reading is increased	Literacy learning in schools is improved
PERFORMANCE MEASURES	• # of children per 100 reporting reading regularly • % change in library lending to children	• % of children reporting enjoyment of reading • post-test change in reading ability	• % of teachers with improved practices • % of schools with same or higher Inspectorate Scores
STRATEGIES	• Book vouchers • Mobile library in target areas • Family days in libraries	• Reading Bugs initiative • Reading Buddies	• Professional Development days for teachers • Teaching packs for schools

FURTHER GUIDANCE

When putting together your Impact Canvas there are a number of main considerations.

Identifying Impacts

To establish your intended impact, think about the mission of your organization, and the biggest, most broad-ranging change you are working towards.

For example, your intended impact might be to improve literacy levels among children in low income communities.

Describing Outcomes

To identify your outcomes, think about the immediate changes that are necessary if your end goal (impact) is to be realized. Taken together these will define your success.

For example, to improve literacy levels (your intended impact) you might need to: widen children's access to books; increase children's interest in reading; and improve literacy learning in schools. These are your outcomes.

You will find that a combination of two or three main outcomes are usually enough to achieve your long-term goal. The failure to achieve any one of these outcomes will mean that your impact cannot be realized.

Consider your outcomes. Are they specific about who or what you expect to change? Are they measurable in the sense that the change can be observed and counted? Are they attainable within the timeframe you have in mind? And, are they meaningful descriptions of changes that will really be valued?

Setting Performance Measures

Performance measures provide tangible signs (indicators) that you are making progress towards your intended outcomes.

Your measures should be countable, answering questions about the quantity of outcome achieved, such as **how many?, how much?** or **how often?** The measures may be an absolute level of change, a percentage, an average, a ratio, or a monetary value.

Ensure that any performance indicators you set closely reflect the changes (outcomes) you hope to measure.

For example, if your intended outcome is to encourage more children to read in a community, you might want to measure the change in attitudes to reading in the local school or the change in the number of library loans.

Selecting Strategies

When attempting to come up with strategies, think about the two or three actions that would really move the dial. Ask yourself: **what would it take to succeed?**

For example, if your performance measure is the change in library books loaned to children, you might consider introducing family days in libraries or reading groups for children.