

From Scattered to Strategic:
**A Practical Workshop on
Measuring What
Matters**



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Hi, I'm Gabe Cohen.

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What's the impact of a paintbrush?



The North Philadelphia Beacon Project © 2013 Mural Arts Philadelphia / James Burns. Photo by Steve Weinik.

The Impact of Knowing Your Impact

Prove your Impact



Drive Business and Social Value

Make a difference on the issues that matter most to your company and your community.



Substantiate Your Work

Put real numbers behind your efforts to increase trust with all stakeholders.



Tell Better Stories

Support your nonprofit partners by giving them numbers to pair with their stories.

Improve your Impact



Maximize Your Impact

Do more of what works, and fix (or exit) what doesn't.

At True Impact, we're building a social sector guided by impact-driven insights.

7,000+ NPO Programs Measured
\$1.5 trillion in nonprofit activities tracked
resulting in 314 million impacts



200+ Funders Supported
Increasing trust and improving their
decision making and storytelling



One Emerging Impact Network
Our connections with major charitable
platforms benefit nonprofits and the sector

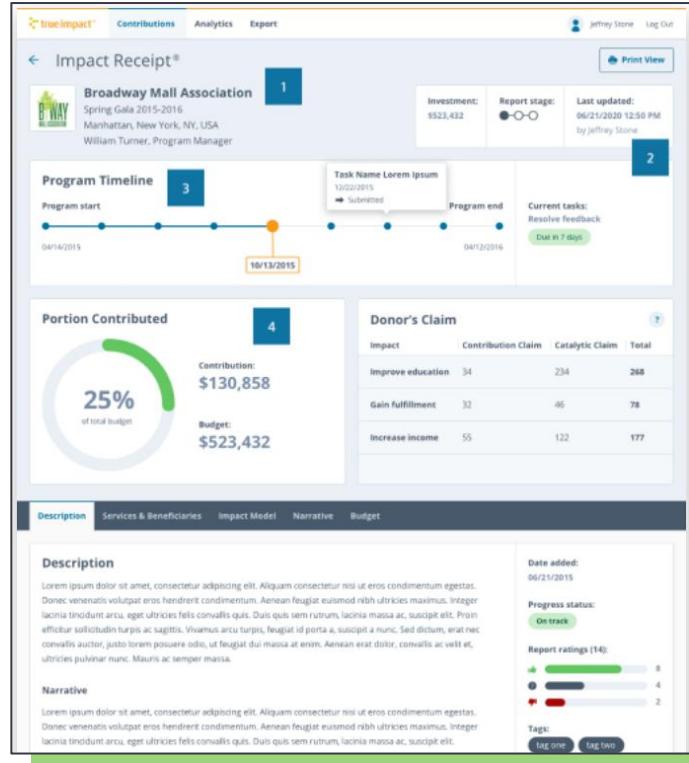


More partners to be announced in 2026

True Impact: A Purpose Built Impact Measurement Platform

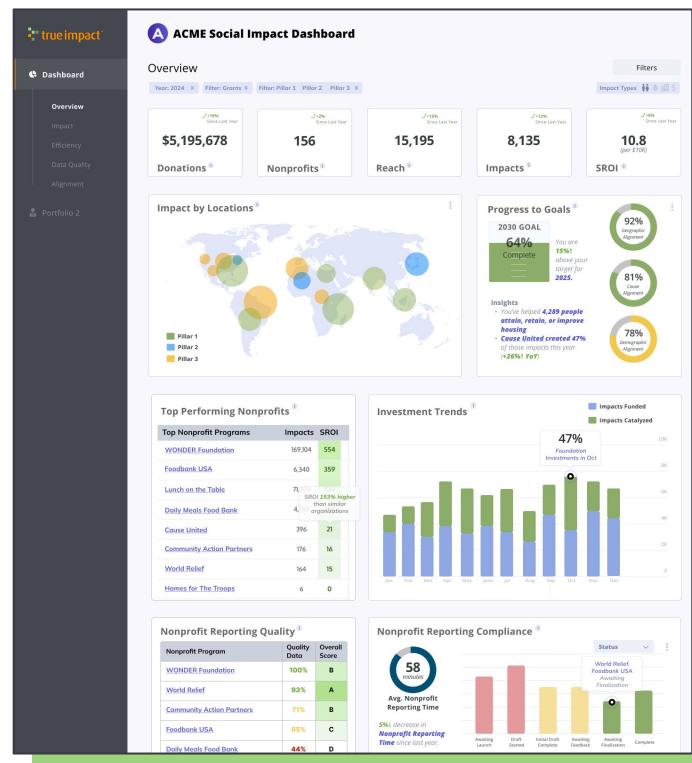
Universal Nonprofit Impact Reports

Nonprofit Program = 97 people improve health



Custom Donor Impact Dashboards

\$2M donations = 45,000 impacts



Donors and Nonprofits:

Prove Value

Attract, retain support with robust data & storytelling



Save Time

Slash administrative demands with standardized reporting



Increase ROI

Improve investment decisions with benchmarking insights

Learn more at:

■ www.trueimpact.com

Presentation Part 1

Measurement Principles

Poll: Which of the following best describes your current measurement approach?

1. We have dipped our toe into measurement but generally prioritize other other things out of necessity.
2. We focus on measuring a few important metrics and report out on some specific goals.
3. We build measurement into everything we do so so we can use the data for a variety of purposes.

Why worry about impact measurement now?

Elephant #1:
Nonprofits +
Beneficiaries

- Decreased funding
- Increased demand for services

Elephant #2:
Funders and Companies

- Limited staff and time
- Competing Board priorities

Impact measurement can bridge the gap—helping nonprofits and funders increase trust and accelerate change.



The CSR Do More Good Cycle

Get more money to your community

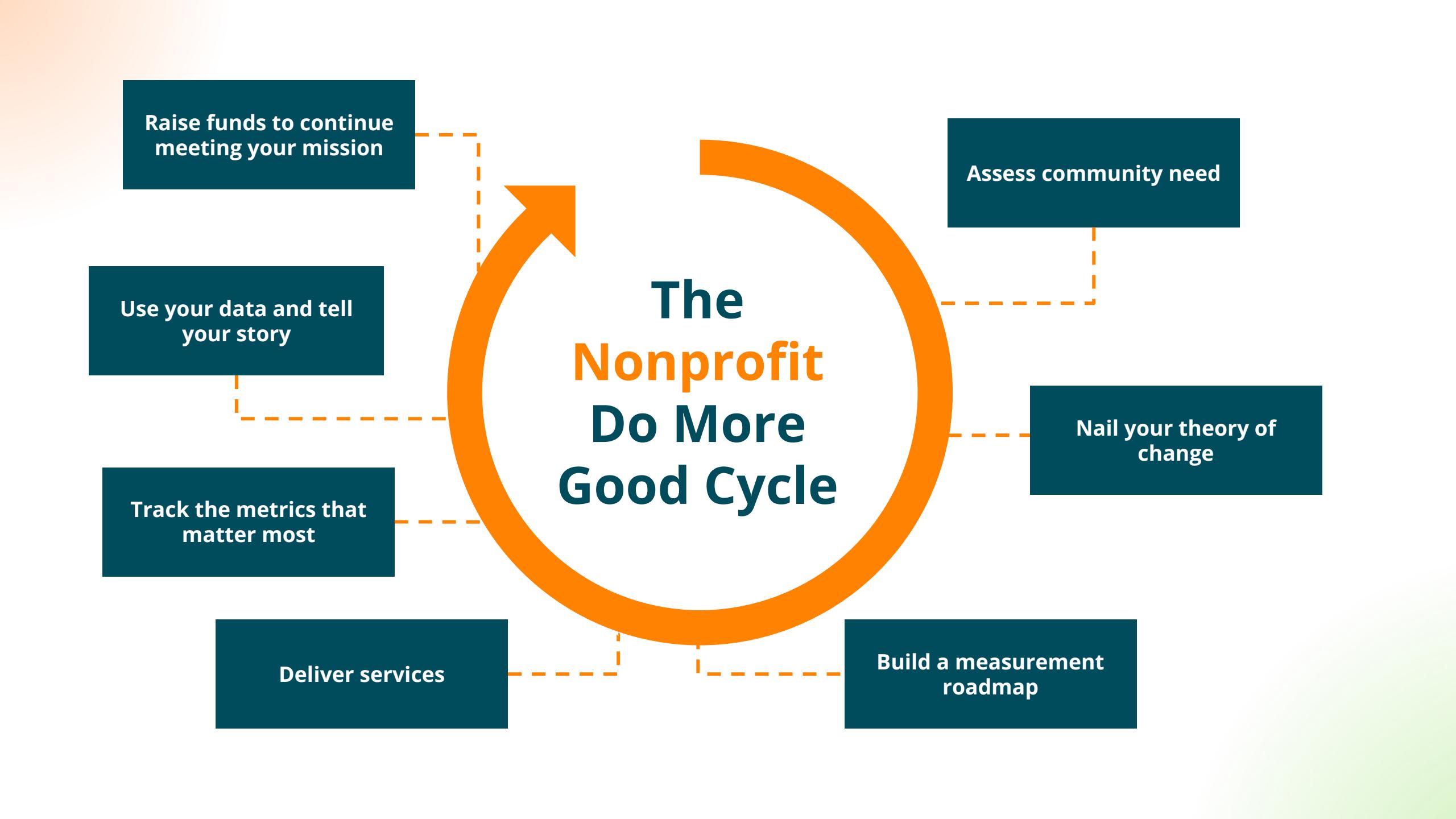
Gain the trust of your executives/ board

Tell your story,
internally

Measure your impact and confirm alignment

Get support to your nonprofit partners

Nail company <>
community alignment
(*who, what, where*)



The Nonprofit Do More Good Cycle

Raise funds to continue meeting your mission

Assess community need

Use your data and tell your story

Nail your theory of change

Track the metrics that matter most

Deliver services

Build a measurement roadmap

When it comes to impact measurement and reporting, we've also seen **what doesn't work.**

Funders

Funders requiring bespoke reports or updates on their specific portion of the program.

Evaluations/reporting requirements that lead the implementation of programs - cart leading the horse.

Funders unable to speak to their broader goals or understand the actual impact of their philanthropy.

Nonprofits

Over complication of evaluation and outcome tracking.

The **stifling of creativity** due to a funder-driven implementation requirements.

The **spin** required of NPOs to speak to the priority of their funders.



TODAY'S NORTH STAR

**How nonprofits
and funders can
work together
to tell their
collective impact
stories.**



Share a Common Language: Impact



Personal Renaissance © 2010 Mural Arts Philadelphia / James Burns. Photo by Steve Weinik.

Focus on End Outcomes, Not Process or Vanity Metrics

1

Inputs

The resources used to run a program.

Examples:

- Cash
- Staff
- Equipment
- Office space



2

Outputs

The goods or services delivered.

Examples:

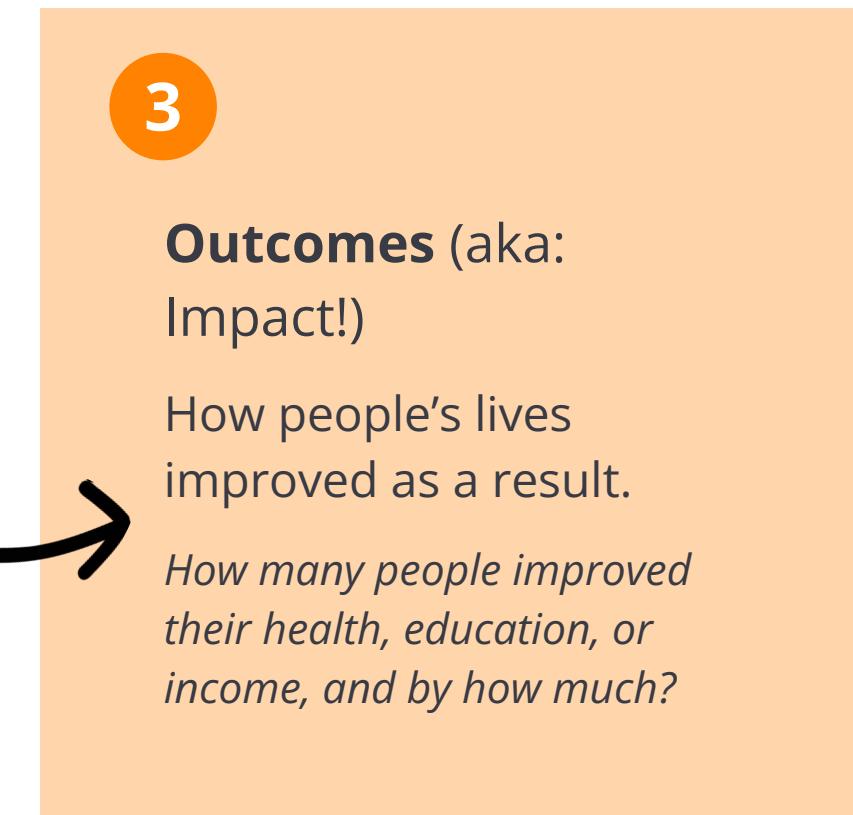
- People Reached
- Meals delivered
- Training provided

3

Outcomes (aka: Impact!)

How people's lives improved as a result.

How many people improved their health, education, or income, and by how much?



Poll: Which one is an outcome?

1. 450 trees planted by smallholder farms
2. Launching a new endowed scholarship funded
3. 93 students participate in equity and inclusion workshops

Actually...none are outcomes.

1

2

3

Input

Output

Outcome

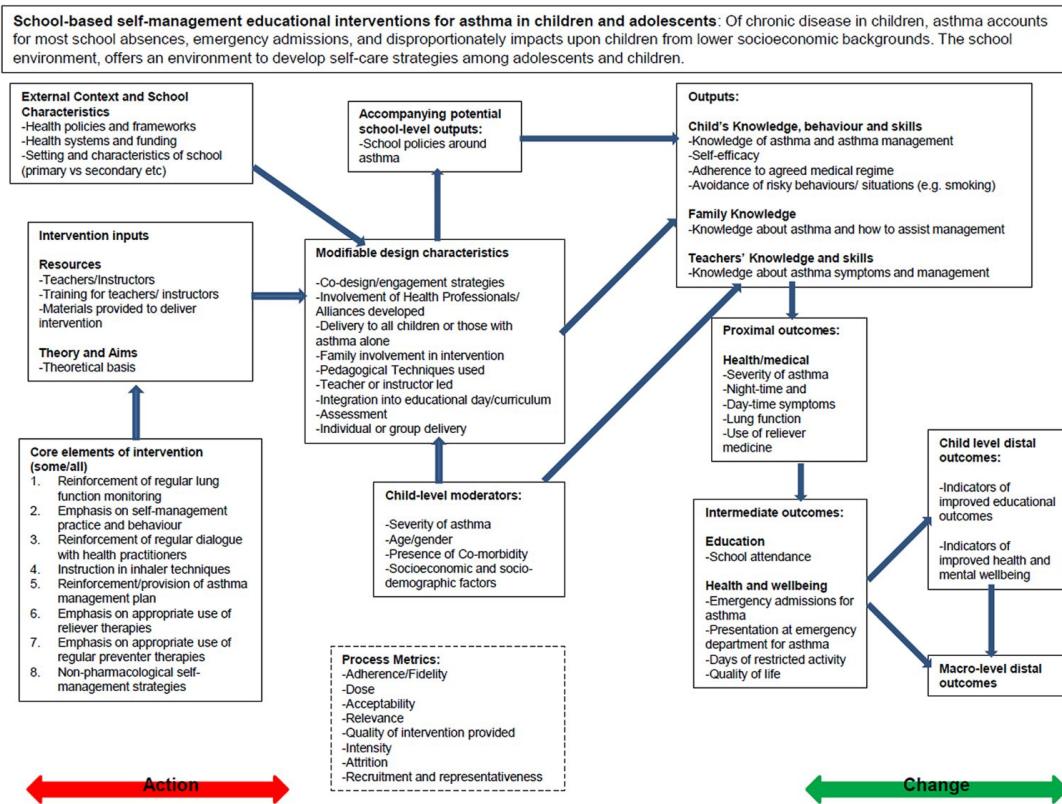
Smallholder farmers are trained in sustainable planting techniques	450 trees planted by smallholder farms	80 mt of CO2 reduced
A new endowed scholarship funded	15 first generation students receive scholarships	12 students graduate from post-secondary school
Teachers are trained in equity and inclusion best practices	93 Students participate in equity and inclusion workshops	Students report feeling safer and report fewer acts of violence



Why can't we just focus
on "people reached"?

How to Move from Inputs to Outputs: Logic Models and Elevator Rides

What People See When They Hear “Logic Model”



4 Golden Reporting Rules for Funders



Keep it Simple

- Count what counts (impact!)
- Allow grantee to tell their story, not yours



Keep it Timely

- Align reporting with the program cycle
- Provide adequate time (no surprises!)



Keep it Uniform

- Provide concise instructions with explicit definitions
- Standardize your reporting template



Keep it Supportive

- Allocate funds for capacity building
- Emphasize learning and improvement



To sum things up:
Be a good human.

5 Golden Reporting Rules for Nonprofits



1

Nail Your Theory of Change

Map how to achieve your mission by asking "and then what?"



2

Review Evidence to Strengthen Implementation

Confirm the efficacy of your strategies based on existing research



3

Build a Measurement Roadmap

Plan data collection (or use research) to track outcomes



4

Share Your Impact Story

Use "Stories and Numbers" to connect with hearts and minds



5

Start Now

No time but the present—don't get caught without it

Cross-Sector Discussion

Cross Sector Discussion

- An exercise in listening, empathy, and surfacing sector-wide insights.

Step 1

Activity Explanation

This exercise is about listening, not solving.

We'll surface:

- Your biggest measurement/reporting challenges
- What you wish partners understood

→ Start by forming mixed groups of 3–4 (nonprofit + funder).

Step 2

Individual Reflection (3 min)

→ Write 1–2 pain points about measurement/reporting.

Examples:

- Reporting too long
- Missing data
- Too many portals
- Hard to translate stories to outcomes
- Lack of feedback
- Misaligned KPIs

Step 3

Small-Group Discussion (5-7 min)

- Step A: Share your top challenge.
- Step B: Cross-Sector Recommendations:
 - What should cross-sector partners do differently? What do you wish they understood?

Step 4

Large-Group Share Out (5-7 min)

1. Biggest Pain Points
2. Cross-Sector Recommendations

Questions to consider:

- What's universal?
- Where perspectives differ?
- What's most actionable?

Step 5

Facilitator Synthesis

Presentation Part 2

Putting Principles Into Practice

Nonprofit Best Practices



The NPO Do More Good Cycle

Raise funds to meet your mission

Use your data and tell your story

Track the metrics that matter most

Deliver services

Assess community need

Nail your theory of change

Build a measurement roadmap

Incorporate Evidence into Your Program Design

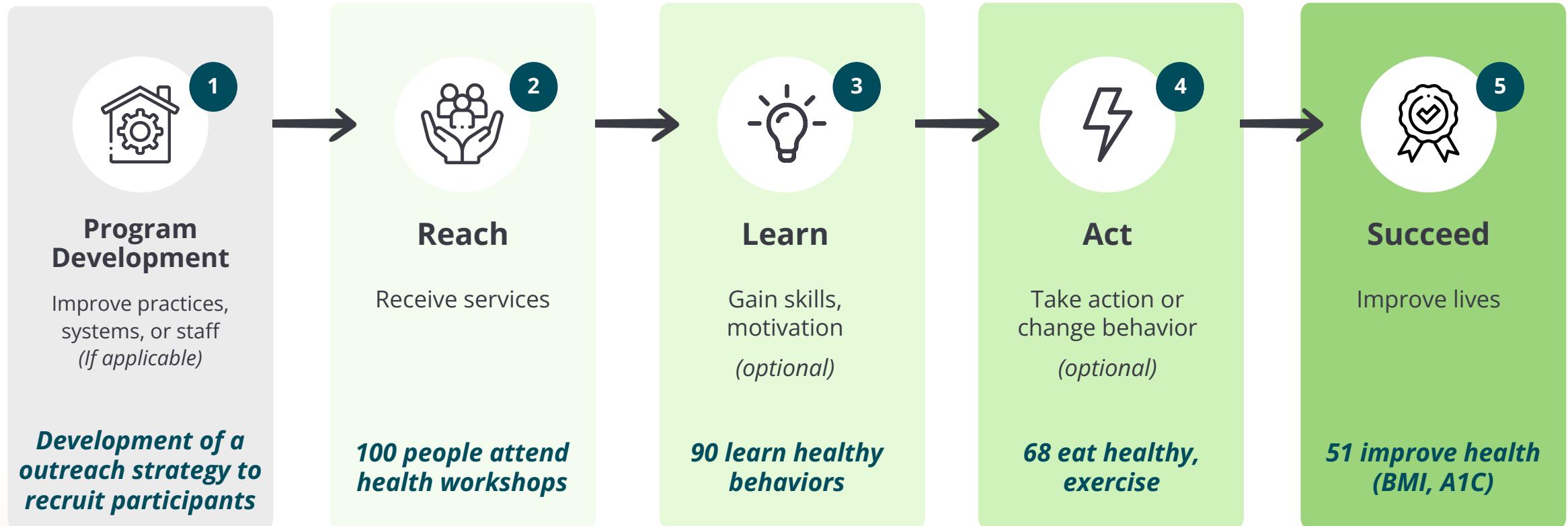
1. **Review evidence informed strategies** with your program's focus, intervention, and impact in mind
 trueimpact.com/nonprofitresources
2. **Consider the strength of the evidence**
 - a. Are the findings based on opinions of experts, a single study, or multiple studies?
 - b. Has the strategy been evaluated by someone other than those who developed the strategy?
3. **Revise your implementation plan** to incorporate evidence-informed strategies
4. **Identify areas where existing research** might supplement direct data collection



The Color of Your Voice by Keir Johnston & Ernel Martinez.
Photo by Steve Weinik.

Remember the elevator ride...

Use a Five Step Logic Model



The NPO Do More Good Cycle

Raise funds to meet your mission

Assess community need

Use your data and tell your story

Nail your theory of change

Track the metrics that matter most

Deliver services

Build a measurement roadmap

Think about The Impact Continuum

Find the sweet spot between unimportant and impractical.



Ensure You Can Trust Your Data

Results are either sufficiently rigorous for reporting or decision making or an opportunity for improving nonprofit capacity.

Guess **Speculation**



- Logical assumptions based on experience

Evidence-Based **Estimation**



- Sampling, piloting
- Previous results
- External studies

Evidence-Based **Direct Measurement**



- Randomized controlled trial (scientific confirmation)
- Compare participants to similar population not receiving services
- Systematic outcome tracking

More rigorous and valuable

Youth Tutoring Example



Reach

How many people received services?



Learn

How many gained skills, motivation?



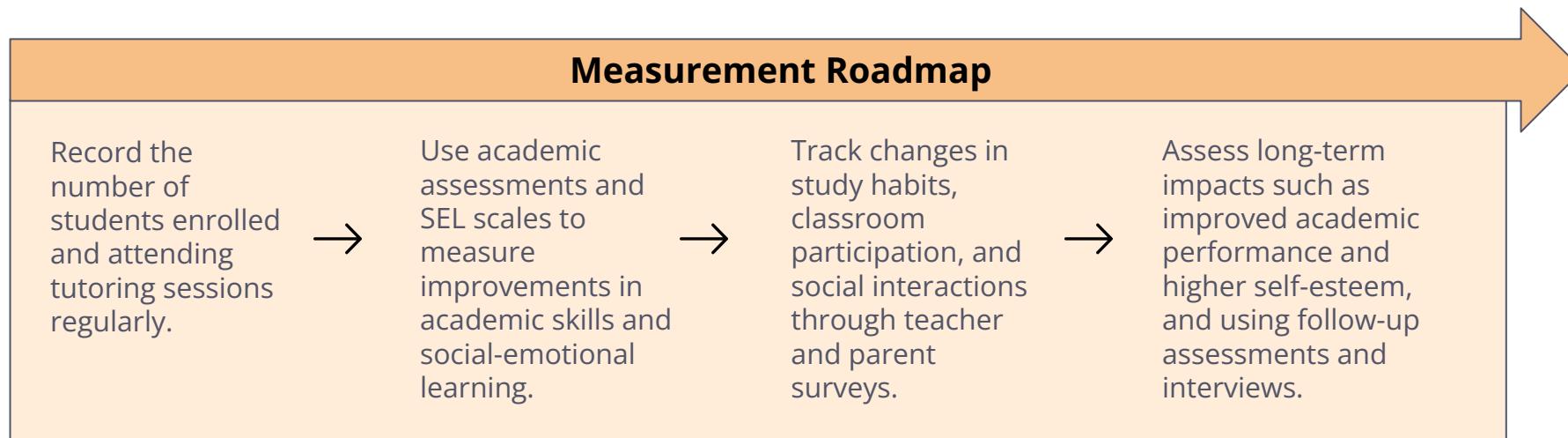
Act

How many took action or changed behavior?



Succeed

How many improved their lives?



Quick Links



True Impact's Top 5 Data Collection Best Practices



Helping the helpers: how to measure the impact of nonprofit and intermediary support work

Impact Measurement Resources for Nonprofits

Simple Ways to Kickstart Your Impact Measurement

The NPO Do More Good Cycle



Recommended Data Collection Strategies

Integrate into initial program planning	→	Creates a shared language internally
Leverage existing strengths or assets	→	Builds on what you are already doing well
Embed in existing systems	→	Highest quality data / least effort
Integrate into grant applications	→	Increases alignment, promotes transparency
Share the purpose, scope, and benefits of data collection to your stakeholders	→	Promotes transparency and clarifies the intended use of the data
Avoid collecting sensitive or unnecessary data	→	Reduces burden and maintains privacy

A woman with blonde hair, wearing a high-visibility orange and yellow safety vest, is smiling broadly while holding a small plant in her gloved hands. She is outdoors in a dirt area, possibly a construction or landscaping site. In the background, other people wearing safety vests are visible. The image has a faint, semi-transparent green overlay with a grid of nine green squares.

Funder Best Practices

What we will cover today

How to work best with your nonprofits in three phases of work:

- 1 **Prior to Reporting**
- 2 **During Reporting**
- 3 **Post-Reporting**

FUNDERS - PHASE 1

Before
Reporting
Begins

Know your Who, What, and Where and then trust the experts (nonprofits) to figure out the How.



Who do you want to help?

- Ethnic/racial groups
- Age group
- Gender
- Socioeconomic status
- Occupation



What ways do you want to help them?

- Issues
- UN SDGs
- Specific outcomes



Where do you want to focus your support?

- Market
- Continent
- Country
- Operating region
- Site/facility

Your goal is to know the problem you want to address, not the solution to that problem.

Your partners are best positioned to offer potential solutions

Start the conversation about impact **as early as possible.**

This could be during the
grant application process or
immediately upon award.

Why ask *before* the work is done?

- Asking early confirms alignment (who, what, where)
- Opens the door to capacity building conversations BEFORE the work is complete
- You get forecasted impacts for reporting and accountability

Start with a conversation.



- Explain why you are prioritizing impact
- Discuss roles, responsibilities, and timing
- Explain the benefits to THEM of reporting impact
- Make space for input and questions from the nonprofit, aim to understand their reporting needs and challenges
- Offer constructive feedback to highlight strengths and suggest improvements

If done well:

Impact Measurement  **Trust Based Philanthropy**

Other Ways to Be Thoughtful with the Timing of Your Asks

- Be up front with reporting requirements
- Provide adequate time for reporting (no surprises!)
 - *and this one is important -*
- Align reporting expectations with the program cycle for more accurate reporting



Personal Renaissance by James Burns. Completed 2010.
Photo by Mustafah Abdulaziz.

FUNDERS - PHASE 2

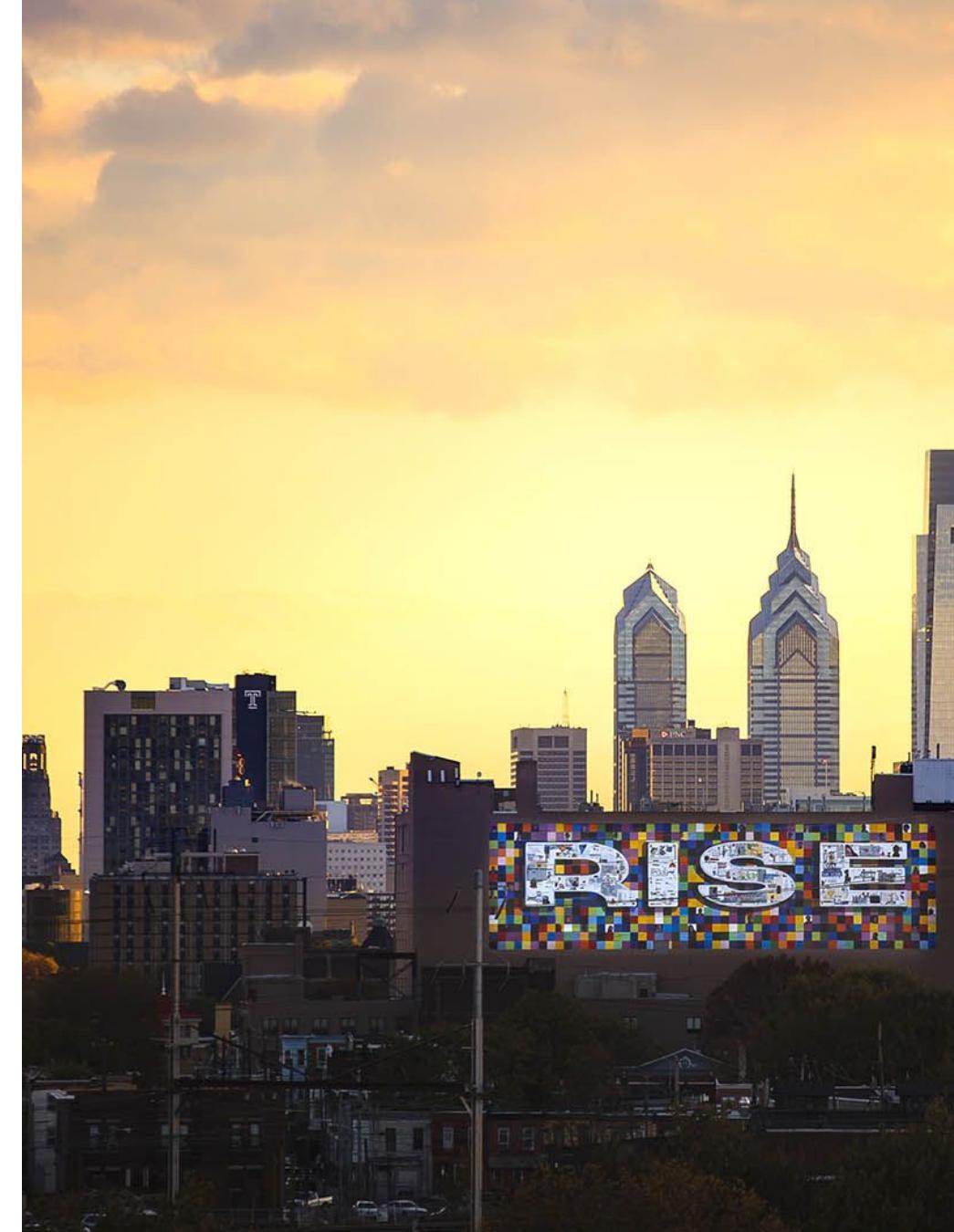
During
Reporting

Ask for the Nonprofit's Whole Story, Not Just the Part You Funded

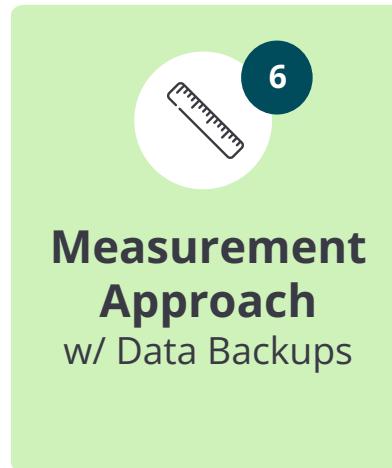
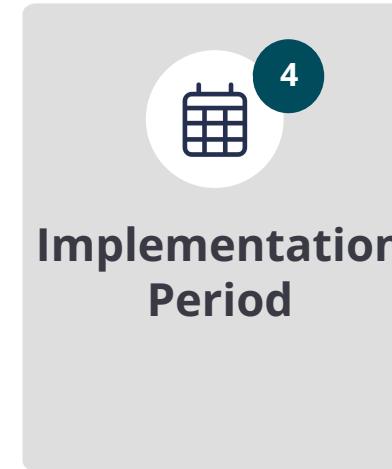
Allow your grantee to report out on the full impact of their program, not just the amount you funded.

Focus on the art not the paint brushes.

This empowers your nonprofit with a comprehensive impact report and allows us to get closer to a **universal reporting framework**.



Standardize Your **Impact** Reporting Template



Resources
No need to write these down, you can find them here:
trueimpact.com/funderresources

Review what you are asking of nonprofits and follow this rule:

If you ask for something that you don't use for a specific reason, stop asking for it!



**Stay focused
on your
common
language:
Impact and go
on “an elevator
ride” with your
nonprofit
partners.**

Youth Tutoring Example



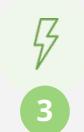
Reach

How many people received services?



Learn

How many gained skills, motivation?



Act

How many took action or changed behavior?



Succeed

How many improved their lives?

Measurement Roadmap

Record the number of students enrolled and attending tutoring sessions regularly.



Use academic assessments and SEL scales to measure improvements in academic skills and social-emotional learning.



Track changes in study habits, classroom participation, and social interactions through teacher and parent surveys.



Assess long-term impacts such as improved academic performance and higher self-esteem, and using follow-up assessments and interviews.

The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly of Claiming Impact

The Bad

underclaiming impact

Funders not claiming any impact because they are worried about taking credit for nonprofit's hard work.



The Good

just right

Funders claiming an appropriate amount of impact and sharing the stories of their nonprofits (a win, win!)



The Ugly

overclaiming impact

Funders claiming to entire impact of any organization they fund, no matter how much they contributed.



Takeaway

If you are claiming all of the impacts of all of your nonprofit partners, STOP THIS NOW!



Keep It Simple with a Contribution Claim

Percent Funded = Percent Claimed

Program's Impact

How many people's lives were improved?



Your Contribution

You funded 50% of the program



Contribution Claim

50 % funded = 50% claim (most common)



Three Metrics to Determine Your Claim of Impact

Overall Program Impact

(The nonprofit helped 300 people improve their health)



Your Contribution

(\$1 million)

Total Program Cost

(\$3 million)



Your Claim

(you helped 100 people improve their health)

Maximize Your Investment with Catalytic Funding

More substantial, targeted donations may create social ripple effects, creating additional impact beyond those impacts you are directly funding.

How to Be Catalytic

- Support programs in a “foundational” capacity (*as determined by the nonprofit*)
- Serve as a “seed funder” and attract other donors
- Fund a new program or model that is then replicated in the future
- Increase the capacity of an organization that results in a sustained and defined net gain in impact



Catalytic Claims

Sometimes Your Impact Goes Further

Program's Impact

How many people's lives were improved?

Your Contribution

You funded 50% of the program

Contribution Claim

50 % funded = 50% claim (most common)

Catalytic Claim

Only applicable if you activated additional indirect gains



Always Make Sure You Can Trust Your Data

Trustworthy Data

- Accurate
- Verifiable
- Robust
- Standard
- Well designed



3 Questions to Get Trustworthy Data

- What is your definition of success (impact)?
- How much impact did you create?
- How do you know?

Takeaway

Create chains of evidence- “receipts” of your impact – that will hold up to auditing, comms, and legal teams.

PHASE 3

Post- Reporting

Four KPIs to Guide Strategic Management and Reporting



1. Impact

How much are you improving people's lives and wellbeing?



Take Action to Improve

Share your impact with internal and external stakeholders to get the credit you deserve



2. Alignment

Does it match your goals?



Target resources to better aligned causes, demographics, and geographies



3. Efficiency

Are you doing it well?



Benchmark similar programs to learn what works best and share results across all grantees



4. Data Quality

Can you trust the data?



Improve data quality to strengthen insights and increase trust between you, your nonprofits, and your stakeholders

Have Measurement Focused Meetings with Your Grantees

Post-reporting conversations can be a great way to foster a culture of continuous learning and improvement.

Use them to:

- Increase open, transparent communication
- Align on goals
- Evaluate progress
- Address challenges
- Explore opportunities for growth
- Build a supportive and trust-based relationship.



The image shows a slide titled "Social Impact Measurement Discussion Guide for Dow Relationship Managers". The slide is divided into three main sections: "Step 1", "Step 2", and "Step 3".

- Step 1:** "Review grantee's Social Impact Forecast prior to meeting". This section includes a brief guide on how to interpret a Social Impact Forecast and a link to "to-understanding-a-social-impact-forecast".
- Step 2:** "Invite your grantee to a conversation to discuss their programmatic goals and measurement plans". This section includes a list of steps:
 - In your grantee meeting invitation, note that Dow is focused on the social impact of their grants and would like to better understand the grantees' goals, metrics of success, and measurement plans to track progress towards those goals.
 - Set context for the discussion by framing the discussion in terms of Dow's desire to develop a shared understanding of outcomes and identify opportunities for learning.
 - Explain that the goal is to cultivate a learning-focused environment where grantees feel comfortable sharing both successes and challenges, fostering a culture of continuous improvement.
- Step 3:** "Hold a measurement-focused discussion with the grantee re: their Social Impact Forecast". This section includes a list of steps:
 - Invite the grantee to present their forecasted social impacts.
 - Encourage them to share their vision for the future and the expected outcomes.
 - Ensure that there is a shared understanding of the forecasted impacts and goals for the upcoming period.
 - Ask the grantee to describe their measurement plans and explore any challenges or gaps re: those measurement plans.
 - Identify areas where additional Dow resources, guidance, or partnership could be beneficial.

The slide is titled "Global Citizenship" and features the Dow logo. A "General Business" section is also visible at the bottom right.

Invest in Capacity Building

- **Allocate funds for capacity building** (or contribute expertise) to strengthen your grantees' ability to deliver services more effectively - systems change leads to sustained impact.
- **Emphasize learning and improvement** by reflecting on results and sharing best practices.
- **Meet with your partners to help them** utilize this new resource and improve their future impacts.



It Has to be From Here, Forgotten But Unshaken by Betsy Casañas.
Photo by Steve Weinik.

For everyone

Tell your story



Proper Data-Driven Storytelling

No stories without numbers, and no numbers without stories.



How to Tell Your Story To Do More Good

(Funders and Nonprofits)

Get more resources, and more autonomy, to do more good!

Share Your Story, Internally

Reach new stakeholders and build their trust

Focus on your shared language: Impact

Share Your Story. Externally.

Build trust through alignment with company goals, donor priorities, community needs

Takeaway

Once you've built a confident foundation internally, move to targeted external impact-based storytelling.

Take Home Activities



← If you
need help!

Funder Stakeholder Matrix

Have Questions?
We're here to help →
trueimpact.com



Role	Priorities/Needs	Data Needed	How Often	Measurement Plan	Who is responsible for meeting this stakeholder need?
CSR Team					
CSR Team Leader					
ESG Team					
Other C-Suite Leader					
Board					
Marketing					
Partners					



Nonprofit Stakeholder Matrix

Have Questions?
We're here to help →
trueimpact.com



Role	Priorities/Needs	Data Needed	How Often	Measurement Plan	Who is responsible for meeting this stakeholder need?
Program Team					
Program Director					
Marketing and Development Team					
Funders					
Board					
Community Partners					

Nonprofit Logic Model Guide

Have Questions?
We're here to help →
trueimpact.com



	Program Dev. <i>(Ways in which our program is strengthened)</i>	Reach <i>(Those who are engaged)</i>	Learn <i>(Those who gain knowledge, skills, motivation)</i>	Act <i>(Those who take action based on their learning)</i>	Succeed <i>(How lives are improved or contributions to society)</i>
What does success look like at each stage? A few things to keep in mind: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consider what your “success threshold” is for each stage of the logic model.• Consider the different indicators of success for each stage.• Consider who is shaping that success threshold - your stakeholder matrix could help with this.• Consider your community needs and organization mission.					



Nonprofit Measurement Roadmap

Have Questions?
We're here to help →
trueimpact.com



	Program Dev. <i>(Ways in which our program is strengthened)</i>	Reach <i>(Those who are engaged)</i>	Learn <i>(Those who gain knowledge, skills, motivation)</i>	Act <i>(Those who take action based on their learning)</i>	Succeed <i>(How lives are improved or contributions to society)</i>
Indicators of success					
How are you currently tracking this indicator? If not, what tracking strategies could be put in place?					
How can you increase data quality?					
What are next steps and who should be involved?					

Measuring Corporate Social Impact

Recommendations
for Better
Partnerships
and Reporting



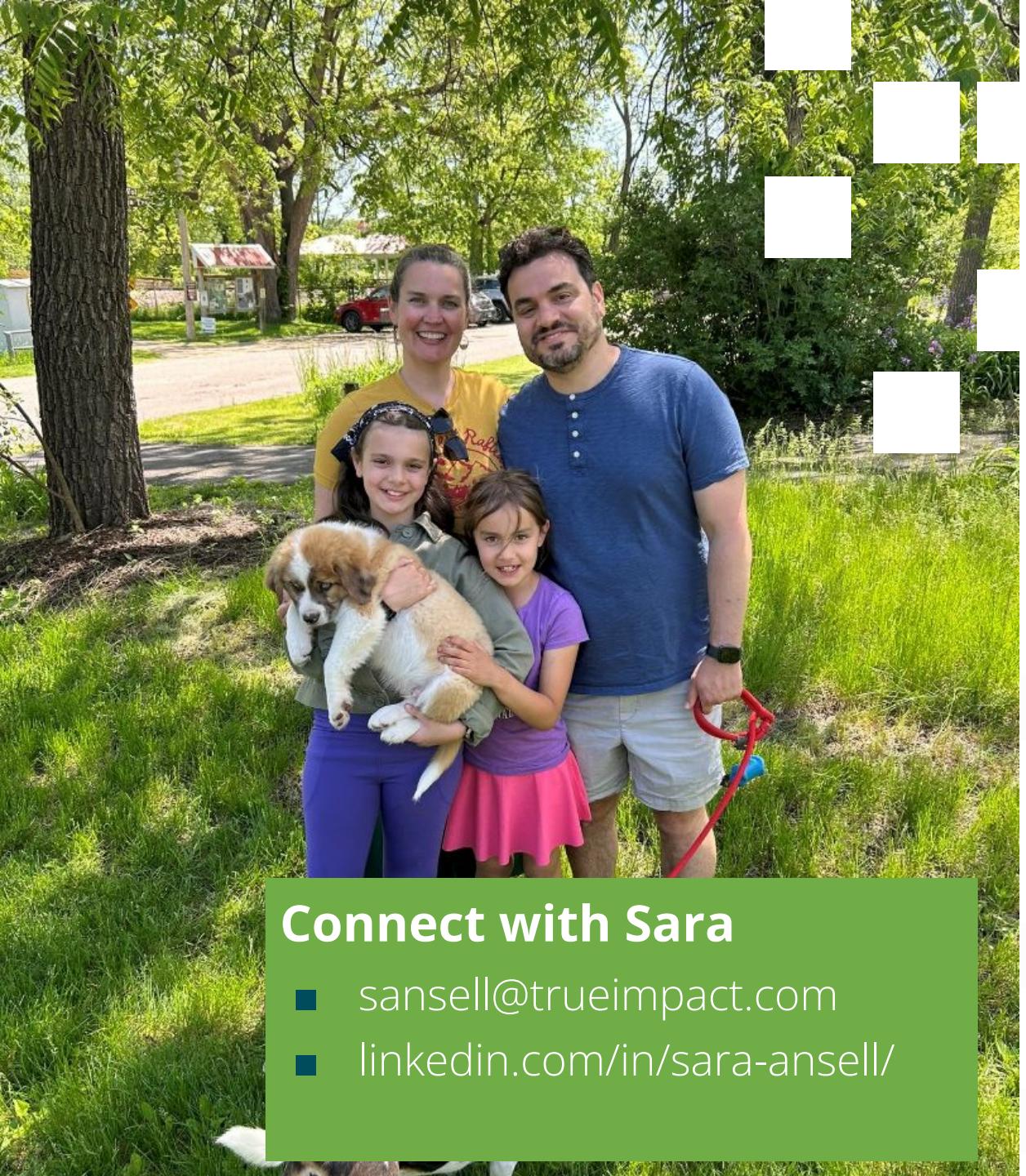
A practical toolkit, designed with decades of experience across two flagship organizations, to help you measure and maximize your impact.

Download today:
trueimpact.com/toolkit

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