

Sustained Impact Diagnostic

(Beta version)

Developed for visionary charities
and social enterprises by
Emma Insley



Sustained Impact Diagnostic

Congratulations!

You made a smart move in downloading this diagnostic tool. Now you can make great progress towards getting your project fully funded and achieving a sustained impact.



My name is Emma Insley, Director of Insley Consulting. We help visionary charities and social enterprises ensure their big ideas have a sustained impact. I have 20+ years' experience working in and with the voluntary sector as a former CEO, Fundraiser, Grants Assessor, Trustee and Consultant. I have assessed dozens of grant applications for BBC Children in Need, and as CEO I turned around two charities from near-insolvency to a sustained surplus.

For the last decade I have worked as a consultant to charities and social enterprises and have found that if they have been unsuccessful with securing funding and/or developing their services in a sustainable way, there are some key elements that are missing from their approach.

I have therefore developed this *Sustained Impact Diagnostic* to help charities and social enterprises self-assess their likelihood of securing income for projects and services and achieving a sustained impact.

Progressing through the diagnostic should help you identify the steps needed to maximise the opportunity to generate sustainable income, focus on the things that make the biggest difference and change lives.

Don't worry if you find that there are lots of gaps or you start to find the questions overwhelming. **Make a realistic assessment of where you are, identify the top three things you need to work on, then drop me an email with your top three priorities.** I'll help you to come up with a plan to strengthen your sustained impact.

Do can get in touch with me with any comments or questions at emma@insleyconsulting.com and don't forget to let me know your top three actions.

“The Sustained Impact Diagnostic gave us a really clear and quick overview of what is needed to make our proposition more compelling to funders. It was a great tool to focus our time on getting our life-changing projects fully funded.”

KIRAN GILL, FOUNDER, THE DIFFERENCE

THE TRADITIONAL MODEL

When working with third sector organisations I have noticed that the squeeze on funding and increased demand for services has led to an increased focus on 'more'. I frequently see a push for MORE income to deliver MORE activities to MORE people.

It is exhausting and relentless and can lead to disengaged funders, an unfocused team at risk of burnout, and unsupported beneficiaries.

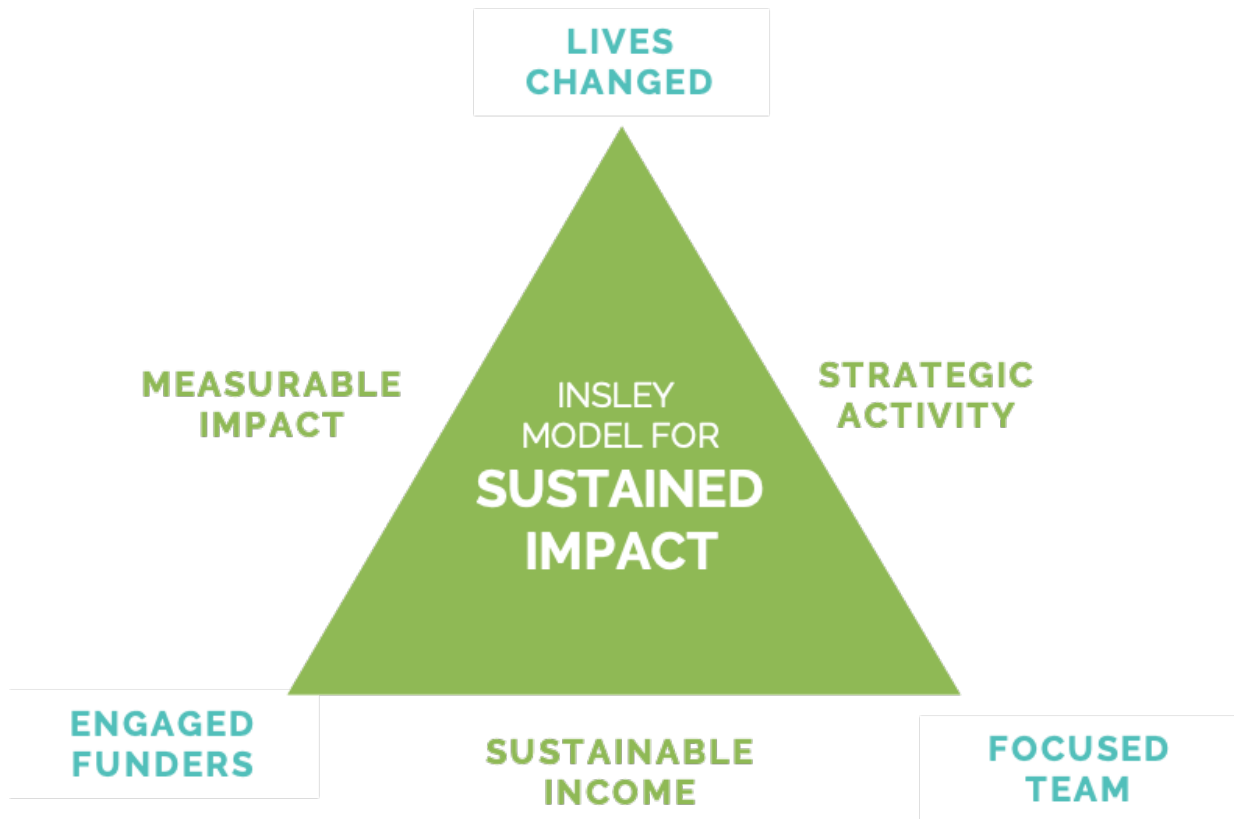


Without the right foundations everything can come crashing down.



WHAT IT TAKES TO ACHIEVE A SUSTAINED IMPACT

A more sustainable approach is to ensure that your income, activities and impact are aligned.



Your charity or social enterprise will achieve a sustained impact if you have:

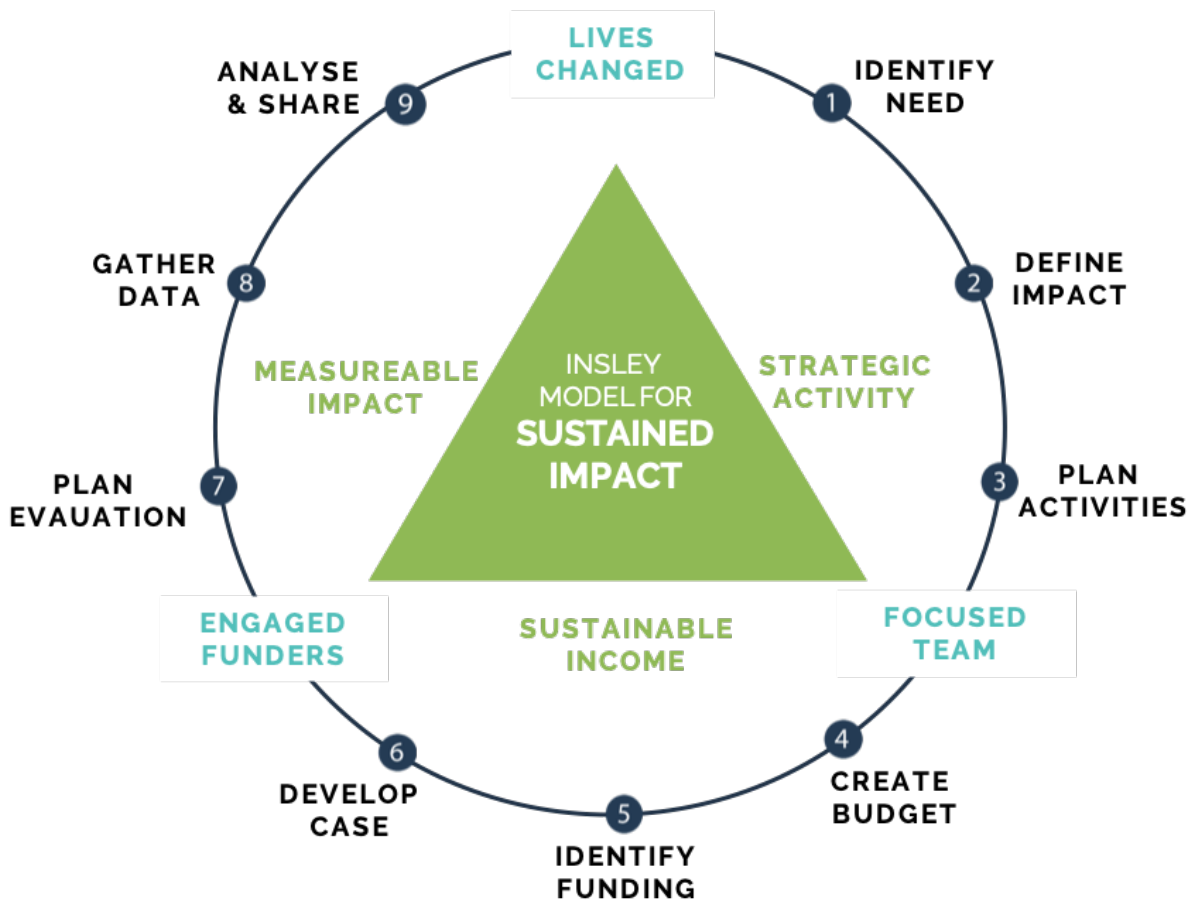
- **Effectively planned your activities** based on evidence of need and defined the impact you want to achieve.
- Generated **sustainable income** from a diverse range of sources to sustain your work.
- Developed systems to **measure your impact**, and then learn from this data to change lives and the communities you work in.

Having these three things in alignment is the key to:

- ✓ **Focusing your team** on the things that make the biggest difference.
- ✓ **Engaging funders** and securing the funding you need to sustain your service.
- ✓ **Changing lives** and the communities that you work in.

YOUR SUSTAINED IMPACT

We have identified nine steps to achieve a sustained impact, illustrated in the model below:



Strategic activity

'Strategic' needn't be a daunting concept. It is simply about planning activities based on evidence of need, the impact and outcomes you want to achieve and the resources available (and showing that you have done this, within funding applications).

Sustainable income

Sustainable income is sufficient to deliver activities, whilst being diverse, regular and reliable to support organisational stability. It starts with developing a budget, planning who to approach, knowing how your project will continue after funding has ended, and then developing a compelling case or proposition to inspire funders.

Measurable impact

To be able to measure your impact you need to plan your evaluation by identifying what you are measuring and how, then start gathering your data, and analyse it to report to funders and improve services.

HOW TO USE THE DIAGNOSTIC

Print this document and answer each question about the project or service that you are seeking funding for. If you have more than one project or service you can complete it as many times as you need, to see how the evidence stacks up for each. Write down your notes or actions you may need to take to strengthen your sustained impact.

Let's get to it!

QUESTIONS	Yes	No	Don't know	NOTES/ACTIONS
STRATEGIC ACTIVITY				
Identify need				
1. Have you identified the group(s) of people that you want to reach through your project or service?				
2. Have you found out the problems that they face, the underlying causes, and the help that they need to overcome these problems?				
Define your impact				
3. Have you defined the impact or ultimate goal of your project/service (the long-term change that will be achieved for individuals, communities and/or society)?				
4. Have you defined your project's outcomes (the shorter-term changes to be achieved by individuals)?				
Plan activities				
5. Can you refer to external research about what works to bring about the change you want to see? And have you found out about other organisations who may be delivering similar work, to draw on best practice?				
6. Have you consulted with potential beneficiaries to help plan and develop activities?				
SUSTAINABLE INCOME				
Create a budget				
7. Have you developed a fully costed budget for your project, to include an allocation of organisational overheads?				
Identify funding				
8. Have you identified the general mix of fundraising, grants, gifts, contracts, earned and other income needed to fund activities?				

QUESTIONS	Yes	No	Don't know	NOTES/ACTIONS
9. Is the (planned) blend of income sufficiently diverse to avoid an over-reliance on any one source of funding?				
10. Have you identified the specific funders to approach?				
11. Have you detailed your plans for how and when you will generate income in a fundraising strategy or business plan?				
Develop your case				
12. Have you developed an inspiring Case for Support or template funding application?				
MEASURABLE IMPACT				
Evaluation plan				
13. Have you articulated how change will happen within a Theory of Change or Logic Framework, to illustrate the links between the activities you will be delivering and the anticipated outcomes?				
14. Have you considered how you will capture the following types of data (as relevant): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Background of beneficiaries ○ The number of people who access the service ○ Outcomes achieved ○ User feedback ○ Stories of lives changed ○ Impact on wider society or long-term goal 				
15. Have you developed an Evaluation Framework to show what you will measure, how, when and who will be responsible?				
Gather data				
16. Have you developed the tools (e.g. surveys, observation records, interviews etc.) to measure outcomes?				
Analyse and share				
17. Do you analyse, review and compare your findings to identify what has gone well and how to improve your service?				
18. Do you inform and inspire funders/donors with evidence of your impact and stories of lives changed?				

RESULTS

Review your answers to identify the areas you need to work on. Generally speaking, the higher value the funding application, the more questions you need to answer with 'yes'. If you answered 'don't know' it is a good idea to speak to colleagues to get a definitive answer (some of my clients have got very interesting results from completing the diagnostic during a team meeting!). Work with your colleagues to plan how you can turn each 'no' into a 'yes'.

Next, write down the top three actions you are going to take to maximise your potential for getting your projects fully funded and achieving a sustained impact.

1.
2.
3.

Now drop me an email at emma@insleyconsulting.com to let me know what your three priorities are, and I'll help you come up with a plan to achieve a sustained impact.

CONTACT

At Insley Consulting, our vision is that charities and social enterprises have the clarity and evidence they need to ensure their big ideas have a sustained impact. So, if your third sector organisation could benefit from some fresh insights or you'd like help completing this assessment, do get in touch.



Emma Insley is the founder of Insley Consulting, which helps visionary charities and social enterprises ensure their big ideas have a sustained impact.

For more information about our services, please visit www.insleyconsulting.com or email emma@insleyconsulting.com.

