AccessEd: Researcher Development Programme
Researcher Engagement and Reflection Log

Workshop: Preparing for Social Impact

Outline

This worksheet is designed for you to reflect on the key learning steps from the training workshop you attended and think about workshop learning outcomes in line with your learning portfolio.

We encourage you to make a note of your responses in a word document or otherwise, ensuring your record your reflections and consider what legacy this will have after the training has finished.

Consider the following actions that you might take in relation to this workshop engagement and reflection log:

- ✔ Consider sharing your reflections with your peers – Commonwealth Scholars and others
- ✔ How can you best record your notes and reflections to best suit your own individual style of learning?
- ✔ How might you use reflections from this worksheet log in the future to contribute towards learning in other workshops?

A. Self-reflection: Skills development

1. Rate your confidence in the following skills for success in Development, which were covered during the workshop. Rate the skills from 1-5 (1 = least confident, 5 = most confident):

	Time management during your degree
	Analysing and mapping how your research matches wider policy needs
	Functional understanding of the cause you are working towards
	Excellent writing skills
	Evaluation analysis and monitoring skills
	Short-term planning: being able to project manage to immediate goals
	Long-term planning: being able to map required actions and milestones for future
	Networking with stakeholders and organisations in your field
	Total (max: 45)

2. Below is a list of typical areas of expertise for researchers who excel at contributing to the impact of their field, all of which we touched on during training.

   Rate your perceived expertise in the following areas. This is helpful in understanding what further training opportunities you could pursue (1 = no expertise, 5 = high expertise):

	Strategic planning and policy
	Programme design (practical implementation of research)
	Monitoring and Evaluation
	Networking
	Capacity building
	Public Engagement
	Fundraising
	Total (max: 35)

3. What was your biggest learning takeaway from the workshop?

4. How will you apply what you have learnt today to your research/studies, and how does it complement your learning portfolio?

5. What is one commitment you will make to building one of the skills introduced as part of the Impact Planning training?

E.g.

Skill: *Networking*

Action: *Starting to build and track my network with those in my field, with peers, major institutions, and/or public so I am able to enact my strategic impact plan (e.g. gaining a role at a major NGO; attracting funding). Note where there are network gaps, and make concerted efforts to fill those.*

Skill:

Action:

B. Self-reflection: Learning in relation to International Development

6. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):

    a. Which SDG and sub-goal does will your work *best* help target? *Focus on no more than one SDG where you believe the common stakeholders of this area of work would find your research *most* useful and potentially enable to change policy or outcomes.*

    b. What have you learnt about how the SDGs relate to your own research?

7. What have you learned about the role of strategic planning that will help you better

consider your impact in your area of study?

8. Impact Research Creation: from the 4 methods of creating research impact covered in training, write a short sentence on one specific action you can take for each to see that you are able to have this type of impact (Refer to slide 16 in the presentation for definitions).

Responsive Impact	
Proactive nurtured Impact	
Reputational Impact	
Passive Impact	

9. During this session we discussed the importance of recognising the different type of impact you want to have so you can successfully plan for it.

    a. Name two specific (achievable by you, measurable) impacts you would like to have in your field through your research? Name one short term, one long term.

    b. What are three 'outputs' you will achieve during your degree to work towards this? Think about the practicalities required to achieve each.

10. We discussed what impedes progress in Development research. What are the key factors to consider relating to your own individual research (e.g. lack of feedback/data; lack of project organisation) that you need to be aware of that could impede progress? How might you mitigate against these factors?
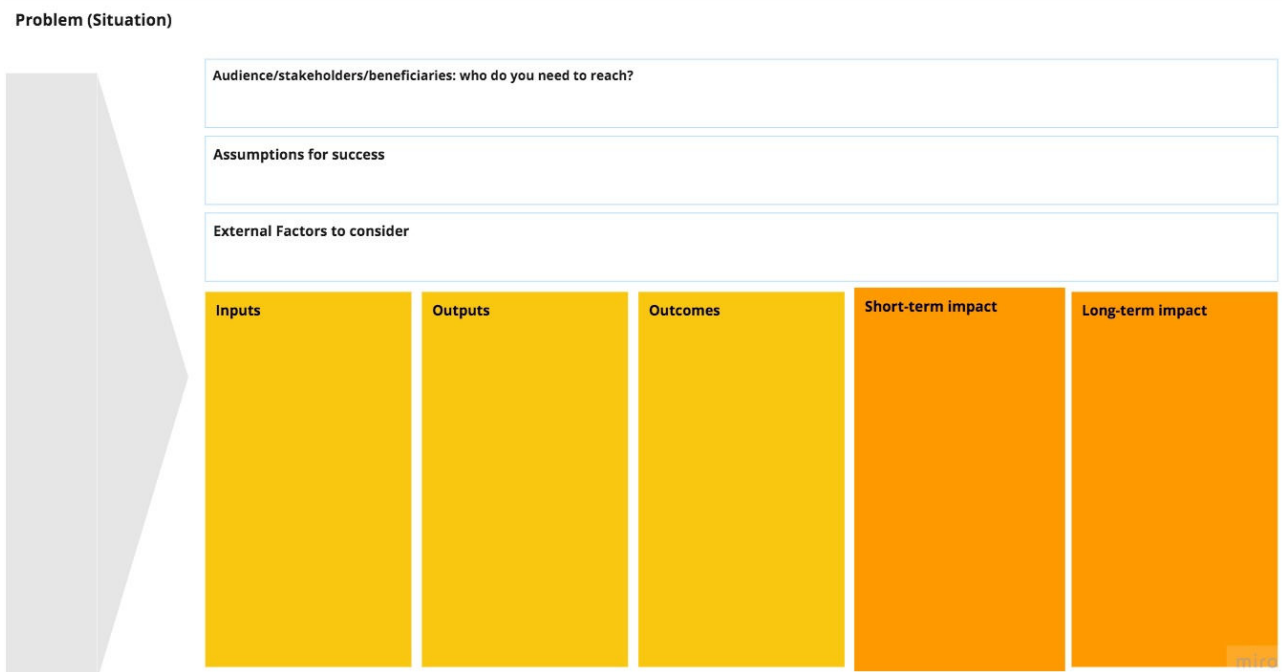
C. Tools to takeaway: Logic Models

Below is a list of further tools that can be used for researching and writing for Development.

(i)   Logic Model

Logic models are used by many organisations, funders and project leaders when understanding how to map out the essential components of their programmes. It should focus on solving a specific issue *(e.g., girls in Tanzania lack access to text books therefore fall behind and don't pass their senior level tests; this leads to low graduation rates)*

This template can be used to understand where you need to focus your time, requirements for success and better understanding the outcomes your require through your work to achieve your impact. If you don't have A and B, you won't get C!

Problem (Situation)

Audience/stakeholders/beneficiaries: who do you need to reach?				
Assumptions for success				
External Factors to consider				
Inputs	**Outputs**	**Outcomes**	**Short-term impact**	**Long-term impact**

(ii)   Stakeholder Mapping

Stakeholders count as anyone that is impacted by or involved in your work. Knowing your stakeholders as you go through your project, research and journey to impact is essential.

Beneficiaries- Those who will benefit from your work, like local farmers; students; infants and their mothers.

Influential individuals - Established academics in your field, business leaders, community leaders that care about or need to act on your issue or could fund it

Influential Organisations - Those likely operating in your space that can help implement your work, contribute to, back it reputationally or fund it.

Decision Makers - Those who are gatekeepers to seeing that your beneficiaries will benefit; these could be policy makers, politicians or teachers that are essential for longer term change to the systemic issues you are addressing

Who should you list?
It's also important they focus on those who are accessible as well - like local city councils -- and not just those who will be very difficult to influence or create a relationship with, like the Botswanan Education Department. It's fine to include those, but if you need to access major institutions: who are the stakeholders that lead to them?

Beneficiaries (who needs to benefit from your work)	Influential Individuals
Influential Organisations - can help implement or back your work	**Decision Makers (e.g. government bodies)**

Key questions to ask during and after you complete your map:

1. Who benefits indirectly from your work? *(e.g. local traders who do well because local farmers are making more income from your project)*

2. Who else is working on what you are working on?

3. Are there any you could collaborate with? What circumstances would be required, and actions you would have to take, for that to be possible?

4. How could you sub-divide each category into short term and longer term stakeholders to reach?

5. How has this activity helped you understand who you should target when networking?

(iii)   PERT – Programme Evaluation and Review Technique

It's important that any key objective you have identified that will be critical to your intended social impact in the short to medium term is pursued as a 'project'. This means making the goal tangible, setting a deadline and understanding steps that need to be taken to get there. Otherwise, it will remain an ambition instead of a goal.

Click here to read more about PERT and critical path planning. This helps you understand the timelines and potential variances you need to account for to effectively plan any projects.

D. Further reading tip….

In addition to the readings shared during training, see below for further resources to check out to help look at your impact planning longer term:

Researcher Excellence Framework (REF) impact toolkit

Understanding Sustainable Development with the SDGS

Understanding Approaches to Partnering on the SDGs