

Map the contribution pathway

Choose one service, place or stakeholder group to explore.

Trace how your work may contribute to change for organisations, people and place.

Write outcomes you intend to test. A pathway is a hypothesis, not proof of cause.

Based on: How CVSS and TSIs can measure their impact.

SERVICE OR ACTIVITY

PLACE OR NETWORK

PERIOD

Which infrastructure function is in scope?

☐

Leadership and advocacy

☐

Partnerships and collaboration

☐

Capacity building

☐

Volunteering

Build the chain

1. Activity

Support, service or
convening

2. Direct outcome

Change for people or
organisations we support

3. Enabled outcome

What they can do as a result

4. System outcome

Wider change across a place
or sector

Where could the chain break or take a different route?

Note missing steps, assumptions or outcomes that may not happen.

Plan proportionate evidence

Choose measures that answer a real question, not measures for their own sake.

Start with records you already hold, such as CRM notes, training or volunteer records, grant support logs, partnership minutes, plans and service reviews. Add short follow-up only where a gap matters.
Set timing to fit the outcome. Confidence may change quickly; resilience or influence may take months.

OUTCOME 01 / STAKEHOLDER

INDICATOR OR EXPECTED CHANGE

EVIDENCE SOURCE

WHEN

OWNER

OUTCOME 02 / STAKEHOLDER

INDICATOR OR EXPECTED CHANGE

EVIDENCE SOURCE

WHEN

OWNER

OUTCOME 03 / STAKEHOLDER

INDICATOR OR EXPECTED CHANGE

EVIDENCE SOURCE

WHEN

OWNER

Keep the plan manageable.

Use the fewest useful indicators, agree who will review them, and avoid adding a reporting burden without a clear purpose.

Test contribution and counting

Consider what would have happened anyway and who else shaped the outcome.

Record reasoning and evidence before any impact adjustment. Do not default to an attribution or deadweight percentage. If the evidence is uncertain, say so.

01 Deadweight

What change was likely to happen anyway? What evidence supports that view?

02 Other contributions

Who else contributed, and what did each person, organisation or external factor do?

03 Evidence and limits

What connects our activity with the change? What evidence is missing, weak or inconsistent?

04 Ownership and double counting

Who owns this outcome? Could the same people, service or result appear in more than one total?

For network reporting, agree the period, place, outcome definitions, repeat-beneficiary rules and delivery partners.

Keep member outcomes, infrastructure contribution and combined results visible as distinct things.

Make a reasoned claim

Use what you found to support learning and practical decisions.

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLE ONLY

Hypothetical: governance advice leads trustees to report clearer decisions (direct); the charity later renews funding (enabled); a local service continues (wider change). Test the evidence at each step. The sequence alone does not prove cause.

What decision should this evidence inform?

Write the claim you can support

Name the outcome and stakeholder. Describe contribution, not sole causation.

What supports this wording, and what are its limits?

Note other contributors, what may have happened anyway, evidence gaps and what you will not claim.

Decisions and next steps

	ACTION	OWNER	REVIEW BY
Continue or build on			
Change or stop			
Test or learn			