

OVERVIEW OF IMPACT EVALUATION METHODS OF PUBLIC SECTOR INITIATIVES

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Abstract

The main aim of this article is to present an overview of different methods of economic, social and environmental impact evaluation. The content is as follows: first, the basic concepts are defined, such as impact and impact evaluation. Consequently, the current state of the impact evaluation of public initiatives is analysed, next, the theoretical background of value creation is explained as an important factor for understanding the key aspects of impact evaluation. Finally, different categorization approaches of impact evaluation are outlined. The categorization and overview of the approaches to the impact evaluation of initiatives addressing different issues in society serve as an important knowledge base for designing a comprehensive framework model which would reflect the specifics of the environment and would be able to take into account all the different aspects of public policies.

Keywords: Impact Evaluation, Impact evaluation methods, Theory of Change, Value Chain

Introduction

Nowadays academicians and politicians around the world, including Slovakia, are focused on such issues as stagnant economic growth, low innovation activities, aging population, gender issue in women employment and low employment of youth. One way to solve these problems is entrepreneurship, which is an important phenomenon recognized as a key factor in economic development (Bohlmann et al., 2017, Ferreira et al., 2017, Lukeš, 2013, Koellinger and Thurik, 2012). However, this complex phenomenon has many dimensions which should be taken in consideration if we want to fully use its potential. Among them the inclusion of less represented groups of population to entrepreneurship. The barriers and risks that these population groups like seniors, youth, women, migrants, etc. must overcome to become entrepreneurs, are substantially greater than those individuals who do not belong to these groups. The main measures many national governments, as well as international organizations such as European Commission (2017) and OECD (2017) promote, are to develop appropriate policies, programs and projects to support these entrepreneurs, their education and training as well as the formation of financial support systems. If these are to function effectively and continuously improve, tools to evaluate them are needed. These

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tools must be able to capture economic, social as well as environmental impacts, to be able to holistically evaluate the scope of these interventions. Evaluation studies are based on quantitative data focused on output indicators. Results and impacts are barely mentioned or qualitatively assessed. Domestic publications in this area of research are absent. However, research abroad presents some very useful methods and evaluation rules that could have significant benefits for practice. The need for evaluation models also increases with the growing activities of the non-profit sector (non-profit companies want to maximize their impact), social entrepreneurship (company shareholders require clarification of money management), corporate social responsibility initiatives (such initiatives want to promote the most effective projects) and governmental initiatives (transparency in the handling of public funds) because it is not clear to what extent these initiatives leave lasting positive change.

This article aims to present an overview of different methods of economic, social and environmental impact evaluation. In order to do so, basic concepts such as impact and impact evaluation are explained at first, then current status of public initiatives impact evaluation is presented. Next, the article focuses on theoretical background of impact evaluation, concepts of Value chain, the Theory of change, logic model and different phases of impact evaluation are explained. Finally, various approaches to categorization of impact evaluation methods are outlined and based on those an overview of actual impact evaluation methods is provided.

1 Basic concepts of impact evaluation

Impact is any effect of a service (events, interventions or initiatives) on an individual or a group (Fitz-Gibbon, 1996). An intervention is an intended engagement in solving some problem, which aims is to create impact. As a result of externally induced change, the impact includes both intended and unintended effects, negative but also positive effects and long-term or short-term consequences (Wainwright, 2002). According to Clark et al. (2004) impact is a part of the overall result that occurred as a consequence of a specific activity beyond what would have happened without it. Clifford's (2014) definition of the impact is based on four main components:

- value generated by a particular activity,
- value perceived by the beneficiaries and all parties involved,
- value that includes both positive and negative effects,
- value that is determined on the basis of what the situation would be without the intervention.

Impact evaluation is also defined as the process of collecting qualitative and quantitative evidence on the impact (whether and how the intervention is directly responsible for specific changes or benefits) and their indicators (metrics) that are subsequently applied to ensure the sustainability of the provided services (Streatfield and Markless, 2009). The impact evaluation also aims to understand to what extent, and how the initiatives correct a problem they are addressing, the effects of intervention, the suitability of the intervention proposal, costs and effectiveness of the intervention, its unintended effects and how to use the gained experience to improve the design of future interventions (OECD, 2015). Impact evaluation

focuses on characteristics, procedures, results and / or value of activities (McKinsey & Company, 2010).

Impact evaluation has become a "field of growth", where evaluation systems with their methodologies, organizational infrastructures, textbooks and professional associations exist (Leeuw and Furubo, 2008). The reason for a greater attention is that it has not been clear to what extent results of developed initiatives are satisfactory. It seems that many initiatives do not leave a trail of lasting positive change, and it is difficult to determine what changes have been made upon their completion.

The most frequently stated reasons for impact evaluation are (Leeuw and Vaessen, 2009):

- Impact evaluation provides evidence of which initiatives function properly and which do not, under what circumstances and how large the created impact is.
- Impact evaluation and the attribution of variations of dependent variables to various initiatives serve as a tool for their creation and improvement.
- Impact evaluation provide information that is important in terms of accountability and transparency, making available knowledge of created (social) impacts of initiatives that may be linked to the (financial) resources used to achieve these impacts.
- Impact evaluation can provide evidence of the sustainability of interventions effects.
- Impact evaluation stimulates individual and organizational learning.
- Impact evaluation serves to inform decision makers on whether to extend, modify or remove given initiatives.
- Impact evaluation allows sponsors, partners and beneficiaries of effects to compare the effectiveness of alternative interventions

The most important reason to support the impact evaluation of public initiatives is simply to find out what works, what does not and why. That way, it can contribute to the effectiveness of future interventions.

Our focus is on less represented groups, which face different problems and barriers when they want to start their business. Research shows that public initiatives really stimulate less represented groups to engage in entrepreneurship and thus increase their entrepreneurial activity. Upon finishing an entrepreneurial course, the participants are better able to identify opportunities while generating more entrepreneurial ideas with higher innovation, which has a significant impact on business activity (DeTienne and Chandler, 2004, Tsyganová, 2010) and increased recognition of opportunities may improve entrepreneurial behaviour (Bohlmann et al., 2017). Therefore, trainings should be considered a crucial point in designing public policies and stimulating entrepreneurship in general, both for women and men. These programs may include entrepreneurial training, different types and forms of coaching and mentoring, grant programs, options of loans for start-up entrepreneurs, and support to build networks. However, it is crucial to know if these initiatives have the expected effects and meet the objectives pursued. Therefore, it is important to properly evaluate their impacts. But how is it done and what are the requirements for the impact evaluation?

2 The current status of impact evaluation of public initiatives

An important part of the policy making process, is knowing what and how much impact is created, in order to efficiently allocate resources where they can have the greatest effect. Over the last few years, governments and other public sector organizations have paid much more attention to the impact evaluation. Whereas, only a certain part of the public benefits while using public funds, transparency and efficiency is crucial. It is based on the following (GECES Sub-group on Impact Measurement, 2014):

- the obligation of program and intervention providers to be accountable (and to recognize responsibility) for the public money they spend and for the services provided;
- the need to be transparent in explaining how funds are spent on providing services that meet public needs, including the results they achieve;
- the need for programs and interventions to stimulate and facilitate the involvement of the public, consumers of services and others, in expressing their needs and engaging in their fulfilment;
- the need for structured management of the involved organizations to effectively achieve the first three steps.

The need for a comprehensive impact evaluation of public initiatives is based on the fact that common indicators and impact evaluation methods mostly focus on economic impacts (Fazzi, 2010). In addition, Fazi argues that the impact evaluation of initiatives addressing social aspects is limited by data available from national and international accounting systems, which focus primarily on the commercial sector.

Those countries which draw resources for public programs from the European Structural and Investment Fund, these programs must be evaluated under the conditions set by the European Commission. The European Commission has increased the requirements for evaluating the impact of programs in the last programming period, while they recommend using counterfactual analysis.

The key requirements of the European Commission for evaluating the impact of programs are (European Commission, 2017):

- Impact evaluation must include a logical justification that combines the problem (including subsidiarity issues) with its underlying causes, objectives and a whole range of policy options to address this problem. The likely impacts of different options must be presented, who will be affected and how.
- Stakeholders must be able to provide feedback based on an initial impact evaluation that describes the problem, subsidiarity issues, objectives, different program options and an initial consideration of their relevant impacts.
- Impact evaluation must compare the possibilities of different programs based on their economic, social and environmental impacts (quantified costs and benefits, if possible) and present them in the Impact evaluation report.
- There are elements that need to be included in the impact evaluation report. These include: (i) a description of the environmental, social and economic impacts and an

explicit statement if some of them are not considered significant; (ii) a clear description of who will be affected by the initiative and how.

- Considering the whole life-cycle of the created program, the impact evaluation should define the monitoring and ex-post evaluation mechanisms in order to be able to review whether the policy action actually delivers the intended results and informs any future revisions of the program.

For a specific impact evaluation of initiatives to promote entrepreneurial activity among less represented groups the European Commission, together with the OECD (2013), produced a document defining the impact evaluation process in three stages:

- *Initial stage* - establishing an evidence basis for the proposed policy measures. At this stage, there are three key data sources and evaluation methods: benchmarking and meta-evaluation, statistics and research and stakeholder consultation. Activities at this stage take place before the intervention and its main aim is to create a coherent vision of future policy measures.
- *Ex ante evaluation* - after proposing an intervention in the frame of public policies or a set of measures, it is important to carry out an ex ante evaluation, to see whether these proposed interventions are relevant, coherent and likely to be successful and effective in achieving their objectives. The key indicators to be used to monitor and evaluate interventions, should be identified at the ex-ante evaluation stage in order to create an effective process of gathering the necessary information during interventions.
- *Ex-post evaluation* - after launching the relevant initiative (intervention), it is necessary to focus the attention on the impacts it generates. The concept of counterfactual analysis is used to evaluate what would have happened without political intervention. The impact of the intervention is considered to be the difference between what was caused by the intervention and what would have happened without it. As a part of the impact evaluation it is important to answer the question: what change has been achieved by the intervention?

To understand the concept of impact evaluation as well as existing methods, it is necessary to know the theory behind value creation. In the following chapter, the starting points of value creation will be introduced through the Impact Value Chain concept, the "Theory of Change" and the different phases of impact evaluation.

3 Theoretical background of impact evaluation

Rosenzweig and Olsen (2004), authors of the Impact Value Chain concept, contributed significantly to the definition of value creation. They found that the language used by various stakeholders in the field of impact evaluation was confusing and inconsistent, coming from the fields of program evaluation, business activities, social sciences, policies and NGOs. They designed a logical model to better understand the relationship between inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes and impact, and described the mechanism of change, the model of how the value is generated.

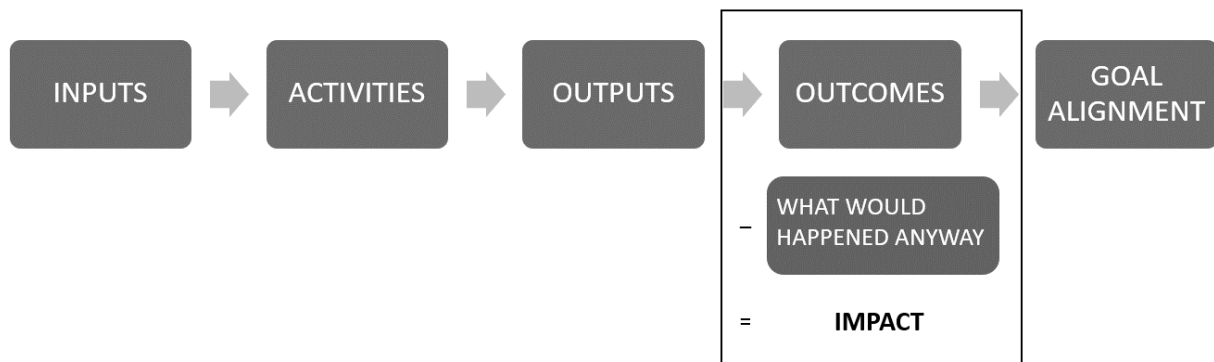


Figure 1. Impact Value Chain (Source: own elaboration according to Clark et al., 2004)

Characteristics of the individual components entering the Impact Value Chain are the following:

- *Inputs*: resources (money, employee time, capital assets, etc.) that are needed for the operational activities of an organization, initiative or a program.
- *Activities*: operations that are being developed to achieve impact.
- *Outputs*: indicators and other measurable variables from the operational activities that can be directly measured.
- *Outcomes*: specific changes in attitudes, behaviours, knowledge, skills, status or level of performance resulting from developed activities, such as finding a job, reducing emissions or unemployment etc.
- *Impact*: the difference between the results that occurred after delivering the activities and the results that would have occurred without performing any action.
- *Goal Alignment*: the process of managing the evaluation whether the results or impacts meet the desired goals and determine what can be done to improve the activities.

The Impact Value Chain is important because it has set a single vocabulary in the field of impact evaluation and present a way of generating value. The logic model that connects these five components is known as the "Theory of Change". Weiss (1995) defines the Theory of Change simply as the theory of how and why an initiative works. The Theory of Change is based on the field of program evaluation. This term appeared in the mid-90s as a new way of analysing theories behind programs and initiatives that promote social and political change. It is a specific type of planning, participation, and evaluation methodology used in philanthropy, non-profit and governmental sector to support change. It is used to define long-term goals and subsequently identify the assumptions necessary for the set goals to occur (Brest, 2010). It illustrates and explains the causal link between activities carried out and their targeted outcomes and impact. The causal link principle must always be understood and explained to make clear that certain activities will lead to certain outcomes. The reason why it is assumed that the outcomes are created by a specific activity, should always be supported by appropriate evidence (Reisman and Giennap, 2004). The Theory of Change explains the

process of change by outlining the causal links of the initiative. Thus, the identified changes, the short-, medium- and long-term outcomes, are mapped and show each outcome in a logical link to everything else, as well as the chronological flow. The links between the outcomes are explained by justifications or statements, why the specific outcome is assumed to be the assumption of another (Taplin and Clark, 2012).

The European Commission requires programs to have defined specific goals that reflect the change that is intended. This evaluation is in the form of an expert judgment and is based on the theory of change, being carried out before the intervention. The additional required impact evaluation is in the form of indicators for monitoring and measuring changes and output indicators that characterize specific measures implemented. This evaluation takes place after the intervention. It answers questions such as: how many people joined the program, how much their income increased after graduation the program, etc. Outputs are the result of activities that can be directly measured or evaluated, and various qualitative research or quantification methods are used.

International leaders at the G8 summit in London in June 2013 set up a working group focused on impact evaluation, as they have recognized its importance. Based on the research, this working group constructed a report outlining seven guidelines (broadly accepted sets of actions) underpinning the four phases of impact evaluation. These seven guidelines provide their users with a model for effectively defining, collecting and analysing impact data. The model consists of the following four phases (Social Impact Investment Taskforce, 2014):

1. *Planning*

- *Goal setting* - defining the required impact. Goal setting not only defines the purpose of the evaluation, it also guides the investment of resources and helps stakeholders evaluate the created progress.
- *Determining the impact framework and selecting methods* - determining methods to be used for impact evaluation and which data will be used in the impact evaluation process. An effective impact framework includes methods and a description of how they will be used, considering the needs and perspectives of different stakeholders.

2. *Activity*

- *Data collection* - matching information technologies, tools, resources, human capital and data acquisition methods. Proven data collection and storage procedures are used, which are important for reducing reporting burden and ensuring data integrity.
- *Data validation* –ensures data quality, ability to check relevant processes and calculations.

3. *Evaluation*

- *Data Analysis* - investigating and analysing data to understand how the resources invested achieve the intended goals. It can provide information on how decisions are made and how capital is allocated. Standard and objective processes are used as far as possible to ensure results that are interpretable, comparable and understandable.

4. Review

- *Data reporting* - sharing obtained information with key stakeholders to help them understand how the set goals are being achieved. Effective reporting is evidence-based and is in line with their expectations in terms of details. It allows comparison and is the basis for decision-making.
- *Data-based decisions* - identifying and implementing mechanisms to improve outcomes. They lead to constant improvement and long-term changes.

Widely accepted sets of actions, and the before-mentioned four stages of the impact evaluation process, have led to the development of a large number of methods and tools that vary according to the impact they are trying to evaluate. The impact evaluation is usually targeted at a specific set of impacts, which often represent a rather narrow picture of outcomes of an intervention. This applies in particular when the impact evaluation is too focused on economic impacts (OECD, 2015).

Many tools have been developed to capture impacts, as well as different methods, but there is no broader consensus on their acceptance (Social Impact Investment Taskforce, 2014). This is because the evaluation of the impact is not easy, especially because of difficulties in identifying qualitative and quantitative methods which should be able to pass on information to stakeholders. It is also difficult to estimate social and environmental impacts, as they can sometimes appear after years, and it is difficult to determine to what extent certain interventions affect them. This complexity has resulted in the development of several models and methods aimed at providing guidelines and indicators for evaluating impacts. This continued development of new models is due to the fact that organizations differ in size, capacity, activities and focus, and therefore there is no single model that would be suitable for all of them (Grieco et al., 2014). In addition, Molecke and Pinks (2017) in their study point out that most institutions that measure their social and environmental impacts do not do so exclusively through one tool or method, but they use a variety of them, moreover, they often choose only the elements of the individual tools (for example according to data availability or interpretations) and then create their own evaluation system that suits them. In the next section, different forms and types of impact evaluation will be introduced.

4. Methods for evaluating the impacts

The impact evaluation, enables organizations to identify, measure and collect evidence about benefits they create for stakeholders in the environmental, social and local development area. Within the wider process of creating value, organizations need to recognize the importance of the evaluation process for discovering new value and creating valuable opportunities for innovation and growth, that would otherwise be lacking (Porter et al., 2012). The main problem is not the evaluation itself, but the conversion of qualitative data regarding the achievement of the social mission into quantitative measures. The objective of the evaluation should be to integrate economic, social and environmental output in order to maximize value creation as well as return to shareholders (Grieco et al., 2014). In this context,

the impact evaluation can be considered as a process of providing evidence that a program or organization provides real and tangible benefits to society or the environment.

Quantification and explanation of the interventions effects are the basis for evaluating the development of public policies programs. In order for managers to make competent decisions, it is important to understand what works or does not, how and why, for whom and in what contexts. On this list of questions, available analytical methods provide at best, only preliminary and incomplete answers. Therefore, it is very important to clarify what methods can answer different questions and under which circumstances.

A large number of different methods and tools also cause their categorization to be extremely important, as its absence could be an obstacle for organizations that want to start using them. Many existing options are confusing for managers who want to select a way to evaluate the impact of their organization, because it is difficult for them to compare different methods and tools and decide which one may be the most appropriate for them. In addition, this may hinder the work of researchers involved in the development of new models of impact evaluation and of academics trying to analyse progress in this area (Maas & Liket, 2011).

In the following section, an overview of the key categories that divide various available methods and tools into certain groups is provided. They will enable to further analyse their usage.

Concerning the categorization of impact evaluation methods, two conceptually different sets of questions arise: one of them deals primarily with the quantification of effects, second one with their explanation. Based on this, two approaches to the categorization of impact evaluation methods have been distinguished (European Commission, 2013):

- *Theory-based impact evaluation*

The importance of this approach stems from the fact that, in addition to the quantifiable causal effects, more information is useful for managers according to which they can decide or present their activities. Questions why a set of interventions have certain impacts, both intended and unintended, for whom and in what context are as important and as demanding as the question of how much impact has been created. This approach is based on examining the "Theory of Change" and therefore it is called the theory-based impact evaluation. The outcome of using this approach is not a number, but rather a story. Therefore, it cannot be used to calculate costs and revenues, it is not immediately communicable and is not supported by a set of statistical tools. Some users therefore might find it less scientific or less objective. But it can provide a rare insight, in understanding why an initiative works or not. This approach is based on the idea that the main component is not the hypothesis (how things would evolve without intervention), but the theory of change (how things should logically work to achieve the desired change).

- *Counterfactual impact evaluation*

The main question of the counterfactual impact evaluation approach is: how much difference does the intervention cause? This approach gives answers that are usually numerical, which are further supported by causal explanations based on empirical evidence and certain assumptions. Determining whether the difference observed in the result, after the

intervention is caused by the intervention itself or by something else, is a very challenging task. The counterfactual impact evaluation approach is useful for decision-taking because of the following reasons (European Commission, 2013):

1. provides easily interpretable information;
2. uses the basic components for the calculation of cost-benefit / efficiency analysis;
3. may be divided into separate subgroup numbers, under the condition that the subgroups are defined in advance.

The challenge for impact quantification is to find a trusted approximation of what would occur in the absence of an intervention, and compare it to what actually happened. This difference is the estimated impact of the intervention on a specific result (whether it is GDP per capita, R & D expenditure or unemployment rate).

Another categorization of impact evaluation methods can be found in the work of Epstein and Yuthas (2014). They divided the impact evaluation methods into four basic categories:

- *Expert judgment* – interviews, discussions and program observations by experienced professionals. Many impact reports are currently evaluated by experienced observers. These evaluations are based on interviews with beneficiaries or their observations. Ideally, evaluations should be based on evidence such as observation by field workers or independent experts. This type of evaluation is appropriate for programs whose impacts cannot be really measured (e.g., programs that support peace). Expert judgment can be valuable and reliable, especially when supported by well-developed logic. In many cases, this approach is insufficient to fully understand the impacts of developed activities.
- *Qualitative research* - systematic in-depth impact research, which may include on-the-spot visits, structured interviews, and focus groups. When processes, operations and outcomes are established, it is advisable to systematically evaluate them. The objective may be to evaluate the overall success or review specific inputs, activities, outputs, or outcomes that are most likely to affect the success of a program. Qualitative research can be a part of the development of a clear mission, theory of change, or logic model of a program. It requires a systematic formulation of the research design and testing of the hypotheses, directly related to the logic model. Unlike expert judgment, qualitative methods are based on objective assessment, systematic documentation and analysis.
- *Quantification* - data and reports in numerical form. It may include direct measurements as well as survey results. This approach is increasingly demanded over expert judgment or qualitative research. Outputs are more often measured and evaluated than actual impact (e.g. the number of participants in the program as opposed to how the intervention impacts on their employability - the effect of outcomes on their beneficiaries). What should be evaluated depends on the purpose of the evaluation, the objectives of an initiative and the logic model. Measurement may be in a form of a score, percentage, or a comparison with a reference value.
- *Monetization* - a quantitative evaluation that converts some or all measured impacts into monetary value. The best known is the cost-benefit analysis, which attributes monetary

values to market and non-market impacts. It is extensively used in the public sector to evaluate social programs. It attributes monetary value to measured outcomes and deducts costs of achieving them, resulting in the value of "net social benefit (or cost)". The challenge of this approach is to estimate fair value of market and non-market benefits. Some estimations may lack objectivity and accuracy, but the evaluation can still be beneficial, if the assumptions of the evaluation are known.

Another categorization of impact evaluation methods can be found in the study of Grieco et al. (2014), who performed cluster analysis based on seven chosen variables. The result is four clusters that provide an overview of over 70 impact evaluation methods of initiatives and programs subdivided into further subgroups. This study contributes to the understanding of the studied methods and provides a simple overview. The disadvantage is that it includes only a limited number of methods.

Based on the literature study and the analysis of different approaches, an overview of different options for categorizing of impact evaluation methods has been put together according to their characteristics, type and authors.

Table 1. Categorization of impact evaluation methods by authors

Characteristics	Type	Authors
Timeframe	Future	Tuan, 2008
	Ongoing	Maas and Liket, 2011
	Retrospective	
Accountability	External stakeholders	Gibbon and Dey, 2011
	Internal stakeholders	Mulgan, 2011
Approach	Process	Clark et al., 2004
	Impact	Maas and Liket, 2011
	Monetization	
Analytical view	Cost-effectiveness	
	Cost -benefits	Tuan, 2008
	Others	
Purpose	Testing	Olsen et al., 2008
	Monitoring	Maas and Liket, 2011
	Reporting	Krlev et al., 2012
	Evaluation	Mulgan, 2010
	Analysis for stakeholders	Krlev et al., 2012
Orientation	Inputs	
	Outputs	Maas and Liket, 2011
Length of timeframe	Short-term	
	Long-term	
Perspective	Micro	Maas and Liket, 2011
	Meso	Schober and Rauscher, 2014
	Macro	
Type of data	Quantitative	
	Qualitative	Nicholls, 2005
	Quali-quantitative	
Impact typology	Holistic	
	People	
	Environment	Rinaldo, 2010
	Social	
	Economic	
Model complexity	Basic	
	Simple	Maas and Liket, 2011
	Complex	Zappalà and Lyons, 2009
	Highly complex	
Sector	General	
	Specific	TRASI

Source: based on Dufour, (2015), own completion

These categorizations were the basis for processing a review of the most commonly used impact evaluation methods contained in Table 2. Two main categories were chosen, namely the Theory-based and Counterfactual impact evaluations. We have further divided them to expert judgment, qualitative research, quantification and monetization. The individual categories include methods sets and techniques, authors or organization and source.

Table 2. Classification of impact evaluation methods

Classification		Methods and techniques	Author/Organization	Source
Theory-based impact evaluation	Expert judgement	Discussion Observation Expert analysis Delphic method		Evalsed sourcebook: Methods and techniques ³
	Qualitative research	Structured interviews On-site visits Focus groups		
Counterfactual impact evaluation	Quantification	Surveys Direct measurement Cost analysis		
		NEF methods ⁴	New Economic Foundation	Prove and Improve
		RF methods ^{5, 6}	The Rockefeller Foundation	Catalogue of Approaches to Impact Measurement
	Monetization	IRIS methods ⁷	Global Impact Investing Network	https://iris.thegiin.org/metrics
		Cost-benefit analysis		Evalsed sourcebook: Method and techniques
		Social return on investment ⁸	SROI Network	A guide to Social Return on Investment
Standards and procedures for measurement and impact evaluation		EU standards	European Commission/GECES group	Proposed Approaches to Social Impact Measurement ⁹
		Other standards and procedures	European Venture Philanthropy Association	A Practical Guide to Measuring and Managing Impact ¹⁰
			The World Bank	Guide to Evaluating Capacity Development Results ¹¹

³ European Commission: EVALSED - The resource for the evaluation of Socio-Economic Development: Sourcebook - Method and techniques, 2014. Available on: http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/information/publications/evaluations-guidance-documents/2013/evalsed-the-resource-for-the-evaluation-of-socio-economic-development-sourcebook-method-and-techniques

⁴ Currently more than 150 methods for evaluating and measuring impact. The Foundation Center is an association of around 500 foundations that have collected these metrics. The TRASI database has until recently provided the opportunity to freely view these techniques and filter them according to the chosen criteria. These methods are currently being reviewed and updated. Some metrics and a short description are available freely on: http://b.3cdn.net/nefoundation/ee604b9c7787bf1b80_aym6ivqnu.pdf

⁵ Catalogue of 25 impact evaluation methods collected by the Rockefeller Foundation. Available on: <http://www.midot.org.il/Sites/midot/content/Flash/CATALOG%20OF%20APPROACHES%20TO%20IMPACT%20MEASUREMENT.pdf>

⁶ Other methods collected by the Rockefeller Foundation. Available on: https://centers.fuqua.duke.edu/case/wp-content/uploads/sites/7/2015/02/Report_Clark_DoubleBottomLineProjectReport_2004.pdf

⁷ A number of different methods that can be filtered by specific criteria such as purpose, organization type, sector, focus, and orientation. Descriptions of individual methods, application manuals, and best practices are available on the web page.

⁸ The description of this method as well as the detailed application procedure is available on the Internet: http://b.3cdn.net/nefoundation/aff3779953c5b88d53_cpm6v3v71.pdf

⁹ http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/social_business/docs/expert-group/20131128-impact-measurement-subgroup_en.pdf

¹⁰ <http://evpa.eu.com/knowledge-centre/publications/evpa-publicatio>

		Toniic Institute	Toniic E-Guide to Early Stage Global Impact Investing ¹²
		Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors	Assessing Impact ¹³
		Social Impact Investment Taskforce	Measuring Impact ¹⁴

Source: authors

Foundation Centre methods as well as IRIS methods are available in online catalogues and can be freely browsed. There is a possibility to filter them according to different criteria. A brief description, application procedure and recommendations are available. Impact evaluation standards and procedures are very important, as they provide guidance on how to apply different impact evaluation methods, thereby improving their quality and standardization.

Conclusion

The topic of the impact evaluation has been extensively discussed by scientific researches as well as practitioners from different sectors. The need to evaluate the economic, environmental and social impact often comes up not only in the public sector but also in other sectors. For example, in profitable companies, the growth of this trend is directly linked to the growing importance of corporate social responsibility and the consequent need for appropriate measures to demonstrate the created impacts. Reasons for increasing interest from social entrepreneurs and non-profit organizations in this area can be found in financial accounting restrictions that exclude items that are not monetary and are aimed only at shareholders and creditors, while employees, beneficiaries, consumers of their services, companies, governments, volunteers and the environment are excluded. The new competitive environment which these organizations face requires a proper evaluation of their impact in order to improve their performance and effectively inform about the benefits of their activities. Incorporation of social and environmental benefits is therefore the key to providing a more comprehensive view of overall intervention or society.

The overview and subsequent categorization of the approaches to the impact evaluation of initiatives addressing different issues in society serve as an important knowledge base for designing a framework model which would reflect the specifics of the environment and would be able to take into account all the different aspects of public policies. In this paper the theoretical background of value creation and an overview of various types of categorization and different available methods of the impact evaluation was the basis for their systematic processing and presentation. In the next step it is important to study each of them in depth to identify further opportunities for more precise way of evaluation impact.

¹¹ <http://wbi.worldbank.org/wbi/document/guide-evaluating-capacity-development-res>

¹² <http://www.toniic.com/toniic-institute/early-stage-e-guide/#top>

¹³ <https://www.rockpa.org/document.doc?id=>

¹⁴ <http://www.socialimpactinvestment.org/reports/Measuring%20Impact%20WG%20paper%20FINAL.pdf>

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