

# A BLUEPRINT TO QUANTIFY SOCIAL SERVICE PROGRAM SUCCESS

Najja Orr develops a four-step blueprint to help social service agencies quantify meaningful program outcomes.

Social service agencies often struggle to meet the total needs of their agency and stakeholders due to limited public and grant funding. As funders begin to expect a higher quality demonstration of social return on investment—in the form of benefits to the community and overall program success—these agencies must learn to effectively quantify and evaluate the impact of their programs.

To solve this problem, Najja Orr developed and proposed a blueprint for social impact evaluation to help social service agencies demonstrate greater effectiveness of their program outcomes and goals.

Orr's four-step blueprint involves a process of identifying long-term goals, connecting inputs and activities to outcomes, determining value created for stakeholders and measuring social return on investment by comparing the perceived dollar value of social benefits to the costs incurred. Involving a diverse stakeholder group in the process allowed for deeper introspection of social impact measurement and development, which helped showcase the organization's overall impact to funders.

To make the most out of the blueprint, Orr emphasizes the importance of selecting relevant stakeholders, making a sincere effort to be involved in the process and keeping dialogue open to facilitate ongoing evaluation. To ensure the validity of the evaluation, agencies should be mindful of the expectations of those funding the programs.

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## MAJOR TAKEAWAYS:

- Social service agencies need to be able to effectively evaluate the impact of their programs to secure funding.
- Orr's four-step blueprint is designed to help social service agencies quantify the effectiveness of their program outcomes.
- Orr's blueprint is best used as an ongoing evaluation that involves a diverse stakeholder group and takes funder expectations into consideration.

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## WHO NEEDS TO KNOW:

- Social service agencies
- Nonprofit organizations
- Funders
- Local and national elected officials

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- Social impact program evaluation. (2022). [Dissertation available through ScholarShare.](#)