Reimagining Charities

An SID, SMU, SUSS Initiative

Presented by SMU Student Pro-bono Research Team

SID NonProfit Committee

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13/12/2021

Project Agenda

1. Charity Landscape and Observations

2. Knowledge Networks and Collaboration

3. The State of Performance Management

4. Charity Performance Evaluation Framework

Problem Statements

How might we change the way that charities assess themselves, in order to encourage them to maximize the value they provide to society and adequately reflect the work they do

What is the state of knowledge sharing and partnerships in the charities sector and what are the challenges in achieving a more coordinated eco-system

Research Methodology

IPC-Registered Charities (excluding religious groups and community development funds) were chosen for this study

Charity Reports and Portal Data

- Descriptive data was collected and organised from the charity portal and data points from charity annual reports

Interviews

- The team conducted in-depth interviews with **18** charity directors and board members

- Charity leaders or nonprofit thoughts leaders from all sub-sectors were represented

- Design thinking methodologies such as ethnographic interviews and affinity mapping was used to conduct and analyse our qualitative research
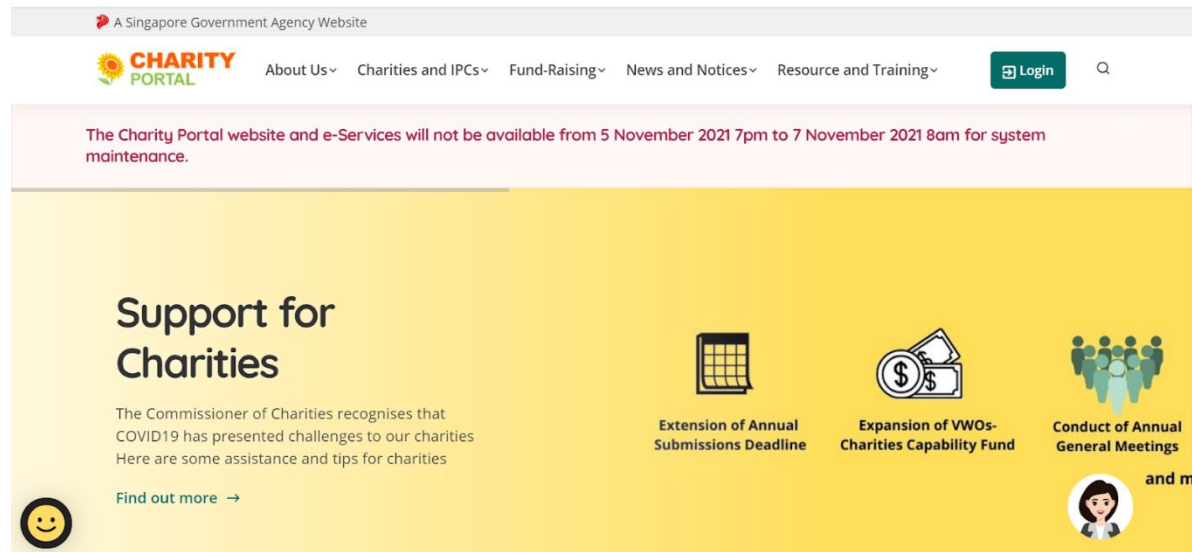
About the Team

- The team consists of **12** volunteer students from Singapore Management University
- The project began in **November 2020** and concluded in **December 2021** with the release of this report
- The team comes from diverse backgrounds with a mixture of business, social science, economics and accountancy students that approached the project from a multi-disciplinary perspective
- The project's main advisors are:
  - Theresa Goh, Chair, Nonprofit Committee, Singapore Institute of Directors
  - Professor Caroline Lim, Head, Organisation and Leadership for NonProfit Programme, Singapore University of Social Sciences

Charity Landscape and Observations
Data Collection and Dashboard

Overview

- Manual data collection from: https://www.charities.gov.sg/

- A list of **555 charities** in Singapore

- Excluded **community funds** and **religious organisations**

Charity Landscape Analysis

Charity Portal

- The Charity Portal provides the public with the latest news and developments in the charity sector. It is a one-stop portal that displays the core characteristics of each organisation. It also allows charities to submit relevant applications and annual reports.

Annual Report

- A charity's annual report outlines the operations, programmes provided to their beneficiaries over the past year.

- Often, it would highlight successful initiatives and key statistics as a result of these activities. This is relevant in our study to see how charities assess the impact of their services.

Charity Portal Data

Existing data from Charity Portal was extracted and divided into:

Type	UEN	IPC Period	Address	Sector	Classification	Activities	Stage of Development

1 **Sectors:** Arts & Heritage, Education, Social & Welfare, Sports, Health, Others

2 **Classifications:** Community, Family, Children, Disabilities (Children), Disabilities (Adults), Disabilities (Sports), Support groups, Eldercare, Environment, Animals, Nursing Home

3 **Stage of Development:** Small, Medium, Large

Annual Report Data

Data was collected from 555 charity annual reports

Vision	Mission	Values/Principles	Objectives	Target Group	Presence of Output Metrics

1   **Vision/Mission/Objectives:** To understand if the charities' performance indicators ties in with their own goals

2   **Target Group:** To understand if there is a specific audience who is lacking performance metrics so evaluate the true extent of impact on them

3   **Presence of Output/Outcome Metrics:** Essential indicators to measure the impact they provide to society

Output vs. Outcome

Holistic View of Performance Indicators

What is impact?

Impact consists of different components:

- **Output:** which can be defined as a measurable unit of a product/defined episode of service directly produced by an investee's activities and can be observed in the short-term.

- **Outcome:** which can be defined as an observable and measurable change for an individual or organisation, or in the results of a programme or intervention, and can be observed in the medium-term.

An extract from Lemiere, M. M. (2016, May). A guide to effective impact assessment. Retrieved from https://avpn.asia/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/AVPN-IA-report-2016-web.pdf

Output vs. Outcome

Team's Revised Definitions

Output Indicators: Success measured by quantitative metrics such as: Turnup rate, Number of events, Number of Volunteer, Growth Percentage, Number of Awards

Outcome Indicators: Success measured by qualitative metrics such as: Testimonials, Post-activity Interviews, Focus group discussions

Data Collection on Charities

The team has curated a dashboard for you to navigate the insights we found in our analysis of the data we collected: https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/natalie.ang/viz/SID_V2Final/Story1

Key Takeaways

1

Social and welfare takes up the greatest proportion of charities in Singapore

2

There is generally a **lack of outcome indicators** as compared to output indicators

3

Some sectors predominantly **focus on output indicators** as that is their **primary objective** i.e. Sports sectors

4

The **stage of development** of a charity has a **positive and significant correlation** with the **presence of performance indicators**

5

There are about **23% of the charities** in Singapore that **do not** have any form of performance indicators

A significant portion of charities without any form of performance indicators belongs to **Theatre and Performing Arts** targeting **Artists**

Knowledge Sharing and Collaboration
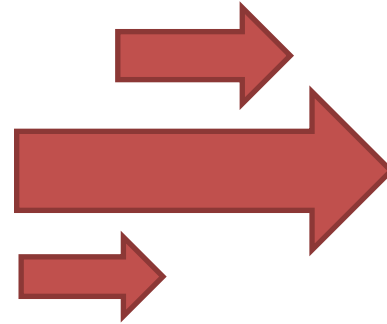*Insights from Interviews*

We investigated the state of knowledge sharing between Charities, as well as between Charities and Governing Bodies and found 3 main categories:

Symmetrical

Asymmetrical
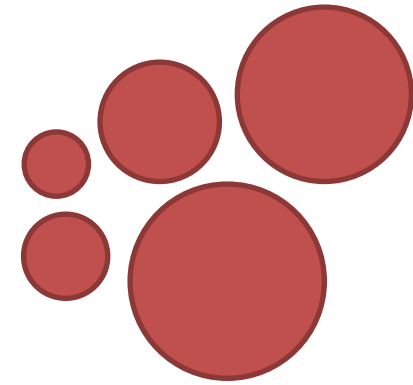
Segregated

We also found that knowledge sharing was often the precursor & enabler for further collaboration & partnerships

Symmetrical Knowledge Sharing

Symmetrical Model

- Two-way free-flow of information & other resources

- Ideal state of knowledge sharing and collaboration
- Topics vary widely, from best practices, research, demographic information, and even organizational structure

Symmetrical Knowledge Sharing

Symmetrical Model

Benefits of Symmetrical Sharing
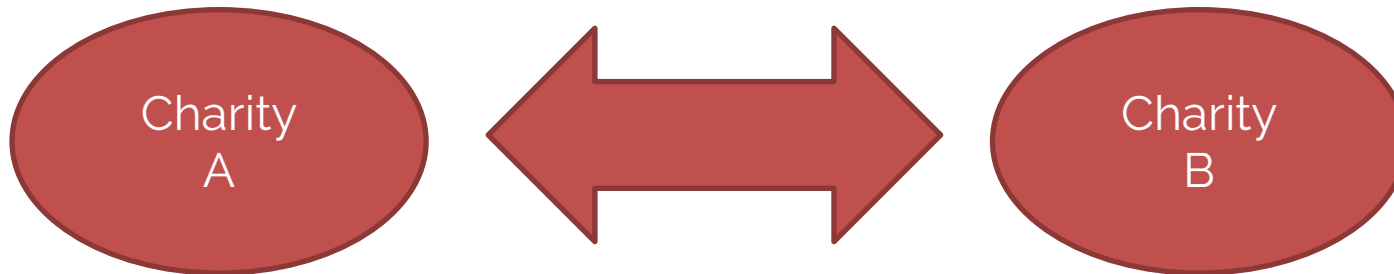
- Allows NPOs to be better informed, gaining a better understanding of their beneficiaries & operating context

- Builds trust and relationships between organizations

- Helps NPOs achieve more than previously possible by themselves

While symmetrical sharing is ideal, it cannot be expected in every Charity sub-sector

- Requires aligned or complementary goals & outcomes

- Some NPOs hold a narrower view, seeing others as competitors for funding and beneficiaries

Symmetrical Knowledge Sharing

Symmetrical Model

There is also resistance faced due to:

- Being unaware of other adjacent NPOs, and/or any potential synergistic partnerships

- Not having established rapport with other organizations

- Lack of organizational capacity (i.e. resources and manpower)

- Complexities and sensitivity of information

Other Types of Knowledge Sharing
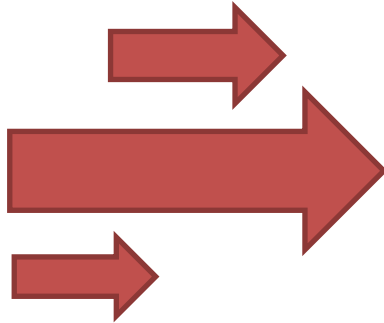
Asymmetrical

- One-way sharing and/or collaboration occurs between charities

- Asymmetrical sharing is usually initiated by a resource rich and/or experienced charity

- Tends to be draining and unsustainable
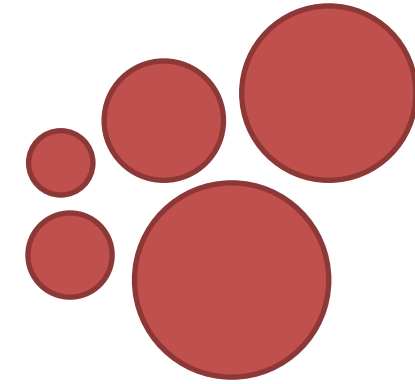
Segregated

- No sharing and/or collaboration occurs between charities and knowledge is kept within the organisation

- This describes the most common type of network amongst charity sectors

Similar Passions
- Common interests and/or passion for a particular topic or beneficiary group
- Acts as common ground for relationships to be built

Problem Solving
- Ability to leverage on knowledge, resources and capabilities beyond any single NPO
- Having a more detailed understanding of the NPO landscape and beneficiary context

GoodWill
- In the absence of a common passion or clear benefits, NPOs might still work together based on existing relationships between members (i.e. doing a favour)

Government Mandate
- Top-down instruction for NPOs to collaborate, to achieve governmental objectives

Conditions for Successful Knowledge Sharing & Collaboration

| Relationships as Most Common Success Factor	Strong Organizational Self-awareness	Ability to Establish Commonalities
• Informal connections are crucial in solving problems outside of the system • E.g. Presence of "Whatsapp networks"; informal relationships to cut through red-tape • Informal relationships often make NPOs more open, and are often the basis for strong networks and future collaborative works	• Awareness of one's strengths and deficiencies, seeing the value others bring and that they can offer • Understanding beneficiaries, identifying real needs not treating symptoms • Not being process/ solution-centric but people-centred helps NPOs to see beyond their organization	• Alignment in goals, objectives, expected outcomes • Co-creation of a similar or complementary Theory of Change • Allows a strong foundation for collaborative efforts to start and persist

- Through our research, the importance of formal and informal relationships through network building is apparent, with charities often relying on them to operate effectively

- We found that charities are often unaware of how to approach knowledge sharing & collaboration as it **happens very informally** with **no clear indication or instruction** of how it should be done

- There is also a **perceived lack of structure and initiatives** that can facilitate the network building necessary to strengthen the sector

- As such, the formation of **assemblies and activities to encourage both informal and formal network building** would be highly beneficial for the whole charity sector by creating communities, mediums for charities to reach out to one another, and even platforms to exchange knowledge and resources

- Such initiatives can be **grown organically** within the sector **or headed by philanthropic entities** that can lend their expertise and resources. This can also **take on various forms** to fit the sector's needs and preferences - from simple coffee sessions, to conducting sector wide get-togethers

- However, facilitating and maintaining such activities might necessitate significant time and resource commitments, these costs might deter such initiatives from being led by smaller charities. As such, this might be an **opportunity area for governmental, or larger philanthropic organizations to be the first movers** in this space

Unpacking the 'Collaborative Chain'
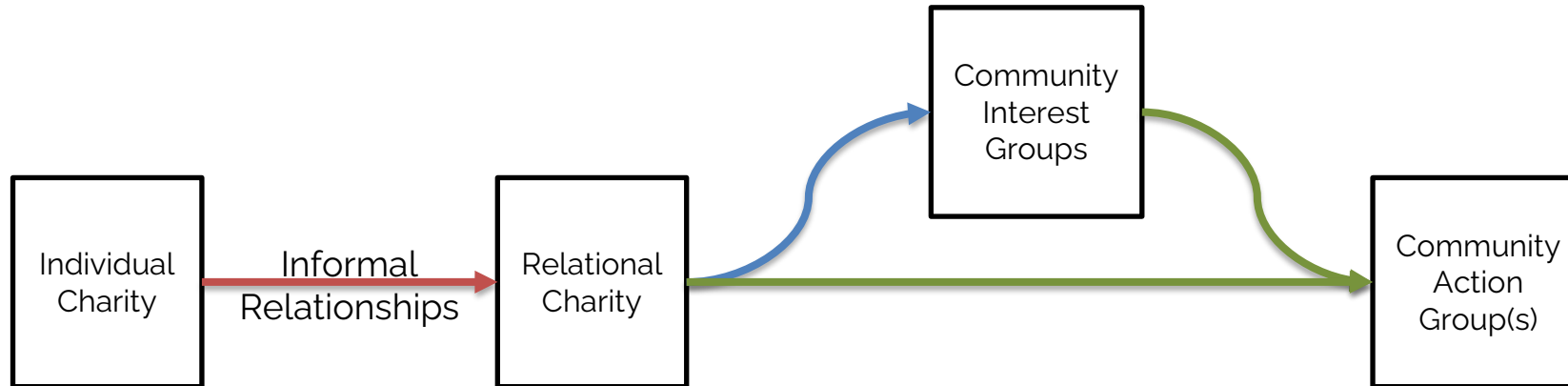
- Charities can envision the formation of their collaborative networks through a **'Collaborative Chain'**
- Individual charities begin their collaborative journey through **informal relationships** (*red arrow*) with other organizations or charities, becoming **relational charities**
- Over time, the strengthening of these informal channels are aggregated and formalized (*blue arrow*) into **community interest groups** where information, ideas, and visions are shared
- Charities and other organizations can take the next step (*green arrow*), forming **community action groups** with aligned partners that have similar goals, co-creating initiatives and implementing them together
- Some charities might transition directly into **community action groups** if they find suitable partners

To foster greater collaboration, charities should seek to widen their network of informal relationships and identify communities of interest and action within and across sub-sectors

The State of Performance Management
Insights from Interviews
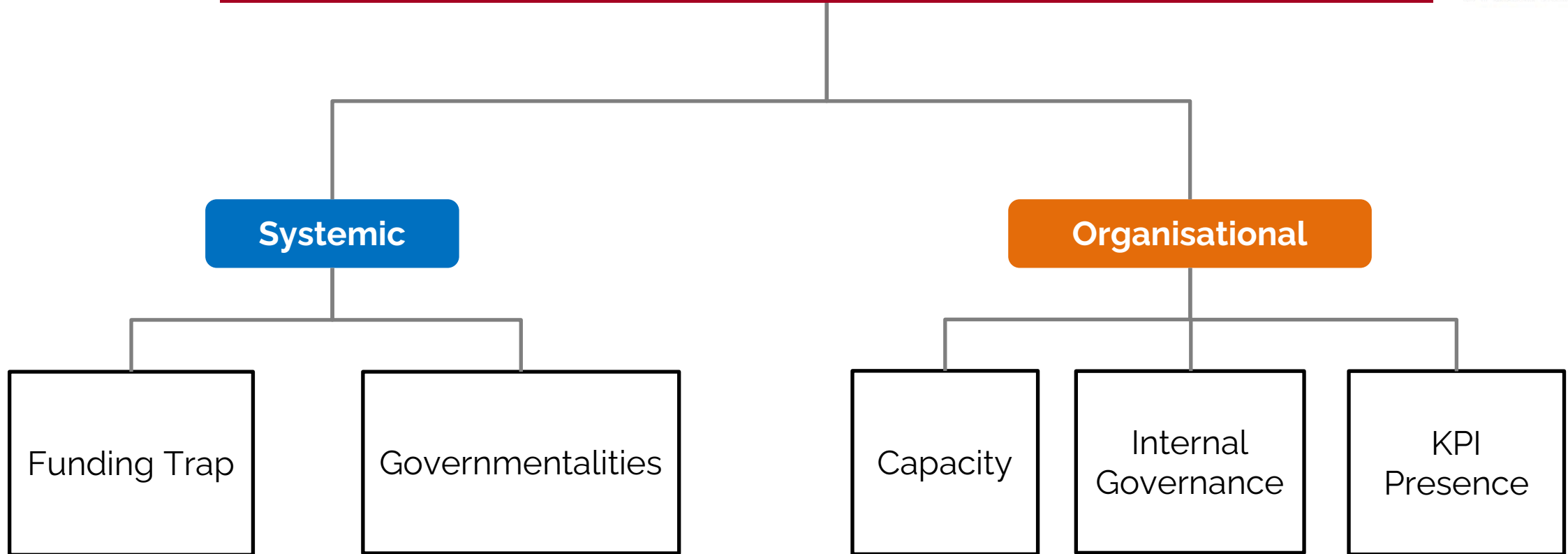
Systemic

Funding Trap

- Funding dictates the development of metrics amongst charities

- Funders strongly influence the decisions made over measurement

- Grant givers have influence over the definition of success in a programme

Governmentalities

- Government gives charities authority and credibility

- Uncertainty in information due to lack of proper shared feedback and resources

- Charities that focus on advocacy and research outputs face resistance against qualitative measures

- Unilateral imposition of Outcome Management programme was ill-received

Organisational

Capacity   Internal Governance   KPI Presence

Lacking Resources (8)
- Not enough financing for more sophisticated performance metrics
- Small full-time charity teams bogged down with operations and volunteer management
- Poor communication and internal red tape

Lacking Skill Sets (2)
- Some feel inadequately prepared for new measurement tools, analytics and data presentation skills lacking

Difficulty Quantifying and Measuring (22)
- Output is easiest to track and there is a struggle to collect tangible data across beneficiaries and programmes *(Cross-beneficiary charities)*
- Transformation to outcome measurements are long-drawn
- How to measure? *(e.g. Arts charities and a healthcare charity looking at quality of life measure)*
- What and how to collect data? Some charities choose what is easier to measure and use indirect methods to observe impact

Organizational

Capacity | **Internal Governance** | **KPI Presence**

Strong link to funding trap
- Nonsocial service agencies apply internally top-down approach in deciding outputs
- Social service agencies face lack of board involvement in decision making and output measures
  - Ministries and funders are highly influential in KPI formation

Inefficiency and redundancy
- Stemming from lack of organisation
- Poor internal communication and internal red tape
- Lack of resources results in poor focus on social impact tools and reporting

Suggestions from the ground

- **Co-creation**
  - Steady streams of communication between government and NPO
  - Capture actual needs, initiatives and realities

- **Sector Specialised attention**
  - Niche industries have higher quality communication channels

- **Leveraging on technology**
  - Data collection, analysis and presentation to provide more in-depth insights
  - Channeling data purposefully
  - Requires training of personnel to build purpose and competency with technology

Charity Performance Evaluation Framework

A Self-Evaluation Tool
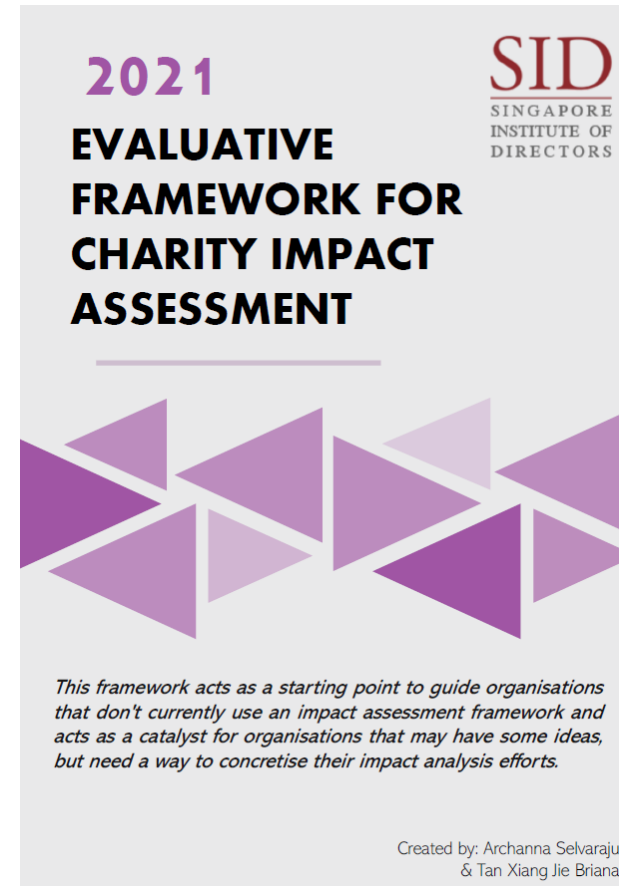
Framework Objectives

Pain Point

- Time consuming to source for a reliable framework to use
- Difficult to develop an evaluative framework on their own
- Resource constraints to evaluate organisation's impact

Addressed By

Aim

A comprehensive and structured model to guide organisations to more effectively monitor and assess the impact of their programmes

Purpose of the framework

Target Group	Charities which do not currently use a framework to assess impact	Charities looking for a way to concretise their impact analyses efforts
Intended Purpose	Acts as a starting point to guide impact assessment	Serves as a catalyst to accelerate the process of impact assessment

It is meant to be an effective guide that caters to all charities **regardless of size or sector**

Benefits of the framework

- Encourages conversations about the importance of impact analysis and helps kick start this process

- Contains dedicated sections with guiding questions to evaluate the current impact analysis efforts

- Allows tracking of organisation's progress over time as it is updated periodically

- Helps charity heads to regroup & view their programmes from a fresh perspective

The framework could even aid in content generation for annual reports or newsletters

Framework Summary

1 **Section 1:** Descriptive details of Charity

2 **Section 2:** Flowchart assessment and goal alignment

3 **Section 3:** Performance management planning

4 **Section 4:** Post-Programme goals

Section 1 - Introduction to my Organisation

Name of Charity	
Sector	
Classification	
Type of Charity Activities	
Target Group	

Vision	
Mission	
Values	

Organisation's Goals	1.
	2.
	3.
	4.

Programmes (Include Core Functions of the Charity or Day-to-day programmes)	1.
	2.
	3.
	4.
	5.

Basic information about the charity as an overview

Goals and Programmes will come in handy in later sections

Section 2 - Assessing the Current Situation

Section 2A. Where does my Organisation Stand?

RATIONALE: We would like your organisation to self reflect on their current progress at impact analysis. We understand that organisations have different resource levels and manpower to allocate to impact analysis, hence it is understandable if you're still in the early stages! This flowchart is meant to understand your organisations needs, so that you can use this evaluative framework better.
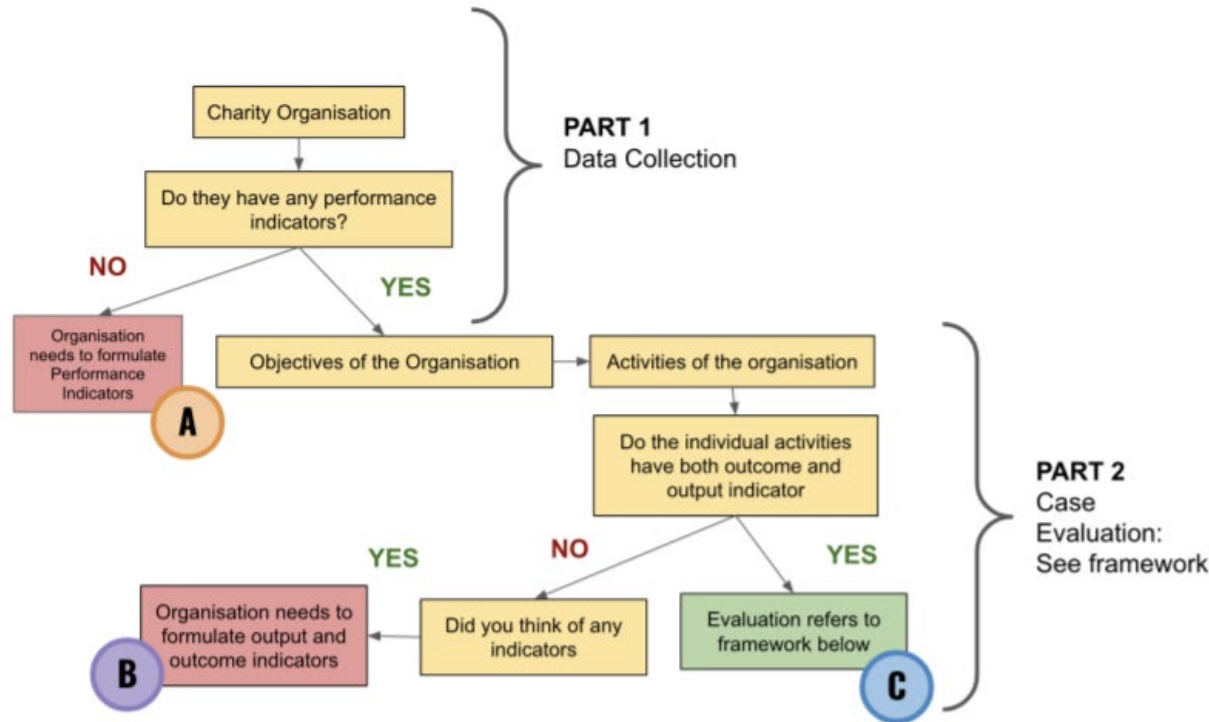
Section 2A is an initial assessment for charities to understand the stage of their current impact assessment efforts

Condition "C" is the best stage of development to embark applying our framework

1. Your organisation's programs and organisation goals should be auto filled according to what you typed out in Section 1.

2. If the program is aligned with the goal, put a tick in the box.

3. Count the total number of ticks to evaluate how well the goals are met based on the current programs in the blue and yellow boxes as demonstrated above.

Note: You DO NOT NEED to attain ticks for all the boxes. The purpose of this exercise is to ensure that your **goals are accounted for** by at least one program, and to ensure that your **programmes are purposeful** in meeting your organisation's goals.

	Goal 1.	Goal 2.	Goal 3.	Goal 4.	Total
Programme 1.					0
Programme 2.					0
Programme 3.					0
Programme 4.					0
Programme 5.					0
Total	0	0	0	0	

Tip: If you notice that some of your goals are not accounted for, perhaps you could relook at how you can adjust your programmes to align with the goals that your organisation has set out for itself at the start.

Yellow Section: Each goal should be met by at least 40% of your programmes.
(i.e: if your organisation has 5 programmes, each goal should be met by at least 2 programmes

Blue Section: Each programme should target at least 1 goal for your organisation.

What are some ways your organisation can improve its programmes?	
Which are the goals that are not accounted for?	
What are some programmes that do not meet the goals?	

Section 2B seeks to help charities identify alignments in their organisational goals and programmes

Place a tick in this table if the goal is met by that programme

Light yellow and blue cells would update according to the number of ticks for that column or row

3A. Breaking Down into Specific Programmes

RATIONALE: Through Section 3, you can ensure that your target groups are accounted for across all your programmes, and verify that the target groups and programme rationales are differentiated from each other. If the rationales are very similar, you can consider combining programmes, or expanding target groups to have greater outreach.

Example of filling up the table	Programme Specific Rationale *What is the rationale for these programmes?*	Target Group *Who are you targeting for this programme?*
Programme 1: Tutoring and Academic Supervision	Provide academic supervision and improve their performance in school	Students who struggle with schoolwork and are not performing well in academics.
Programme 2: Mentoring and Support networks	Ensure that youths are engaged and interact with role models	At-risk youths who have low self-esteem and are showing behavioural issues.
Programme 3: Arts & Crafts	Develop the students' creativity and allow them to have fun in the process. Hone the students' talents and skills outside of academics.	All students who are interested in art (no restriction to age)

The Programmes column should be autofilled. Fill up the table below with your organisation's programme rationale and target group. You can refer to the table above as an example.

	Programme Specific Rationale *What is the rationale for these programmes?*	Target Group *Who are you targeting for this programme?*
Programme 1.		
Programme 2.		
Programme 3.		
Programme 4.		
Programme 5.		

After filling up the table above, are your programmes differentiated from each other? If you find that the programmes overlap with each other (eg. have very similar rationale and target group), you may want to rethink the purpose of your programmes.

Ensure that the programmes are sufficiently differentiated

3B: Organisation Goal Setting (QUALITATIVE & QUANTITATIVE)

RATIONALE: This section serves as a precursor to Sections 3C and 3D. By listing out the quantitative and qualitative goals within each programme, and then prioritising your goals, we hope that you can be more mindful about the programme goals that are more critical (higher priority).

The Programmes column should be autofilled. Fill up your organisation's goals, and prioritize them within each programme. You may include both output and outcome measurements. You can refer to the example in the grey boxes.

	B1: QUANTITATIVE Programme Goals *Have you set out any goals for your organisation prior to commencing the Programme?*	B2: QUALITATIVE Programme Goals *Have you set out any goals for your organisation prior to commencing the Programme?*
Example Programme: *Tutoring & Academic Supervision*	Priority 1. 75% of my students achieve 30% improvement from their previous grades at school. (Output) Priority 2. More students join the tutoring sessions through referrals from participants or from parents. (Output) Priority 3. The number of students who qualify for the Edusave Good Progress Award increase by 5% per year. (Outcome)	Priority 1. There is a high rate of continued attendance (above 80% of sessions) among students. (Output) Priority 2. Students are more participative during tutoring sessions and demonstrate greater interest in learning. (Outcome) Priority 3. Students set higher academic or non-academic targets for themselves (such as aspiring to join the school team, increasing the scores for a particular subject). (Outcome)
Programme 1.		
Programme 2.		
Programme 3.		
Programme 4.		
Programme 5.		

Section 3B serves as a means for charities to consolidate and review their programme goals, listing down qualitative and quantitative aspects of these goals

3C: Deeper Dive into your QUANTITATIVE Indicators

RATIONALE: Besides ensuring that there are sufficient quantifiable goals for your programmes, Section 3C also helps to ensure that these goals are being measured. You may use this section to track the progress of programmes and improvements experienced by the target groups. You may also check that there is coherence between programme goals and organisation's goals, and to identify the key indicators that you should be monitoring actively.

Name	Student Care & Tuition Centre for Low Income Students
Organisation's Goal	I want students of all backgrounds to have access to quality education and academic support
Programmes	Tutoring and Academic Supervision
	Mentoring and Support networks
	Arts & crafts as a non-academic and stress relieving activity

Fill up the boxes in the table according to the headers. You can refer to the examples within each header to get a sense of the content to fill in.

	C1: QUANTITATIVE Programme Goals Same as B1 above	**C2: How are the goals quantitatively measured?** E.g: 1. Scores Attained by students per subject 2. No. of students who scored in the top 10% of their cohort 3. No. of new students	**C3: [Yes/No] Is there alignment between the goal (C1) with the quantitative metric (C2)?** E.g: Pre Programme goal is to improve independence and motivation among students is a mismatch with quantitative metric of academic performance.	**C4: [Yes/No] Do these measurements help link back to your organisation's goals?** E.g: It links back to goals 1, I want students of all backgrounds to have access to quality education and academic support
Programme 1.				
Programme 2.				
Programme 3.				
Programme 4.				
Programme 5.				

Section 3C is used to list the metrics that are used to measure their programme goals

A charity can evaluate whether the metric and goal aligns with the organisation's goals

3D. Identifying QUALITATIVE Indicators used by your Organisation

RATIONALE: The aim of Section 3D is to ascertain that there are qualitative goals, which are integral to charities. It also allows you to identify how your organisation measures qualitative goals (such as using surveys, testimonials etc). In addition, it serves to help you ensure that your target groups are empowered with qualitative skills such that they require less help from your organisation, and are able to live more independently.

Fill up the boxes in the table according to the headers. You can refer to the examples within each header to get a sense of the content to fill in.

	D1: QUALITATIVE Programme Goals *Same as B2 above*	D2: How are the goals qualitatively measured? *E.g: Surveys, Testimonials, Attitudes towards Studying, Level of focus, Goals and Aspirations for themselves (Students)*	D3: How do these programmes help to empower your Target Group such that they can be self sufficient without your organisation? *E.g: Providing students skills to be self motivated & driven such that they are able to study on their own, and need less assistance outside school*
Programme 1.			
Programme 2.			
Programme 3.			
Programme 4.			
Programme 5.			

Section 3D serves to systematically outline your methodology for collecting and framing your data

Column D3 helps reflect about how the programmes help to empower the target group

4A. Goals for Post Programme

RATIONALE: *As the next step, consider how you can maximise the potential of the data collected. These include surveys to obtain the sentiments about the efficiency and delivery of the event from volunteers, participants and staff. Think about how these data can be translated into insights that can adrenalise your future programmes.*

Does your organisation conduct surveys?
(If no, move to section 4B)

How do you conduct the survey after the programme?	
Who do you conduct these surveys with?	
What is done after the collection of output data?	
How are the output and outcome measurements used to influence future programmes?	

Section 4A helps charities plan for the next steps. Open-ended reflective questions to consider how the data collected is being used

4B. Filling in the Gaps

RATIONALE: This concluding section provides guiding questions to help you to identify areas for improvement and identify action items that you can consider implementing in your organisation to increase the impact that your organisation makes.

Were there goals set for your programmes?
(If Yes, move to Q1. If No, move to Q3)

Q1: Yes, there were goals set for the programmes: Were the goals set during pre-programme (B1) met?

Q2: No: what further steps do you think you can take?

Was data collected?
(If Yes, move to Q4. If No, move to Q5)

Q4: Was the data collected (B2 & C2) useful in assessing your goals?

Q3: No, there were no goals set for the programmes: Given your current programmes, what goals do you think your organisation can set for itself?

Q5: Are there any challenges in your organisation in collecting data? (eg manpower limitations, resource constraints)

Q6: How does the data help you to achieve your goals or improve your programmes?

Section 4B lastly helps charities identify areas for improvement and recaps the key action items for the charity to work on