

Project Planning for Systemic and Sustainable Impact

Collected lessons learned
from BRIDGE Maths and
Science Communities of
Practice



Systemic Impact

The notion of 'impact' is related to bringing about **change in school systems and sub-systems**.

interventions need to be formalised into support from national, provincial and district levels in key areas (e.g. curriculum, institutional support) in order to have long term systemic impact.



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The ongoing involvement and support of a province **as part of normal practice** is the only way in which interventions can be judged as systemic and sustainable, as they then become part of the norm. The constant use of external facilitators or support personnel does not represent systemic impact, and is not a long-term solution.

Areas for Systemic Impact

Going to scale

Sustainability

Monitoring & Evaluation

Collaboration

Cost Effectiveness

Plan for sustainability, in that the outcomes of a successful intervention continue to be implemented in the school/s concerned long after the project ends.

Key Learnings on Systemic Impact

Have a thorough understanding of the components and inter-relationships of the schooling system.

Clearly define roles and responsibilities of the different levels of the department and other partners and stakeholders at the start of a project.

Clearly define accountability processes.

Plan for long term institutionalization and embedding of processes which support positive outcomes.

Build in handover and transfer procedures to support post-project systemic sustainability.

Key Learnings on Sustainability

- Make sure that the beneficiaries **see value** in the intervention, so that positive attitudes and commitment support sustainability
- Build in **leadership** for continuity, find **champions** within the programme
- Allow **time** for embedding and internalizing changes in practice
- Plan for some form of **information sharing** and monitoring after the project has officially closed

Going to Scale

There is more than one way of achieving scale.

Increasing the number of beneficiaries

Increasing the number impact sites

Replicating projects in different contexts

Social franchising models



Key Lessons on going to Scale

Pilot and evaluate before going to scale.

Roll out in stages, using an iterative process to understand the success and barrier factors when a project is scaled up.

Grow leaders and champions from within the project as you go to scale.

Don't limit understanding of scale to increasing the number of sites only; consider alternative models such as collaboration or replication of small projects.

Take systemic factors and relationships into account.

Monitoring & Evaluation

‘Clearly, ‘more of the same’ is a waste of resources, and we need to focus on how to maximise the effect of education interventions in the fields of mathematics and science. In order to do this we need more data, and an enhanced understanding of the nature of evaluation data and how to interpret it.’

Lack of evidence-based impact & evaluation data tracking what works and what doesn’t from interventions and innovations over the last twenty years.

- What is impact?
- When can it be seen?
- How do you measure it?
- How do we learn from evaluations?

Key Learnings on M&E

Bring in professional evaluation experts at the design stage.

Use the right data gathering mechanisms for monitoring and impact evaluation pre-, during and post-project.

Allocate sufficient budget for monitoring and evaluation.

Build a research component into projects.

Contribute to evaluation repositories or databases

Key Learnings on Collaboration

Understand types, levels and options for collaboration.

Identify successful NGOs or other social partners with a track record in your area of interest.

Learn from other interventions.

Share information and resources.



Key Learnings on Cost Effectiveness

- Invest in systemic and sustainable interventions - become part of normal delivery.
- Use criteria for selection i.r.o. school functionality
- Use criteria for the appointment of implementation partners or service providers.
- Be informed: avoid repeating ineffective interventions or duplicating existing projects.
- Use good practice costing and budgeting models for financial management and project accountability.

