

BUILDING LIVELIHOODS, STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES IN WALES: OUTCOMES, LEARNING AND VALUE ANALYSIS

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INTRODUCTION:



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The Sustainable Livelihoods Approach:

- The Sustainable Livelihoods Approach, or SLA, is a method of understanding the experiences of people living in poverty – all Oxfam projects in Wales use it.
- It is based on the idea that people experiencing poverty already have abilities and assets they can use to improve their livelihoods.
- It is used as a practical tool to utilise those abilities and assets, focusing on what people can do, not on what they cannot.
- The approach and its tools can also be used by organisations to analyse their interactions with marginalised people.



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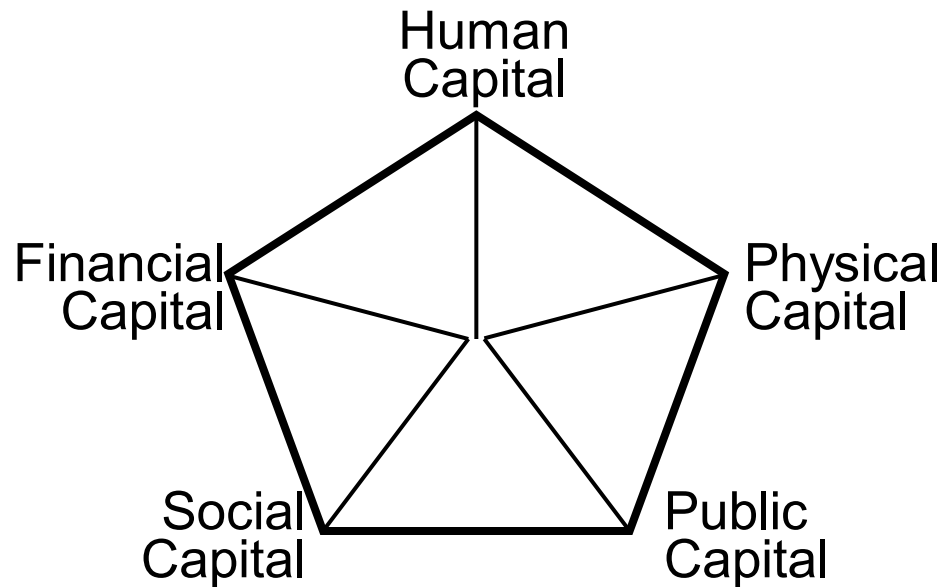


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The Assets Pentagon:



- Human: education, knowledge, skills etc.
- Physical: house, flat, car, equipment etc.
- Public: health services, public transport, council services, leisure facilities etc.
- Social: friends, family, networks, groups etc.
- Financial: wages, benefits, loans etc

OUTCOMES AND PROJECT LEARNING:



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Key statistics:

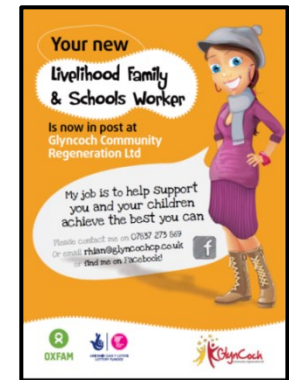
For the Building Livelihoods, Strengthening Communities in Wales project (September 2012 to February 2016):

- £1.1 million over 3.5 years, funded by BIG, Oxfam and Unilever.
- 9 projects in different partner areas: Banwen, Cardiff, Caernarfon, Ebbw Vale, Glyncoch, Newport, Rhyl, Swansea, Wrexham.
- 1123 beneficiaries supported:
 - 636 have gained new skills and confidence;
 - 648 are more involved in community activities;
 - 489 are accessing more or better services;
 - 306 have measurably improved livelihoods.



Learning from project:

- **The SLA helps marginalised people without creating dependency** – fewer than one in twenty Y1 participants were still with the project at its close. 109 participants have become peer mentors and 94 have found jobs.
- **Works equally well across equalities groups** – average increase across all demographic types (ethnicity, gender, age disability etc.) is 15.8 percentage points;
- **Intensive or non-intensive support most important factor** compared to demographic factors: though they still make progress, improvement for non-intensive participants is on average 9.3%.
- **Can also help organisations** – 111 organisations have reported increased understanding of marginalised people in their communities and 58 have made changes to their services because of the project.



VALUE ANALYSIS:



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Value analysis: quantitative

- The Oxfam Livelihoods project has/will achieve the following gross value over 3.5 years:
 - £1,036,858 in gross fiscal value;
 - £ 553,658 in gross economic value;
 - £ 3,939,582 in gross social value.
- These figures include deadweight, dropoff, attribution and so on.
- The overall gross value generated by the Oxfam Livelihoods project over 3.5 years is £5,530,098.
- Factoring in input costs and opportunity costs, the value ratio for the Oxfam Livelihoods project's outcomes to date is 4.43:1 – in other words, £4.43 of value is generated for every £1 invested in it.



Value analysis: qualitative

- *“I feel very alive and it feels like I'm back in my old life where I was in control of things.”*
- *“We feel the community is stronger and everyone has become more involved in our area.”*
- *“I now feel much more confident and able to tackle things on my own.”*
- *“I'd have been stuck at home and had no thought that I could have got a job but the project gave me hope.”*
- *“It's difficult to explain the support, but it's been fantastic. I have gained more faith in myself and my abilities and have lots more confidence. The project has supported me to apply for jobs that I would never have applied for before as I didn't believe I had the skills. I am now working and I love it – the last year has been amazing for me...”*



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Value analysis: case studies

- Case Study #1: Gawain – first language Welsh speaker – comes to project looking for work in construction. Other problems surface (drink, drugs, sofa surfing). SLA analysis reveals root cause is worry whether a child is his or not. Livelihoods worker helps him reestablish relations with his ex-partner and funds DNA test. He is the father and cleans up his act – worker helps him become a peer mentor on project, then do a work placement – now a full-time youth worker. Cost of intervention: £2678.46 Value of intervention (fiscal) over 3.5 years: £24,121.38 (2014/15 prices).
- Case Study #2: Paul – young man with autism – worker spots him pulling up weeds at the centre – SLA reveals he is frustrated and wants to learn new skills. Worker helps him write a development plan and gets him involved in a project making things for the community. Now volunteers at two other recycling projects. Cost of intervention: £2746.05 Value (fiscal/economic/social) of intervention: £12,785.09.



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Value analysis: issues

- Technical issues, e.g. scale/actual cash savings
- More fundamental issues – what is valuable?
- Financial cost versus social cost versus human cost
- Which costs should we be trying to save?



- Case Study #3: Hauka – from Africa, asylum seeker, comes to project for help improving his IT skills; Livelihoods worker finds him a course, which he completes, plus help with English and work preparation skills, but asylum claim refused – ends up sofa surfing; worker helps him get housed again, so he can stay in the city he now knows and continue his classes rather than have to move somewhere far away, be isolated and know no-one. Cost of intervention: £2307.36 Value of intervention (fiscal/economic/social) over 3.5 years: £0. Value of support to participant: £0 to priceless...



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MONITORING & EVALUATION:



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Monitoring and evaluation: methods

- Building Livelihoods, Strengthening Communities in Wales – or the Livelihoods project for short – is the first Oxfam Cymru project to include dedicated monitoring and evaluation capacity.
- This has allowed the project to carry out its outputs and outcomes monitoring, plus a value analysis for the pan-Wales project as a whole, as well as for each individual project in the nine partner areas.
- A decade of Oxfam SLA work has also produced learning of potential relevance to future statutory and voluntary sector projects and service provision.



Monitoring and evaluation: learning

- **Outputs are useful; outcomes are important** – the Livelihoods project had to spend as much of its time monitoring outputs as it did outcomes, but outcomes are what makes a project a success or not.



- **Even good partner organisations struggle to monitor their activities without help** – all project workers were trained in a unified monitoring system to ensure comparable data across all partner projects, but many still needed ongoing support and encouragement to use it properly.

Monitoring and evaluation: learning

- **Any monitoring system must be flexible and light-touch** – the Livelihoods project introduced as simple a system as was possible under the agreement it had with funders; even that, however, required amending and slimming down to get worker and participant buy-in.

OXFAM 'MY STORY' TEMPLATE

1. Your details:

What is your name?

How old are you?

Are you a man or a woman?

Where in Wales do you live?

What is your ethnic background?

Now please turn over the page!



- **Voluntary and statutory sectors have a lot more work to do together to assess scalability** – projects and organisations piloting innovative practice in the voluntary sector have neither the resources nor sufficient access to statutory sector data to demonstrate full scalability; pilot projects cannot pump-prime by themselves.



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Case studies

Case Study #3: Phil's dilemma was that he was guaranteed a job if he had an up to date fork lift truck licence with counter balancing; Phil had previously held this licence but it needed to be renewed and the old licence did not have the counter balancing part on it. Phil had been to JCP in Rhyl to explain this and asked them if they could help him to renew his licence and undertake training for the counter balancing part, as this would secure employment. Phil was told that the JCP was unable to help.

The cost of the course was £320 + vat for a full day FLT refresher including CB training and Assessment. The course was booked for Phil and when the details came we discovered that he needed to have his own PPE i.e. a high vis vest, safety boots and a hard hat; the cost of these items was £14.97. The JCP in Rhyl were unable to assist him with those costs so BLSCW did. The BLSCW project covered the cost of the above course and as a result Phil now has employment.

Case studies

Phil has improved his confidence as a result of the intervention through the SLA, before this he was spending almost every day searching for any job that he could apply for that didn't require specific skills and was becoming more and more frustrated because during his searching he was seeing FLT vacancies that he wanted to apply for but didn't because he didn't have a current licence.

The JCP were telling him he wasn't doing enough job searching and needed to step up his search activities.

Phil has improved his livelihood because he is happier, in work and able to support his family.



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Any QUESTIONS?



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