



## Outcomes in Action Monitoring and Evaluation Resources

**Promising 'How to' Tools** \* = most promising tools for CDFIs and community development organizations

\* **Success Measures by NeighborWorks America:** [www.successmeasures.org](http://www.successmeasures.org)

- **What?** Success Measures is an outcome evaluation resource for community development organizations, intermediaries and funders. A social enterprise based at NeighborWorks® America, Success Measures was created by practitioners and funders who wanted to document their impact for the people and communities they serve. Its participatory approach equips nonprofits and their funders with skills and tools needed to demonstrate results and communicate success. Success Measures Data System (SMDS) is a well-vetted, growing set of 122 indicators and 312 data collection instruments that provides survey tools, database, and tabulation of the indicators based on the subscription level. Organizations using Success Measures have web access to the SMDS library of these tools that they can use alone, or in combinations of two to three, to measure the results of community development programs. SMDS also structures data collection tools for fieldwork or online delivery, and tabulates, aggregates and stores the resulting evaluation data for easy retrieval or download for further analysis. Contact Success Measures for more information about subscription costs and levels.
- **Best for?** Community development organizations that need to assess their outcome results.
- **Downside?** Does not include program management and performance (activity, cost, etc.) data and does not allow for trend or benchmarking analysis within Success Measures. Cost can be substantial for a standalone outcomes data collection tool. New price structure upcoming in Spring 2013.

**microTracker with MicroTest by FIELD at the Aspen Institute** performance and outcomes monitoring system for microenterprise development programs:

[www.microTracker.org](http://www.microTracker.org); [www.microtest.org](http://www.microtest.org) and <http://www.fieldus.org/Publications/DataThatWorks.pdf>

- **What?** microTracker and MicroTest data management tools are designed by practitioners and administered by FIELD at The Aspen Institute since 1998 to assess and improve program performance and outcomes. These tools include a national microfinance and microenterprise program census and directory (microTracker); standard program performance and outcome indicators, tools, and protocols (MicroTest); and robust online benchmarking tools (microTracker) and MicroTest custom reports. Annual microTracker subscriptions available at 3 levels: basic (free); premium (\$250/year); and premium plus that includes MicroTest tools, protocols (includes review of your data by FIELD staff), and custom reports (\$650/year). MicroTest training is required for new premium plus subscribers (training packages range from \$650 for online training to \$4,800 for a 2 day intensive MicroTest+ capacity building onsite training and one year of technical assistance). *Data that Works* is a handbook to guide data management capacity building.
- **Best for?** microTracker and MicroTest are ‘must have’ tools for organizations with microenterprise/self-employment programs. Very good for establishing the use of basic data management best practices used in the microfinance and microenterprise industry. Tools can be adapted for other program performance and outcome monitoring purposes.
- **Downside?** Does not track metrics for small businesses at entry (over 5 employees) or other asset building strategies (IDAs for other purposes, homeownership, etc.).

\* **CDFI Assessment & Rating System (CARS):**

<http://www.carsratingsystem.net/default.asp>

- **What?** Launched by the Opportunity Finance Network in 2004, CARS™ is now an independent third-party assessment of a CDFI's impact performance *and* financial strength and performance. CARS™ helps investors confidently assess CDFIs that match their social objectives and risk parameters. A CARS™ assessment includes past performance, current financial position, and risk factors in the future. Ratings are based on five years of historical performance. Contact CARS for more information about rating costs and levels.
- **Best for?** CARS™ currently rates CDFI loan funds with a minimum of five years of lending activity. CDFIs do not need to be certified by the U.S. Treasury Department's CDFI Fund and do not need to be members of Opportunity Finance Network. CARS™ has a three-tiered pricing structure for CDFIs based on their total assets—the larger the CDFI, the higher the fee.
- **Downside?** Cost is substantial for CARS fees as well as staff time needed to implement.

\* **TechSoup for MIS/ technology <http://www.techsoup.org/> & Nonprofit Technology Network [www.nten.org](http://www.nten.org)**

- **What?** TechSoup connects nonprofits with free or deeply discounted new technology products, plus the learning resources needed to make informed decisions about technology and operate at full potential. TechSoup and NTEN build up the tech know-how. In addition to the free stuff available to everyone, NTEN membership—whether for individuals (at \$85/year) or entire organizations (\$1000/year)—gives immediate access to cutting edge technology resources. Here's an example: NTEN Tech Spending/investment benchmarking tool: <http://benchmarks.nten.org/>
- **Best for?** Everyone! Best if you have technology plan and support staff.
- **Downside?** What downside?

\* **Social Return on Investment (SROI) & Economic Impact Analysis:**  
[www.implan.com](http://www.implan.com); **Impact Reporting and Investing Standards (IRIS)**  
<http://iris.thegiin.org/about-iris>

- **What?** IMPLAN software calculates direct, indirect, and induced economic impact based econometric multipliers on social accounting matrices (SAMs & biz transactions) in a specified geographic region. *A complete economic assessment package including data, software, and an external hard drive, providing economic resolution from the National level down to the ZIP Code level. Cost is ~\$800/county, with state and national packages available for higher rates. See website for more information.*

IRIS has been administered by the [Global Impact Investing Network \(GIIN\) Investors' Council](http://www.giin.org) since 2008 to provide a common language and framework that allows comparison and communication across the breadth of national and international organizations that have social or environmental impact as a primary driver. IRIS provides a library of indicators with standard definitions that empowers companies and funds to refine their current performance tracking and enables comparison to other organizations and industry-wide performance benchmarks. IRIS is free for the public good.

- **Best for?** Both IMPLAN and IRIS are best for CDFIs with dedicated data MIS & analysis staff as these take considerable resources to learn, sustain and use to show your 'triple' bottom line—economic, social, and environment returns.
- **Downside?** IMPLAN requires that you have job FTE, NAICS codes, etc. about the businesses you serve. It may be hard to adapt if you have many unique business types you serve.

\* **Policy Map:** [www.policymap.com](http://www.policymap.com)

- **What?** Managed by the Reinvestment Fund (TRF)-- a CDFI that works across the Mid-Atlantic. PolicyMap is a fully web-based Geographic Information System. It captures data in visually powerful ways through custom demographic maps, tables, reports and analysis tool, Analytics. GIS mapping can incorporate your own data and leverage it against the thousands of indicators already available in PolicyMap. Available data includes the latest demographics from census, real estate data, health data, mortgage trends, school performance scores, etc.. As of March 2013 Standard Single User License: \$2,000 annually or \$200/month for 5 users. 7 day free trial available.
- **Best for?** Community development organizations that need to assess and show need for their services in specific geographic regions.
- **Downside?** Can be a substantial investment so best if used to its fullest

### **Other Promising 'How to' Tools**

- SROI/economic impact: <http://www.redf.org/results-sroi.htm> ; [www.svtgroup.net](http://www.svtgroup.net);  
[http://www.opportunityfund.org/sites/default/files/pdf/Ripple\\_Effect\\_Final%20Report.pdf](http://www.opportunityfund.org/sites/default/files/pdf/Ripple_Effect_Final%20Report.pdf)  
<http://www.svtgroup.net/SROInetworkUSA> ;
- Charting Impact, a project of GuideStar, Independent Sector:  
<http://www.chartingimpact.org/about/>
- United Way of America: contact local offices for resources
- Innovation Network: <http://www.innonet.org/tools>
- The Urban Institute: <http://www.urban.org/center/cnp/projects/outcomeindicators.cfm>
- American Evaluation Association (AEA)  
<http://www.eval.org/EvaluationLinks/default.htm>

### **'Measuring Up'—Resources for External Program Comparisons (business development)**

- \* FIELD, [www.fieldus.org](http://www.fieldus.org) MicroTest: [www.microtest.org](http://www.microtest.org) microTracker:  
<http://microtracker.org/>
- CFED: [http://www.cfed.org/knowledge\\_center/research/](http://www.cfed.org/knowledge_center/research/)
- Opportunity Finance Network <http://www.opportunityfinance.net/about/>
- Association of Enterprise Opportunity (AEO), [www.microenterpriseworks.org](http://www.microenterpriseworks.org)  
Standards:  
<http://aeoworks.org/images/uploads/pages/Standards%20UpdatedFeb2008.pdf>
- SBA Office of Advocacy: <http://www.sba.gov/ADVO/>
- Kauffman Foundation: <http://www.kauffman.org/research.cfm> or  
<http://www.entreworld.org/Channel/SE.cfm?Topic=AcMa>
- National Federation of Independent Businesses:  
<http://www.nfib.com/page/researchFoundation>
- Consortium for Entrepreneurship Education [www.entre-ed.org](http://www.entre-ed.org)
- US Association for Small Business and Entrepreneurship (USASBE):  
<http://www.usasbe.org/index.asp>
- National Business Incubator Association (NBIA): <https://www.nbia.org>
- Center for Women's Business Research: <http://www.womensbusinessresearch.org/>
- Credit Builder Alliance, [www.creditbuilderalliance.org](http://www.creditbuilderalliance.org)
- Institute for Financial Literacy: <http://www.financiallit.org/resources/standards.aspx>

### **Technology and Database Product Reviews & Resources**

- <http://www.nten.org/research> : 2012 State of Nonprofit Data; 2011 Nonprofit Technology Staffing and Investments; 2012 The State of the Nonprofit Cloud
- What is in Your Technology Tool Box?  
<http://www.opportunityfinance.net/store/product.asp?pid=197>