



WHY DO I NEED THIS?

Monitor, measure, and document the outcomes and effects of a project. Systematically record and evaluate the impact that the research has on stakeholders, objectives, goals, and key performance indicators (KPIs).

IMPACT CENTRE

Co-created by the Science in Society unit, in consultation with the research divisions.



HSRC
Human Sciences
Research Council

IMPACT TRACKING TEMPLATE

Relevance • Visibility • Impact

What is an Impact Tracking Template?

This is a strategic tool used to monitor, measure, and document the outcomes and effects of a research project, programme, initiative, or activity. The purpose of such a template is to systematically record and evaluate the impact that the research has on various aspects, such as stakeholders, objectives, goals, and key performance indicators (KPIs).

Why is it useful?

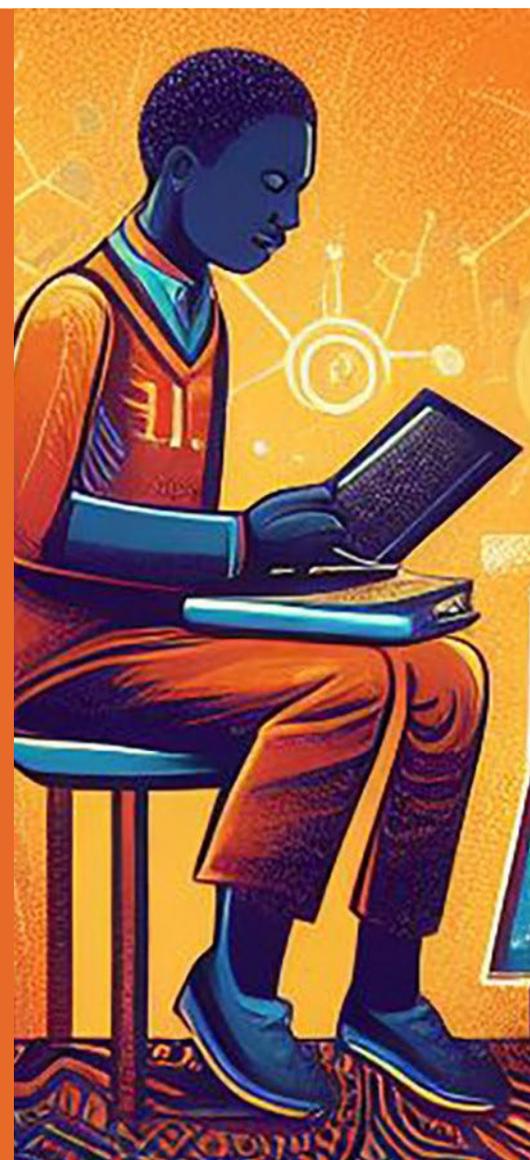
Impact tracking is essential for assessing the success or effectiveness of a project and for making informed decisions about future activities.

So how does this work?

The specifics of an impact tracking template may vary based on your research needs and the nature of the project, as well as the needs of the HSRC. Regularly updating and reviewing the template allows for continuous improvement and informed decision-making throughout the project lifecycle.

An impact tracking template typically includes several key elements. These could include:

- **Objectives and goals** that clearly define the objectives and goals of the project or initiative.
- Identifying and listing **KPIs** that will be used to measure success and impact. Record baseline data for each KPI before the project starts. This provides a reference point for comparison.
- Set specific **targets or benchmarks** for each KPI to indicate the desired level of impact.
- Specify the **data collection methods** related to each KPI and outline a schedule for collecting data at regular intervals throughout the project lifecycle. **Assign responsibilities** for data collection, analysis, and reporting to specific team members. Describe the methods for analysing the collected data to assess impact.
- Define the **format for reporting impact**, including charts, graphs, narratives, or other relevant formats.
- Include a **narrative section** that provides qualitative insights into the impact, including success stories, challenges faced, and lessons learned.
- Specify how and when the impact tracking template will be **updated or revised** to reflect changes in project circumstances.
- Include a section for **feedback and recommendations** based on the impact assessment. This can help inform future decision-making.
- Consider incorporating **visual representations of data**, such as charts or graphs, to enhance understanding.
- Summarise the overall impact and draw conclusions about the success of the project or initiative.



Additional reading on impact tracking and resources

Nagarajan, A, et al.. 2021. [Altmetrics for Research Impact Actuation \(ARIA\): An Impact Tracking Tool for Multidisciplinary and Role-based Cross-Metric Analysis](#). *Journal of Altmetrics*, 4(1), p.2.

[Introducing the Fast Track Impact Tracking Template](#) by Prof Mark Reed

[UCD Dublin Research Impact Toolkit](#) Various tools are available to help you keep track of where your research is being picked up and used. Using them, you might identify where your work is having an impact. The [UCD Impact Planning Canvas](#) tool makes life easier by breaking impact down into its component parts.

Miro is a digital tool that helps you build a visual impact map and discuss everything with your team in real-time using Miro's virtual collaboration platform [Impact Mapping Template](#).

Google Jamboard is an [online whiteboard system](#)

Impact Tracking Template

Impact outcome or objective	Delivery mechanism or activity	Activity indicator	Means of measurement	Progress	Comments	Impact indicator	Means of measurement	Progress	Comments

Worked example: HSRC data downloads

Below is constructed example of a populated Impact Tracking template based on one of the key outcomes of the HIV's LeaPPT+S.

Impact outcome or objective	Delivery mechanism or activity	Activity indicator	Means of measurement	Progress	Comments	Impact indicator	Means of measurement	Progress	Comments
To increase the number of data downloads and utilization of HSRC datasets to maximize on the research investment beyond the HSRC	HSRC engages with Deputy Vice Chancellors of Research on 10 universities in SA to publicize range of research projects and available datasets	10 road shows to universities DVCs in the next year	1 road show per month for the next 10 months		There is need to increase the use of HSRC datasets outside the organization to maximize the research investment benefits	% of Universities who sign an MoU with the HSRC that agree to use/access the HSRC dataset for their student research (PhDs)	MOUs signed		The HSRC has been doing poorly on this LeaPPT+S indicator, so the roadshows are meant to improve this indicator
		Number of data downloads by the 10 universities over the next financial year	Percentage of downloads by universities as a proportion of all downloads		It is important that datasets are curate in time so that they remain relevant to key issues across time and space, thus speedily curation is critical for that	% of PhD students downloading/ using HSRC data set for their research thesis	The indicator will be calculated as: Number of PhD candidate divided by the total number of all downloads, i.e. # of PhD candidates/#of all downloads		One of the potential benefits for this activity is that the HSRC will attract some these bright students to join the organisation.

Below is a link to one other example, TeamPact, an innovative tool for monitoring and tracking impact, that has been used for Early Learning Programmes in South Africa.

Overview

“TeamPact is a data-lite platform developed by Waves for Change, that leverages the selfie culture and artificial intelligence facial recognition technology to make tracking attendance fun and easy. Innovation Edge (IE) invested in the platform to support its development, testing and scaling up. The platform is useful for funders, organisations and sectors working with teams and groups who need accurate attendance to make informed decisions. TeamPact provides instant, transparent and reliable data, which users can share with key stakeholders in real time, enabling effective reporting and data-informed decision-making”.

[WEB TeamPact-Report.pdf \(innovationedge.org.za\)](#)