

Impact matrix

This is a quick reference tool for you to reflect on and understand whether the work you're doing is likely to create effective impact.

For more information visit wearespur.com/tools

Outputs

Outputs are the “things you do” like, creating a video, building a website, designing a system, etc. Although outputs are needed to help create impact, they do not inherently ensure it. For example, a charity might build 1,000 water wells in a region, but the building of the wells won't necessarily improve people's lives if they're not utilised or deployed in an effective manner.

Outcomes

Outcomes are the demonstrable improvements to people's lives. In the water wells example, the reduction of water born disease, improvement to people's health and wellbeing, etc are outcomes.

Symptom

When root causes are not addressed, myriad symptoms manifest. Symptoms are often focussed on over root causes as they easier to fix and more manageable to address. However, the fixing of symptoms is likely to be only temporary. For example, the government might fund additional staffing for overburdened hospitals coping with flu patients. However, this is an intervention and is likely to be a symptom of a different issue. If that "other issue" were to be solved, then the need for additional staffing may be usurped.

Root Cause

Root causes allow symptoms to manifest. They are often harder to understand, and far more complex to solve. However, if addressed correctly, solving root causes is far more profound and long lasting. In the funding example above, the government could divert that funding into immunisation programs and increasing community understanding—potentially removing the need for additional hospital resourcing.

Projects and solutions should always aim to be in the top right-hand corner of the matrix.

