



Vision

"To be a global leader in promoting good corporate governance"

Motto

सत्यं वद। धर्मं चर। इष्टं कुरु तृप्तं भवेत् त्वं कुरु।

Mission

"To develop high calibre professionals facilitating good corporate governance"

Challenges and Technological Solutions in Social Impact Assessment

The challenges related to Social Impact Assessment (SIA) are multifaceted and require careful consideration to ensure accurate and meaningful evaluations.

Challenges in Social Impact Assessment

- **Capturing "Softer Data":** Measuring intangible outcomes such as confidence, self-esteem, and sense of agency can be difficult. Social impact assessors must ensure that appropriate methods are used to capture these outcomes, such as proxy indicators, paisa scales, or narrative numeracy methods. Assessors need to be skilled in linking data to the reported impact indicators.
- **Complexity of Social and Economic Impact:** Organizations often struggle with the documentation and analysis of social and economic impacts. The lack of appropriate, traceable indicators can hinder assessments. This challenge can be mitigated by identifying data needs during the project design phase and hiring qualified professionals familiar with relevant reporting frameworks.
- **Traceability of Stakeholder Groups:** Certain groups, such as adult learners or nomads, may be difficult to trace, making it challenging to gather primary evidence or maintain an audit trail for these populations.
- **Access to Data:** Accessing appropriate data in a user-friendly manner is crucial for drawing conclusions. Organizations may withhold data that contradicts their narratives, complicating the assessment process.
- **Over-Claiming of Impact:** There is a risk of over-claiming impacts. To mitigate this, it is essential to assign roles to intervening variables, capture quality of life indicators from stakeholders, and use dead weights to provide a more accurate picture of impact.
- **Multi-Dimensional Project Implementation:** Projects that converge multiple sectors (e.g., health, sanitation, nutrition) can complicate the SIA process. The complexity and scale of such assessments can make the process lengthy and cumbersome, potentially affecting the rigor of the evaluations.

- **Lack of Qualified Social Impact Assessors:** There is often a shortage of assessors who are trained to conduct evaluations according to Social Impact Assessment (Audit) Standards aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This can limit the availability of accredited experts across various thematic sectors.

Use of Technology in Social Impact Assessment

Technology can play a significant role in enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency of Social Impact Assessments. Social impact assessors should consider the following technological applications:

- **Stakeholder Interaction:** Utilizing virtual meetings and phone surveys can facilitate communication with stakeholders, making it easier to gather qualitative data.
- **Information Database:** Developing a comprehensive database that includes information on project sites, donors, stakeholders, beneficiaries, volunteers, and staff can streamline data collection and management.
- **Data Analysis and Visualization:** Employing IT tools for data analysis, visualization, and the presentation of infographics can enhance the clarity and impact of the findings, making it easier for stakeholders to understand the results.

Addressing these challenges and leveraging technology, Social Impact Assessors can improve the quality and reliability of their assessments, ultimately leading to more effective interventions and better outcomes for communities.

Source: NISM Series XXIII: Social Impact Assessors Certification Examination workbook
