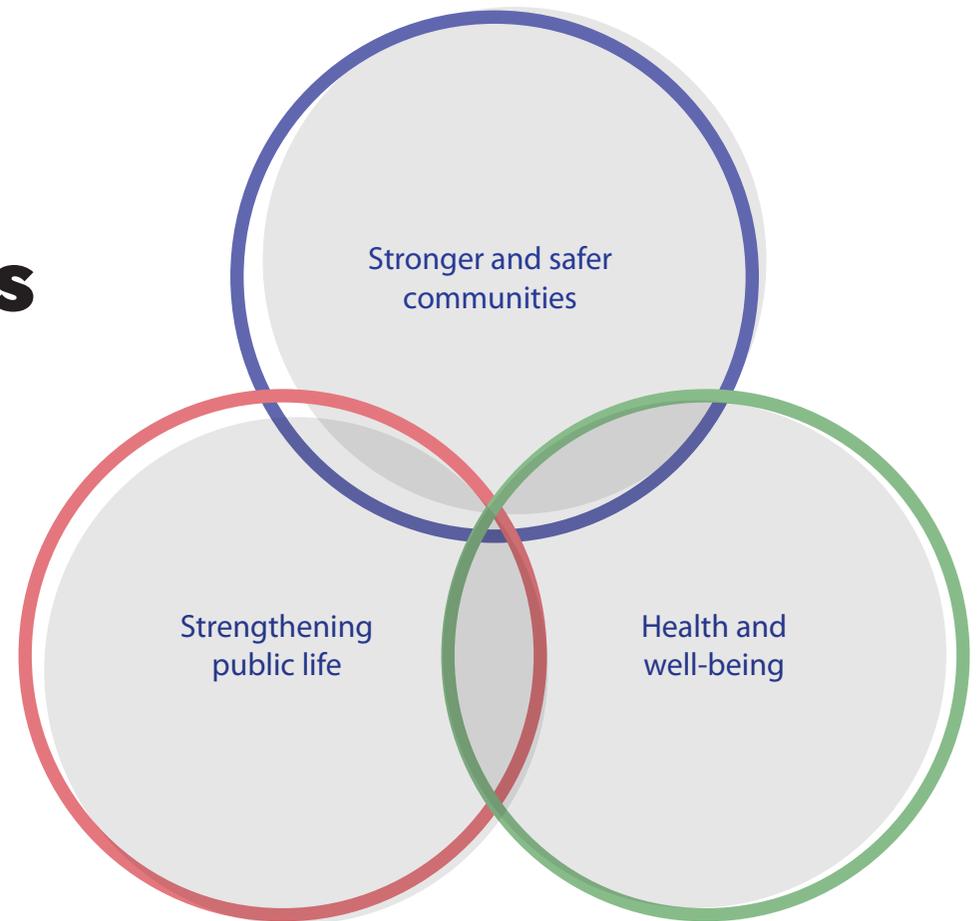


Generic Social Outcomes Indicator Bank

For museums, libraries and archives



MLA: Generic Social Outcomes for museums, libraries and archives

Background

The Generic Social Outcomes (GSOs) outline ways in which museums, libraries and archives impact on social and community themes: Stronger and Safer Communities, Strengthening Public Life and Health and Well-Being.

The Generic Social Outcomes (GSOs) sit alongside the Generic Learning Outcomes (GLOs) as part of the Inspiring Learning for All framework. Over the past five years the GLOs have become an increasingly important tool for the Museum, Library and Archive sector. The GSOs have been developed to help demonstrate the sector's social contribution within the framework of key government policy drivers. They are also an effective tool to help with the planning of outcome focussed projects and programmes.

Research by organisations such as IPSOS Mori and the Henley Centre have identified that there is an environment of increasing cynicism and disenchantment with the political process – reflected in low election turnout and a sense of powerlessness. It has also been shown that there is a correlation between feelings of empowerment and involvement in local issues and with levels of satisfaction with the area where you live.

Within this environment MLA funded research on the potential social impact of museums, in the development of cultural participation.

This led to the development of Generic Social Outcomes (GSOs) – a national framework developed and piloted by the Burns Owen Partnership (BOP) in 2005.

This national GSO framework was developed as a combination of:

- a 'bottom up' process of developing the framework with practitioners, staff from regional agencies and MLA's Learning and Access team
- a 'top down' process of aligning the sector's potential social contribution with key drivers of government policy – through consultation with external bodies (e.g. IDeA, Audit Commission, DCMS) and a review of relevant policy documents

The result was the creation of 3 Generic social Outcomes: Stronger and Safer Communities, Strengthening Public Life and Health and Well-Being (Tier 1).

Each of these 3 GSOs is subdivided into a set of social outcome themes (Tier 2).

The Indicator Bank

In 2008 MLA North East and the North East Regional Museums Hub commissioned CHE Associates to design and develop an indicator bank, which will support sector staff to use the GSO framework in planning, delivery and evaluation of services. This work was funded by MLA North East through the Commissioned Projects Grant Programme.

The core aim for developing this Indicator Bank was to create a tool to build on and extend these two tiers. Based on research into current understanding of how the GSOs may be used, it subdivides each of the 2nd tier social outcome themes into more in-depth outcomes. By so doing, a tool is created to practically assist museums, libraries and archives in measuring the social outcomes of their work (Tier 3).

This Indicator Bank, for GSOs, has been developed to provide practical guidance to practitioners, grounded in real practice and which will:

- Inform the planning process
- Inform the review and evaluation process
- Enable museums to capture the difference they make to people's lives in terms of stronger, safer communities, health and well-being and strengthening public life.

The indicators within this Indicator Bank can be used by an organisation across different activity areas including learning, outreach, exhibitions and collections.

The bank of indicators can inform aims and objectives in project planning. In addition, the Bank incorporates generic questions that can be used as a guide for evaluation to capture outcomes. Following a review of regional and national projects and evaluation data, this Bank also presents example evidence from real life museum case studies.

Learning

Learning is the core process that links the three Generic Social Outcomes and it is at the heart of this document. Activities in museums, libraries and archives that foster behavioural change (whether individual or social) necessarily involve learning (active engagement, awareness and participation). The sector benefits individuals and communities by creating opportunities for learning about ourselves, our communities and our context.

Museums, libraries and archives have the potential, some would say responsibility, to help people better understand who they are and where they come from.

Although learning is integral to social change none of the Tier 2 indicators focus explicitly on formal learning or skills development. This is a critical area for further consideration when using this tool. In this Indicator Bank, as a starting point, each Tier 3 indicator has been linked to one or more of the Generic Learning Outcomes (GLOs). (A key is provided on the first page of each separate section of the tool).

Creation of a definitive guide

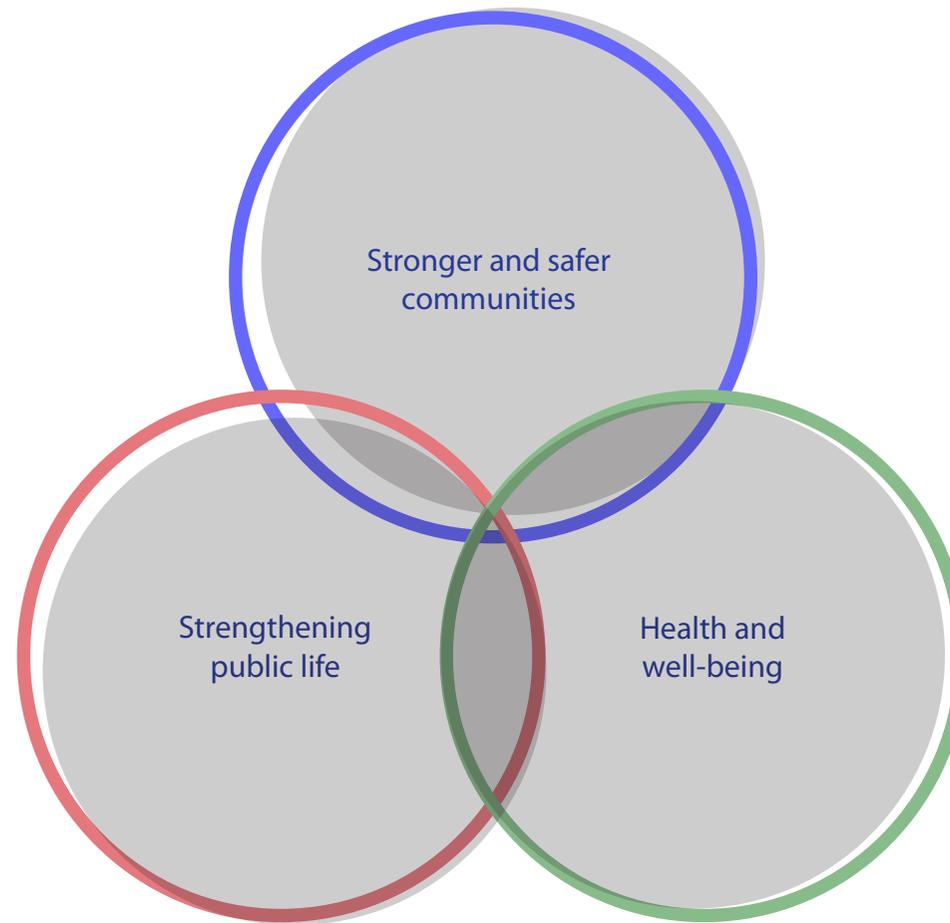
This document is a "work in progress". During research to create the Bank it was not always possible to identify 'strong' examples of evidence for every indicator. Those examples deemed as 'weak' are not incorporated into this Bank.

Yet as the use of GSOs expands, those who use this Bank are encouraged to identify 'strong' examples from their own practices. It is intended that these can be added to the Indicator Bank to create a 'definitive' guide to using and interpreting the GSOs.

To assist practice, in Appendix 1 there is a brief summary of the range, benefits and appropriate applications of evaluation methods that are suitable to capture outcomes.

Appendix 2 contains acknowledgements and contact details for the North East Regional Museums Hub and for MLA.

Tier 1. Social outcomes framework for museums, libraries and archives



Tier 2. Social outcomes themes

1. Stronger & Safer Communities

1.1 Improving group and inter-group dialogue and understanding

1.2 Supporting cultural diversity and identity

1.3 Encouraging familial ties and relationships

1.4 Tackling the fear of crime and anti-social behaviour

1.5 Contributing to crime prevention and reduction

2. Strengthening Public Life

2.1 Encouraging and supporting awareness and participation in local-decision making and wider civic and political engagement

2.2 Building the capacity of community and voluntary groups

2.3 Providing safe, inclusive and trusted public spaces

2.4 Enabling community empowerment through the awareness of rights, benefits and external services

2.5 Improving the responsiveness of services to the needs of the local community, including other stakeholders

3. Health & Well-Being

3.1 Encouraging healthy lifestyles and contributing to mental and physical well-being

3.2 Supporting care and recovery

3.3 Supporting older people to live independent lives

3.4 Helping children and young people to enjoy life and make a positive contribution