

Hugh Rolo

Locality

Umbrella

Where can you see 'obvious gaps' in capacity building provision: what's worked well (or not so well) in the past, and why?

Small amounts £5-£10k of development finance accessible through a proportionate process in "real time" (so rolling programme) with allowance for some to be used by the social enterprise to backfill capacity and some to buy in support expertise --well networked so similar proposal can share peer learning.

My Community Rights Pre-feasibly is a good model.

Consider forming cohorts by issuing specific calls in particular policy areas (eg preventative interventions for early stage dementia/ youth mental health/ welfare rights) perhaps supported by online seminars

What evidence of the scale and nature of these issues should we be aware of, and where are there gaps in the evidence?

see Keep it Local

Tom Fox

UnLtd

Supporter of social entrepreneurs

Where can you see 'obvious gaps' in capacity building provision: what's worked well (or not so well) in the past, and why?

Key insights from UnLtd's work with social entrepreneurs seeking to access social investment:

1. Capacity building support is best when it is bespoke, not standardized, responding to specific competencies and gaps.
2. Capacity building support may need to be more intensive for those social entrepreneurs from certain backgrounds, if they have had less exposure to business and have less well-developed networks.
3. Support should be tailored to the social outcome/theme as well as the social venture itself.
4. Capacity building support is needed at every stage, and support shouldn't stop after the first round of investment.
5. From our experience, social entrepreneurs most need a combination of tailored support to develop their business expertise (e.g. finance, sales, marketing) plus access to networks.
6. Some require support related to spinning out trading entities from existing charities.
7. For unregulated social sector organisations, there is a need for capacity building support on embedding social mission and meeting any related requirements of social investors.
8. Most social ventures need help with social impact measurement and reporting, which small, early stage social ventures find hard to prioritise. Social investors should recognise that they may be the primary audience for impact data, and investing in robust measurement at the early stage may not feel like a priority to the social entrepreneur from a sales/revenue point of view.

What evidence of the scale and nature of these issues should we be aware of, and where are there gaps in the evidence?

See our Findings Papers 5, 6, 7 and 8 available at <https://unltd.org.uk/news/research-publications/>.

How do you want to tell us more, now and in the future?

We'd be pleased to share our experience and that of our Award Winners more broadly and look forward to discussing the best way to do so.

Debbie Risborough
Cornwall Community Accountancy Service
Social Sector Organisation

Where can you see 'obvious gaps' in capacity building provision: what's worked well (or not so well) in the past, and why?

I have seen larger organisations scale up in the past using financing but generally these are organisations with a £100,000+ turnover. Smaller organisations have not yet built up their surpluses and will often take on loan finance which makes them struggle to the extent that it prevents growth rather than assisting it.

What evidence of the scale and nature of these issues should we be aware of, and where are there gaps in the evidence?

In terms of smaller businesses I have evidence of sole traders trying to grow their business and struggling. In terms of charitable organisations the evidence I have is that growth is only achieved by grant funding rather than loan financing. However this may be due to the conservative nature of trustees and the natural wish to safeguard the organisations. I have no evidence on successful growth achieved by financing in the third sector.

How do you want to tell us more, now and in the future?

Local voluntary sector infra structure organisations such as CVS's are good to get the word out, along with survey monkey questionnaires. The most successful event we have had was a collaboration of 3 interested parties ourselves, a bank, and another accountancy body. Media used was a mix of press releases, social media and direct email.

An event that gives training on current topics seems to work.

Jane Hayes
Edberts House
Social Sector Organisation

Where can you see 'obvious gaps' in capacity building provision: what's worked well (or not so well) in the past, and why?

Lots of charities I have worked in have the resource e.g. senior staff who have the knowledge but not the time to develop capacity so what is needed is short term funding to back fill or use these peoples time.

Some schemes in the past have been too prescriptive e.g. only offering their consultants to do work. Consultants are ok but often want to use your time and ideas. It might be better spent just getting on with the issue.

Sometimes you need a mixture of both your time and a bit of help from an expert. I think bursaries to help groups see similar groups who have achieved what you are trying is good. Also a network to link people together is good.

What evidence of the scale and nature of these issues should we be aware of, and where are there gaps in the evidence?

There is little evidence in this field - ultimately you are investing in people. Do you trust the people, can they prove their track record is more important than can the find evidence to make you feel better

How do you want to tell us more, now and in the future?

I don't use many online tools or platforms. I read emails, follow some web updates like Third Sector or Charity Finance Group.

In the North East of England I refer to VONNE website and read their updates - best way of sharing information

Anne McCrossan

Visceral Business

A facilitator building impact capacity and social business investment models

Where can you see 'obvious gaps' in capacity building provision: what's worked well (or not so well) in the past, and why?

Research findings from the Visceral Business Social Charity study over several years revealed how much charities struggle with demonstrating impact using data. Data inventories are patchy and data strategy is not widely understood at a senior level. The research findings, developed in conjunction with Just Giving, also showed that smaller charities are often more effective, pound for pound, in terms of how their supporter networks spread news and generate support and income. This capability would be powered further by developing better digital infrastructure for charities in order to demonstrate non-profit social impact for charities both large and small. The overwhelming priority, as I see it from looking at over 285 charities large and small over a four year period, is that charities will be able to develop much better social returns when they address this.

What evidence of the scale and nature of these issues should we be aware of, and where are there gaps in the evidence?

The link to the Social Charity studies is here <http://visceralbusiness.com/section/reports/> . They are available as free downloads. Also this summary <http://www.theguardian.com/voluntary-sector-network/2013/sep/19/social-media-charity-index-2013> . We know there is a great deal of overlap and also gaps in non-profit provision. Developing the capability to create in-house data skills and integrated data strategies within non-profits would help substantially to eliminate these issues as well as provide the stimulus for increased ROI from social investment funding.

How do you want to tell us more, now and in the future?

Basecamp and Slack.

Peter Gilson
Northstar Ventures Ltd
Finance Intermediary (SIFI)

Where can you see 'obvious gaps' in capacity building provision: what's worked well (or not so well) in the past, and why?

gaps are in:

1. negotiating skills particularly in respect of performance related contracts
2. marketing & pricing strategies
3. Risk awareness vis a vis risk averse -- the sector needs the skills to become more aware of the risks rather than averse to taking risk - social investment is a classic example of this
4. Building sustainability through generating unrestricted income
5. Capacity building of core skills is required to improve efficiency of VCSE operations

What evidence of the scale and nature of these issues should we be aware of, and where are there gaps in the evidence?

1. Evidence can be seen in the demand for likes of Big Potential.
2. There is also a growing number of VCSE's looking to set up trading arms
3. A recent report showed that grants from foundations now exceeds grants from Public sector, with Public sector increasing the % of their monies to the sector through contracts

How do you want to tell us more, now and in the future?

We have only used the likes of SKYPE, video conferencing, etc where two offices are meeting. We haven't used this where there would be multi site participants - if can be achieved and costs reasonable we would participate.

Depending on size of groups meetings could be held in key locations with good links e.g. Central London, York, Birmingham, & Bristol

adrian ashton

Adrian Ashton

interested individual/consultant

Where can you see 'obvious gaps' in capacity building provision: what's worked well (or not so well) in the past, and why?

mixture of focussed consultancy support with development grant - various programmes have used this model, and evaluations against all find that the consultancy support usually found to be more valuable than the cash;

time-scales of support can be restrictive: for ventures to fully engage with, and benefit from, support they need to make sure it doesn't disrupt their ability to keep running - therefore needs to be structured over 6-12 month period

What evidence of the scale and nature of these issues should we be aware of, and where are there gaps in the evidence?

evaluations of previous programmes such as 'enterprise 4 all', co-operative enterprise hub, making local food work, etc etc would seem to offer good range of evidences;

gaps in evidence seem to be in relation to views and experiences of those who are delivering the support

How do you want to tell us more, now and in the future?

am currently using JustAct within the national community economic development programme, but as with all platforms there's little engagement by the wider community of stakeholders - staged focus groups would ensure better update and engagement

Donald Simpson

Emmaus Salford

Social sector organisation.

Where can you see 'obvious gaps' in capacity building provision: what's worked well (or not so well) in the past, and why?

I am a trustee of a small charitable organisation which helps homeless people and which aims to become financially self-sustaining by operating a household-goods refurbishing and recycling business. Getting the start-up money is difficult. One of the difficulties is the plethora of organisations which appear either to be in the business of helping projects like ours, or else are in the business of helping the organisations which appear to be in the business of helping projects like ours. Exactly what each one does, how they relate to each other, which ones to attempt to approach, and which would be a diversion of resources is very far from clear.

So the first gap in capacity-building provision I would like you to fill is the provision of a catalogue of organisations and a some kind of route map/relationship diagram so that grass-roots outfits like ours:

- a) can get a better grasp on it all, and
- b) can avoid wasting the time of people we shouldn't be bothering.

What evidence of the scale and nature of these issues should we be aware of, and where are there gaps in the evidence?

Evidence of the issue? Consider how easy it would be for you (or someone whom you commission) to do what I ask. If it would be difficult, my case is made!

If it would be easy, please do it anyway!

How do you want to tell us more, now and in the future?

I am happy to answer questionnaires and surveys, be interviewed, receive visitors, if the helps you but we are not experts in the whole of the social investment landscape (see above), nor realistically, can we be expected to be. We only know our own experience. This we are happy to share.

Sally Cupitt

NCVO Charities Evaluation Services

NCVO is an umbrella body: within that, CES are evaluation consultants

Where can you see 'obvious gaps' in capacity building provision: what's worked well (or not so well) in the past, and why?

Charities and social enterprises still need considerable amounts of support in both planning and impact-focused evaluation; many also fail to see the inherent links between the two. While many in the sector have really moved on in this field, others are still struggling even to get the basics in place (for example, being able identify a basic theory of change, monitor a handful of key outcomes from it, and then use the data for decision-making).

There are a lot of resources already available. However, there are sections of the voluntary sector that still don't know where to go for help. And for many, there are limits as to how far they can go alone, based on free resources.

Many need consultancy support to move them on but can't afford it. Support doesn't need to be extensive; we (NCVO Charities Evaluation Services) run a number of support programmes for funders where grantees just get 2-6 days. This can really get people to the point where they are starting to develop their own evaluation work.

When support is accessed, its not always joined up. This can result in, for example, a strategic plan not referencing the high level goals in a theory of change.

Timescale is an issue; the recent Impact Readiness Fund could have been a great opportunity but the timescale meant that the money was not as effective as it might have been. Developing internal systems for evaluation and impact assessment isn't just about introducing tools and processes; it can often be about whole-organisation culture change. This takesw time - it can be two years in some organisations.

What evidence of the scale and nature of these issues should we be aware of, and where are there gaps in the evidence?

Our research in 2008 (<http://www.ces-vol.org.uk/Publications-Research/publications-free-downloads/accountability-and-learning-research-report>), while done some time ago, still has considerable relevance today. NPC did a piece of work drawn from this a few years after that's worth picking up on too.

John Hannen

GMCVO

umbrella body

Where can you see 'obvious gaps' in capacity building provision: what's worked well (or not so well) in the past, and why?

Very little capacity building works because it's often untargeted or badly targeted. It's important support is directed in the economic segments where there is potential unmet economic demand - no point in helping unsustainable business approaches transform into not particularly sustainable business approaches. Particular example being support to the sector for Transforming Rehabilitation - completely wasted because the business models of primes and the pricing strategy of MoJ did not support complex supply chains and significant sub-contracting. I see little point in targeting investment at social enterprises engaging in public service delivery at all unless they can potentially deliver at pace and scale - in which case they'll need to have the capital required to deal with TUPE - loans won't help here as contracts are never long enough to cover transfer costs. Opportunities for growth may be more in delivery of personal services and retail - esp with social firm model - and that's where investment and support should be directed. So for example we believe that locally there is growing demand for low-volume high-margin producers that can avoid direct competition with low-cost commodity producers in low-wage nations and large corporate entities by creating customised products for less price-sensitive customers. There is also a need to help small start-ups build a credit track record in order to prepare them for larger scale lending. In this way capacity is built through managing and working with a loan rather than an off-the-peg training course. Critical - in order to really make the most of opportunities within the economy enterprises need social marketplaces to enable them to access customers. This is a largely undeveloped area of capacity building. There's also a massive unrealised opportunity linked to an ageing economy as many mainstream retailers and service providers are not adjusting to shifts in disposable income and in developing work opportunities for highly skilled people who may need to leave traditionally managed workplaces due to caring responsibilities or changes in health.

What evidence of the scale and nature of these issues should we be aware of, and where are there gaps in the evidence?

There is very little evidence available to social enterprises directly trading with the public of wider economic demand - they just don't have access to the data large corporations have. So for example large retailers have significant

levels of info on the buying habits of customers and the demand they're not currently meeting. This is essential to good product development. We also need to understand the importance of market structures in supporting small enterprises - eg we have some evidence in the private sector that small independent markets can support low-volume high-margin providers but no similar robust evidence exists for social markets that we're aware of.

How do you want to tell us more, now and in the future?

It's important to go where people are and not to develop online tools that just end up unused. We would support engagement with Social Enterprise UK to link to the sector and to local forums as we and colleagues have faith in their ability to represent the diverse nature of the sector.

Gerald Oppenheim,
Camden Citizens Advice Bureau Service
Social sector organisation

Where can you see 'obvious gaps' in capacity building provision: what's worked well (or not so well) in the past, and why?

The biggest gap for an advice giving charity is that it does not have an asset against which it can borrow to develop its services and capacity as well as its financial sustainability. Yet it needs to invest in new ways of advice delivery to remain relevant. It is not possible to rely solely on face to face delivery any longer. It is virtually impossible to borrow for the technology and training required to develop better ways of being contacted and responding to need.

What evidence of the scale and nature of these issues should we be aware of, and where are there gaps in the evidence?

The evidence is not obvious or easily identifiable other than through the experience of individual organisations. We have evidence of demand for our services and that it is increasing at a time when resources to meet it are shrinking. Where a charity is reliant for its income solely on grants and contracts and does not generate funds through selling its services in any substantial way, the ability to innovate is seriously constrained because it is hard or impossible to secure the investment needed.

How do you want to tell us more, now and in the future?

We would be happy to meet and/or exchange views by Skype or e mail. This response is being submitted by Camden CAB Service although we are part of a wider network of advice givers in the borough and we work in partnership specifically with the Elfrida Rathbobe Society on some initiatives.

Mandy Douglas

RLSB

Social Sector Organisation

Where can you see 'obvious gaps' in capacity building provision: what's worked well (or not so well) in the past, and why?

Ensuring that any support incorporates:

Core funding from the CE down to allow 'business as normal' whilst senior staff focus on developing the future business

Innovation (true innovation where success is not a fundamental criteria)

Evaluation of work and sharing of good practice across the relevant sectors.

Development of services based on evidence from evaluations of similar services.

What evidence of the scale and nature of these issues should we be aware of, and where are there gaps in the evidence?

There is a wealth of evidence that underpins the need for investment in an organisations growth, sustainability, staff and understand of service users to lead to a better motivated workforce in an organisation that is better equipped and able to meet and exceed the needs of their service users.

There is little evidence to suggest that underinvestment leads to lower standards or quality services but some economists, like Larry Summers, call it "secular stagnation". Others refer to it as "Japanisation". But all agree that after too many years of inadequate growth in advanced economies, substantial longer-term risks have emerged, not only for the wellbeing of citizens but also for the health and stability of the global economy Investment is a necessary bet on the future.

How do you want to tell us more, now and in the future?

Survey Monkey

London Portals

Competefor

NCVO

LVSTC

Third Sector News

Children and Young People Now

VODG and other networks

Susan Collins
PureSignCo
Innovator

Where can you see 'obvious gaps' in capacity building provision: what's worked well (or not so well) in the past, and why?

Investing in prototype construction which, when completed could be a stand alone investment vehicle and be self sufficient. Prototypes of a certain nature could have an enormous social impact on a community.

The majority of funding considers this too risky but it's not big investment so limits the risk and once made people can visualise it's social impact.

What evidence of the scale and nature of these issues should we be aware of, and where are there gaps in the evidence?

Without sounding too harsh my experience has been that statistics supporting the gap in the market does not weigh above someone's personal view.

How do you want to tell us more, now and in the future?

Communicating face to face right at the beginning not at the end. Passion drives initiative and innovation and is driven by personal experience.

How can anyone appreciate the focus, tenacity and years of hard work on paper concluding with "too risky"

Prototype funding is zero from my experience even if it does have huge social impact.

Paul Miller
Bethnal Green Ventures
SIFI

Where can you see 'obvious gaps' in capacity building provision: what's worked well (or not so well) in the past, and why?

Very little support or finance available for tech-based social ventures that are trying to show that what they've built works and has impact and grow a viable organisation at the same time. They need help with demonstrating their impact, hiring, marketing and raising further investment. The gap is for £40k-£150k of finance which needs to be in the form of equity or convertible debt in order not to put off future impact investors.

What evidence of the scale and nature of these issues should we be aware of, and where are there gaps in the evidence?

There are now hundreds if not thousands of tech-based social ventures starting up each year (we're just one programme and had over 250 applications last year). We've supported 65 ventures and seen this 'missing middle' catch teams out many times. We've collected a lot of survey data from our alumni about the barriers they face which we're very happy to share.

How do you want to tell us more, now and in the future?

Happy to set up workshops/interviews/meetings with the social ventures we've supported. Also happy to share the data we've collected through questionnaires and quantitative measures of ventures' progress.

Amanda Newbold
Talent Match Staffs
interested group

Where can you see 'obvious gaps' in capacity building provision: what's worked well (or not so well) in the past, and why?

not sure what the gaps are

What evidence of the scale and nature of these issues should we be aware of, and where are there gaps in the evidence?

not sure

How do you want to tell us more, now and in the future?

We would be interested in finding out about successful projects and also how we can find support for our 3 potential projects

Hazel Tilbury

Basingstoke NeighbourCare

small local charity

Where can you see 'obvious gaps' in capacity building provision: what's worked well (or not so well) in the past, and why?

There is a gap in core funding for small local charities. This in the past used to be funded by Local Authorities. Without core funding many will close. Most funding appears to be for new projects

What evidence of the scale and nature of these issues should we be aware of, and where are there gaps in the evidence?

There is a need for funding for the management of volunteers. Volunteers give good value for money but they need a resource/member of staff to recruit, train and support them. Otherwise they will not stay long.

The use of volunteer labour still incurs a cost.

How do you want to tell us more, now and in the future?

Communicate with umbrella voluntary organisation such as Basingstoke Voluntary Action. You could also attend their Voluntary Sector Forum meetings

Sally Young
Newcastle CVS
umbrella body

Where can you see 'obvious gaps' in capacity building provision: what's worked well (or not so well) in the past, and why?

As funding gets tighter, fewer founders are willing to fund central costs and just want to focus on direct provision. Although most charities have cut central costs, we still need this and no-one is willing to pay for it

What evidence of the scale and nature of these issues should we be aware of, and where are there gaps in the evidence?

our taking the temperature 2015 survey of voluntary organisations in Newcastle show that 74% of us have seen an increase in demand in the last year. The variations in funding (increase and decreases) are happening more frequently which means we have to spent more time in internal functions increasing / reducing staff, TUPE, changing premises, etc rather than trying to deliver services

So much of the noise in the charity sector focuses on the large but 1% of organisations have 73% of the assets. Also more than half of all charities have assets of below£10,000

We work with (mainly local) organisations with incomes of £50,000 -£1.5million often in areas of poverty, regeneration who work in greatest areas of need.

Do not be swayed by the big voices from big organisations.

Social investment is far too complex for the vast majority of organisations and it is not clear how it could be paid back, and by whom. Be honest about its limitations

How do you want to tell us more, now and in the future?

i get 100-120 emails a day and cannot even start to engage with everything

I would make a plea not just to be invited to 2 hour London centric events - takes a day of my time and £250 train ticket if the event starts before 10.30. There is a world of need outside London

Engage with local councils for voluntary service as we are close to our members (we have over 600 local members) and are in regular contact with them

Pal Singh

BHat Singh Sabha

Social Enterprise

Where can you see 'obvious gaps' in capacity building provision: what's worked well (or not so well) in the past, and why?

Capacity building has always been about looking for skills and infrastructure shortages in third sector and trying find ways with which these key elements could be bought in to provide enough "capacity" to get the job done. A very one size fits all approach. Quite prescriptive at times.

Capacity building has worked well when it is delivered to meet the particular organisation.

What evidence of the scale and nature of these issues should we be aware of, and where are there gaps in the evidence?

Our organisation "Bhat Singh Sabha" has in the past participated in capacity building programmes. They were delivered more for the funders own aims and objectives rather than identifying specific needs of our organisation and its aims.

How do you want to tell us more, now and in the future?

Capacity building should be on the basis of a SWOT analysis of an organisation. The SWOT should be used to improve the organisations operational characteristics and steer that organisation into a sustainable future.

The circumstances in which the third sector operates is no different to that of "for profit" organisations. It is important to have strong strategic aims but a highly adaptable approach to ride out the peak and troughs of the operating environment.

Jane Hartley

VONNE

Umbrella body

Where can you see 'obvious gaps' in capacity building provision: what's worked well (or not so well) in the past, and why?

Capacity Building needs to be available in a variety of formats, training events but also bespoke one to one mentoring and support tailored to specific organisational need .

Peer mentoring is an obvious gap but can be challenging to facilitate due to organisational capacity.

Capacity building shouldn't stop at the CEO , it needs to include Trustees/Director and other key staff. Ways to engage trustees within more traditional long standing organisations needs to be developed.

Capacity building provision needs to be available locally and tailored to scale of organisation. Organisational diagnostic tools need to take account of scale and geographical location - one size doesn't fit all.

Bodies distributing Capacity building funding such recognise that there is an in house organisational cost to capacity building not just an external consultancy cost and provide for it.

Recently funding such as SIB and Big Potential funding has been focussed on organisations becoming 'social investment ready' when investment and borrowing may not be appropriate at this point or indeed at any point. Organisations require capacity building to adapt to new markets, take advantage of contracting opportunities, develop and broaden income streams which all contribute to sustainability and may remove the need for loans and investment.

What evidence of the scale and nature of these issues should we be aware of, and where are there gaps in the evidence?

A recent Third Sector Trends Report, 'Key findings from the Northern Rock Foundation Third Sector Trends Study in the North East' Aug 2015, <http://www.nr-foundation.org.uk/third-sector-trends.php> a longitudinal study funded by Northern Rock Foundation on the sector in the NE identified 'the squeezed middle' organisations with a turnover of between 50-250k as being at most risk of the negative impact of austerity measures and reduced public sector funding as these organisations are not adapting to the new funding climate and emerging markets. There is evidence to suggest that the 'squeezed middle' includes organisations with a turnover up to £1 million.

The inequalities agenda comes into play in the north east as the Third Sector Trends survey identified that 42% of organisations in the poorest areas describe themselves as being heavily dependent on public sector funding as oppose to 10% in the richest areas.

In addition the NE Thirds sector survey found that 42% of organisations surveyed are taking action to increase earned income but they tend to be larger organisations in more urban areas. Smaller organisations are less likely to be changing their practices.

How do you want to tell us more, now and in the future?

VONNE as the regional infrastructure body for the NE are able to organise regional events engaging with the sector and also coordinate meetings of local infrastructure bodies in the region which Access Foundation may wish to tap into.

We prefer to attend meetings in the region or in the north than travelling to London where possible due to cost and time required.

Video conferencing, Skype, telecons are workable.

Email links to web/blog updates are good.

John Probert

CapitaliSE

Social Sector Organisation

Where can you see 'obvious gaps' in capacity building provision: what's worked well (or not so well) in the past, and why?

Local or regional people on the ground who can offer impartial advice and support through the process of taking on Social Investment

What evidence of the scale and nature of these issues should we be aware of, and where are there gaps in the evidence?

Within the NE Region one full time person was able to achieve 75 deals, worth over £5M pounds in 5 years. This was during the early stages of social investment between 2004 & 2009. In the current climate more could be achieved.

How do you want to tell us more, now and in the future?

Lynne Misner
Small Acts of Kindness
Social sector organisation

Where can you see 'obvious gaps' in capacity building provision: what's worked well (or not so well) in the past, and why?

We are a small but rapidly growing social enterprise registered as a CIC. Due to the fact that we are at an early stage of development it is hard to say what has/hasn't worked well previously. For us there are limits due to the structure of the organisation - not being a charity, to funds generally that we can access and then almost none that offer capacity building grants/finance. We need a combination of core costs such as salaries, R&D and evaluation and capital costs when the project that we are developing moves closer to happening. For us the 'gap' is in funding offered generally to CICs

What evidence of the scale and nature of these issues should we be aware of, and where are there gaps in the evidence?

Small CIC's are often overlooked in favour of more established organisations. There seems to be a reluctance to share the risk and vision that smaller start ups have

How do you want to tell us more, now and in the future?

A shared area on a website, newsletters, blogs.

Not webinars or anything that is limited to specific times as often smaller start up directors are juggling other daytime commitments

Andy Ellis
Doncaster Deaf Trust
Registered Charity

Where can you see 'obvious gaps' in capacity building provision: what's worked well (or not so well) in the past, and why?

Loans frighten people to death. The message, all the way through, is confused by the talk of grants and loans in the same breath. The language needs to be much simpler. Many organisations, us included, want to go down a Social enterprise route, have a good idea and simply need access to a small amount of funding plus advice and support to start-up in a small, to test the idea. What we don't want is to have access to large sums of money, some of which will have to be paid back. We're all 'uncertain' which is why we want to dip our toes in and to give it a try, but recent recession and austerity has made us all super-cautious, so loans are very off-putting. It's made all the more complex by the process, which for me just this morning, has involved clicking on several links to external sites and then to this blog, just to get this far. Make the information simple, downscale and get the information into just one space.

What evidence of the scale and nature of these issues should we be aware of, and where are there gaps in the evidence?

By its very nature Capacity Building is attractive to smaller organisations who want to grow and who believe they can with just a little help. So announcing this consultation, which takes you to an external web-page, which then splits into several different areas each holding a bit more information that finally lead to yet another external blog, makes life much more complicated than it should be and also takes a lot more time to get to grips with.

Stick to what people know. Ask for ideas and then maybe progress those ideas through three or four stages, knocking our projects as you go until you finally reach a core of projects that have what you think it will take to become really viable businesses. Don't force people into collating reams and reams of data from different places just to get a handle on the process. I shudder to think how many organisations will have been put off because of this convoluted process.

How do you want to tell us more, now and in the future?

Do an online video-conference. Announce it via NCVOs and social media and let people sign in to the conference. The conference should make it clear what the process will be and about what the grant and loans aspects are and what they mean. Follow that up by a simple stage one application

that just outlines the idea and current capacity and for those that show promise, have a one to one conversation before as a second stage process. It allows you to control numbers and your time and it keeps it simply for organisations that don't have the resources to spend loads of time gathering information and trying to understand what they need to do.

Elizabeth Borg
Community Learning Partnership
Incorporated charity

Where can you see 'obvious gaps' in capacity building provision: what's worked well (or not so well) in the past, and why?

There is a gap in allowing organisations genuinely to build capacity, without necessarily having to have a 'project'.

Sometimes, organisations are encouraged to pair with a business for capacity-building, whereas it would be useful to pair with an organisation that has successfully gone through a capacity-building process and know the pitfalls and considerations that need to be made. This would be helpful on both a strategic and operational basis.

What evidence of the scale and nature of these issues should we be aware of, and where are there gaps in the evidence?

I have personal experience of finding it increasingly difficult to access capacity-building provision without it being angled towards another agendaie it is for youth; locality; older people etc.

New Philanthropy Capital has also written a paper on how difficult it is to gain substantial capacity-building grant funding.

It is hard to build capacity and maintain the level of the work charities do because funders are not keen on funds being used to build capacity or even cover genuine overheads. Some grants eg Awards for All will not cover any staff costs or overheads at all; others, eg Skills Funding Agency, will allow only 15% which is barely adequate. As a result, we roll from project to project, and pray the wheel doesn't fall off!

It is very difficult to build capacity and scale up in this climate.

How do you want to tell us more, now and in the future?

FaceBook

Webinars

I might also be able to arrange for you to meet with other local charities, particularly in community and family learning.

Geoff Knott

Jubilee+

Umbrella body

Where can you see 'obvious gaps' in capacity building provision: what's worked well (or not so well) in the past, and why?

Jubilee+ (www.jubilee-plus.org) works with churches of all denominations across the UK to encourage social action, social justice and social enterprise. Our research through 3 biennial surveys shows that effort on social action by churches has increased significantly as measured by various dimensions e.g volunteer hours (72M hours in 2010 rising to 115M hours in 2014). See http://www.jubilee-plus.org/Articles/431253/Jubilee_Plus/Research/RESULTS_OF_THE.aspx

We detect a great interest in social enterprises at our conferences and network but it has been difficult to catalyse into action. We would like to nudge churches (and individuals in churches) to run social enterprises through providing some starter funding (matched several times with their own). There is a gap here and these communities could provide a very motivated set of entrepreneurs and helpers.

What evidence of the scale and nature of these issues should we be aware of, and where are there gaps in the evidence?

How do you want to tell us more, now and in the future?

Email

Churches that Change Communities Conference Oct 17th 2015

http://www.jubilee-plus.org/Articles/430702/Jubilee_Plus/Social_Action/Getting_Started/CHURCHES_THAT_CHANGE.aspx

Gail Knopfel

A Positive Partnership

Consultancy specialising in local voluntary/community sector in the North West.

Where can you see 'obvious gaps' in capacity building provision: what's worked well (or not so well) in the past, and why?

Community Development Foundation: Community Right to Challenge fund worked well.

What evidence of the scale and nature of these issues should we be aware of, and where are there gaps in the evidence?

I think the scale is huge - and hidden - within the social enterprise and charity world. This is often because the people who engage in developing this sector are 'doers' and just get on with things despite or in spite of the resources and circumstances. Also they need to be cautious risk takers as the need for risk is inevitable, but because it is so often others' money they are using - risk is entered into lightly.

Gaps in evidence are usually in smaller organisations and in unpopular subjects such as housing, abuse etc.

How do you want to tell us more, now and in the future?

CVS network will link to lots of voluntary organisations including social enterprises & charities.

You already have found Funding Central of course! Also NCVO online networking is good.

Sometimes direct email newsletters/bulletins are useful, however, they can be time consuming for the people having to write them and not know if they are being read(!) so simply an email to all on your database with direct information a couple of times a year if there's a specific deadline or announcement - v effective - then not lost in among all the other info sent out and overlooked.

Geoff Knott
Impact Franchises Ltd
SSO

Where can you see 'obvious gaps' in capacity building provision: what's worked well (or not so well) in the past, and why?

Scaleable social enterprises are few and far between. I've identified 40 commercial franchises that have social impact e.g. elderly care. See www.impactfranchises.com

These are commercially successful businesses, with banks willing to lend money to franchisees. What if there was an impact franchise fund to help fund franchisees if they were willing to run these as CICs? Also staffing could be Neet focused, etc., to increase impact.

The lending criteria can still be applied e.g. acceptance by the franchisor, etc. The loans could be a lower rate than normal commercial loans due to being a social enterprise. This could increase the number of social enterprises dramatically and provide a less risky route to market as well as reducing the risk on the loan.

What evidence of the scale and nature of these issues should we be aware of, and where are there gaps in the evidence?

Edward Hickman
ATQ Consultants
Intermediary

Where can you see 'obvious gaps' in capacity building provision: what's worked well (or not so well) in the past, and why?

One area for capacity building to help ensure the sustainability of a robust VCSE sector is support for developing partnerships and/or mergers. I am not sure whether this directly fits in the remit of the Access Foundation in terms of encouraging demand for social investment but, if so, it is worth consideration.

There are many smaller charities whose core mission could still be served working in partnership or merged with similar mission or diversified VCSE. However, it is not an easy path to go down and hence some support for capacity building of these skill sets is, in my view, appropriate.

There has been support for charity M&A down the years and the legal provisions for charities to merge are all in place but it has not happened at any scale.

This is for many reasons but a key one is that Trustees of smaller charities see its preservation as a core goal of the Board and so, not surprisingly, most energy is directed towards this.

Given current grant funding outlook and longer term move by commissioners towards outcomes based contracts (and PbR), it can be argued that the pressures to find a way of gaining minimum scale will be of growing importance.

This also fits with the commissioning landscape which wants to work with more robust VCSE. Larger VCSE will, no doubt, require social investment funding to deliver contracted services.

What evidence of the scale and nature of these issues should we be aware of, and where are there gaps in the evidence?

Charity Commission registration data shows how long the tail of smaller charities can be across different sectors. Military services charities is one example area and coverage of the recent demise of Kids Company showed that there are many smaller children's services charities delivering to the same client needs.

In terms of evidence gaps, I am not sure where to point. It is clear that there are many views about charity M&A and that many smaller charities are highly

effective whilst remaining limited in scale, so it is by no means a one size fits all solution.

However, if support were made available to capacity build this skill set, then I think it would help make the sector more dynamic.

Alex Sobel

Social Enterprise Yorkshire and the Humber

umbrella body and support organisation

Where can you see 'obvious gaps' in capacity building provision: what's worked well (or not so well) in the past, and why?

There are thematic and geographic programmes which start and finish with cohort entry and there are some large programmes which offer established organisations investment readiness and support as well as routes to investment such as Power to Change and Big Potential. There is very little for pre-starts or early stage social enterprises. UnLtd is a route for social entrepreneurs but much of their money is tied into matching programmes such as Big Local that if you fall outside these programmes it's hard to access.

There need to be broader offer for those at early development stages which isn't deadline based or with narrow criteria (organisations who fall into these categories will pursue those opportunities). Two good examples of good practise where the Co-op Enterprise Hub which had an open application process and a face to face diagnostic and the applicant was given a choice of organisations to work with, this scheme was just for Co-ops but the fundamentals would work for social enterprises.

The Business Link Yorkshire Offer was very holistic which included a face to face diagnostic, vouchers to use for support, a workshop programme and small start-up grants and a mentoring programme from experienced social enterprise leaders. These days diagnostics can be done online.

What evidence of the scale and nature of these issues should we be aware of, and where are there gaps in the evidence?

We run bi-monthly social investment roundtables with SIFIS like Key Fund, Big Issue Invest, Unity Trust, FSE, Clearly So etc which around 15-20 organisations come too. About half are start-ups and not ready for loan or equity and could really do with a blended offer, some don't get off the starting block due to lack of finance. Even in a region where the market is fairly mature the demand is high.

How do you want to tell us more, now and in the future?

We'd be happy to host a face to face consultation event or distribute a survey to our members. We have access to over 1000 organisations across Yorkshire and the Humber (and just beyond our borders).

Chris McBride
Social Investment Business
SIFI

Where can you see 'obvious gaps' in capacity building provision: what's worked well (or not so well) in the past, and why?

We currently deliver investment readiness support through Big Potential, a Big Lottery Fund grant fund. Through Big Potential Breakthrough, eligible voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) organisations can access an online diagnostic tool, followed by specialist one to one support before applying for grants between £20,000 and £75,000 to undertake in-depth investment readiness work with an approved provider.

Big Potential Advanced offers grants of between £50,000 and £150,000 to VCSEs that are clear about how social investment could work for them and can describe a potential deal or interest from investors. The Advanced route is also available to organisations that need help securing a contract.

Launched in 2014, Big Potential grants are available until 2017. Although Big Potential provides targeted investment readiness support we believe there are still a number of gaps in the current provision of capacity building support for the VCSE sector:

- 1) Impact measurement: In January 2015 the Social Investment Business managed a £1.9 million pilot fund on behalf of the Cabinet Office that offered grants and support to VCSEs to improve their social impact measurement. This fund was extremely oversubscribed and the appetite of VCSEs to improve their impact measurement was a key takeaway from the pilot. A longer term focus on improving impact measurement could benefit many different organisations.
- 2) Focus on specific outcome areas/markets: Most recent capacity building and investment readiness programmes have not focussed on building evidence and expertise in specific policy areas. However, recent initiatives such as the Nesta Arts Impact fund or the Childcare Investment Readiness Fund have focused on specific policy areas. Policy specific funding, targeted at improving mental health or social care provision for example, may lead to better understanding and learning about what works for organisations operating in different sectors.
- 3) Commissioning/Localism: Despite the financial challenges facing Local Authorities, devolution still has the potential to lead to opportunities for VCSEs. However, these opportunities may not be realised unless additional support for co-production and smarter commissioning is available. The Cabinet Office

Commissioning Academy programme was aimed at improving the skills of public sector leaders. A programme that brought together charities and social enterprises with commissioners could lead to improved service design.

What evidence of the scale and nature of these issues should we be aware of, and where are there gaps in the evidence?

We are unaware of an up-to-date and comprehensive survey of different sized VCSEs that really drills down into the type of capacity building that VCSEs need and want. A survey like this of different sized ventures could be very beneficial to Access, and the sector as a whole.

Rob Billson

Community Foundation for Calderdale

SSO; Grant Funder; Social Investor;

Where can you see 'obvious gaps' in capacity building provision: what's worked well (or not so well) in the past, and why?

The Community Foundation for Calderdale set up a Social Investment Fund, in partnership with the Key Fun, in 2014 see <http://www.cffc.co.uk/portfolio/loans/> . We had previously dipped our toes in the water of Social Investment via the Yorkshire Venture Philanthropy programme. We have found that there is a lack of confidence in social investment. Organisations feel it is too much of a risk to go into debt. At the same time many organisations are not able to see the entrepreneurial opportunities of their organisations and the market that they are in. This is due I think to the fact that Community and Charity are worlds that have tended to avoid the notion of enterprise, seeing generating a surplus, which can then be ploughed back into the social aim as somehow antipathetic to their aims. Of course the financial outlook for many Voluntary Sector organisations is quite challenging, leading to Boards of Trustees becoming risk averse and they do not have the resilience to believe that social investment can see them through. I think that Social Investment should always come with a mentoring relationship between the investor and investee, it is the support and development part that is often missing.

What evidence of the scale and nature of these issues should we be aware of, and where are there gaps in the evidence?

Our evidence is mostly local and based on contacts we have had with Voluntary Sector Organisations over the last 3 years or so. CFFC has grant funded Calderdale Based organisations for 25 years, and only recently started to look at social investment and loans. But in the relatively short time that we have been trying to market the Impact Fund we have had discussions with several organisations and these conversations have led to the views expressed above.

How do you want to tell us more, now and in the future?

It may be useful to talk to UKCF and communicate with the Community Foundation network which has quite a substantial reach in the VCS in the areas which have Community Foundations and a large capital base, see <http://www.ukcommunityfoundations.org/> .

Locally in Calderdale there is the Calderdale Assembly which is an irregular network which holds events see <http://www.calderdaleforward.org.uk/>

The local VCS Infrastructure Organisation is North Bank Forum, see their website <http://www.sectorsupportcalderdale.org.uk/> . They have a weekly newsletter and an annual funding fair coming up in october.

Yorkshire wide there is Involve <http://www.involveyorkshirehumber.org.uk/> who help support and develop the Voluntary Sector across Yorks and the HUmber.

Locality are also active across the region supporting community enterprise <http://locality.org.uk/members/in-my-region/yorkshire-humber/> and Social Enterprise Yorkshire and Humber <http://www.seyh.org.uk/> are involved in lots of work around Social Investment.

Webinars work well, Survey Monkey and other tools are ok, although a bit over used.

CFFC would be happy to host something

Helen Hoyle

SEE Ahead

Social Sector support organisation

Where can you see 'obvious gaps' in capacity building provision: what's worked well (or not so well) in the past, and why?

Bespoke, one to one BUSINESS support is missing.

This has worked well in the past but is virtually non existent now as funding was pulled.

Tailored support is what most organisations need as, whilst one to many workshops etc have their place, people want specifics.

Business focussed support is the key - ensuring organisations are commercially savvy.

What evidence of the scale and nature of these issues should we be aware of, and where are there gaps in the evidence?

The number of organisations in financial crisis due to a grant dependency culture is high.

We need to support them to develop commercial skills, particularly around business planning & financial management.

How do you want to tell us more, now and in the future?

I could attend a local event in West Yorkshire.

Happy to discuss over the phone with one of your team.

Our focus is on face to face support so we don't generally use any on line tools.

Kate Markey

Blue Sky

Social Sector Org

Where can you see 'obvious gaps' in capacity building provision: what's worked well (or not so well) in the past, and why?

Many charities and social enterprises create multiple outcomes (and cost savings to public purse). However often the outcomes cut across both local and central government budgets. In an age of greater devolution and demands for greater place-based solutions, this challenge is inhibiting sustainability of local charities and social enterprises and the replication of best practice ideas to other geographies.

What evidence of the scale and nature of these issues should we be aware of, and where are there gaps in the evidence?

Blue Sky is one organisation creating very tangible outputs from its work:

Ex-offenders not in prison, not on benefits, paying returns to Treasury and spending locally. To replicate our model, like many charities and social enterprises, we are looking for financing mechanisms which recognise the public purse savings we create.

Access could provide affordable working capital or outcome payments (akin to the Cabinet Office Outcomes Fund for local authorities) to service local models creating multiple outcomes.

Gordon Hunter
Lincolnshire Community Foundation
Community Business Facilitator

Where can you see 'obvious gaps' in capacity building provision: what's worked well (or not so well) in the past, and why?

BIG Lottery capacity building programmes (Future Builders etc) have had limited success: instead of shared services and mergers effecting change and underpinning self sustainability, CABs, CVSSs, RCCs etc have continued to compete instead of partner.

The current funding landscape supports

1. Public sector contract delivery by specialist agencies (eg housing providers).
2. Large national charities with bricks-and-mortar projects that lend themselves to loan funding.
3. Small charities compete for a diminishing grants pot (Trusts etc).
4. Volunteer led groups continue to raise funds locally.

But where do small/medium social businesses go? A tiny number of dull, old ideas like pubs and shops will be funded by Power to Change. The gap is in blended funding for truly creative SME community businesses.

They need support and representation from knowledgeable brokers who can offer empathy and expertise as well as finance options.

What evidence of the scale and nature of these issues should we be aware of, and where are there gaps in the evidence?

We represent 20 community businesses in Lincolnshire ranging from a redundant village hall converted to affordable housing, through flood relief and loans for the fuel poor, to a mini Eden in Uphill Lincoln: the Jo Banks Botanic Gardens and community energy scheme. All would benefit from bespoke intervention (consultancy, advice, starter grants, loans, project management). Very few are likely to be able to access current social investment sources.

We, as a lender, grant maker and facilitator can be an expert conduit.

How do you want to tell us more, now and in the future?

Come up and see us for a workshop and sites tour.

Nickala Torkington

UnLtd

Grant funder, Investment Readiness support and brokerage and
infrastructure capacity builder

Where can you see 'obvious gaps' in capacity building provision: what's worked well (or not so well) in the past, and why?

I see 4 areas

1) capacity building infrastructure agencies to better understand and broker to/pipeline build for social investment

2) not underestimate how risk averse some highly impactful social

entrepreneurs need to be when it comes to loan/equity options - small products need to be developed (£1k - £25k loans) to educate and train people to test them and gain confidence in their own ability to build business acumen and pay back -I realise this is ineffective in terms of cost but still better than writing off thousands/millions supposed to be going out in loans

3) utilise the capability and support new infrastructure agents (eg. Universities, Housing Associations, Corporates) can play in supporting scaling ventures and matching resource

4) more women having confidence and ability to take on these products

What evidence of the scale and nature of these issues should we be aware of, and where are there gaps in the evidence?

Numbers of loans not being paid back

Role of university and other infrastructure agencies - see UnLtd SEE Change programme and report written with SIB called Campus Communities

Learn from community micro finance eg. loans from £500 where they are taking more small scale risks but reaching new people and traininbuilding confidence in paying back loan which can then be scaled up eg. WEvolution and some Housing Associationsg /

Research into the number of women taking up investment is somewhat lacking see @WSSEGroup on twitter's basic learning report

How do you want to tell us more, now and in the future?

I have led some of the UnLtd work with the 80 universities we have supported to create resources and support to invest in social entrepreneurs. I have capacity build 19 of these to deliver investment readiness support. This

coming year we are working with 5 of the more trailblazing universities who are going on a development programme to influence, create and link to appropriate social investment instruments. It would be great to involve you as part of the partnership team in some way through our peer learning events, national conference and perhaps on a one to one level with universities and their ventures. I also run the Women Supporting SEs network in Manchester/NW and there is scope to link to that.

Maxine Tuffin

Warwickshire Community and Voluntary Action

We are an umbrella body for the voluntary groups and organisations across Warwickshire

Where can you see 'obvious gaps' in capacity building provision: what's worked well (or not so well) in the past, and why?

In deprived areas there is still a need for additional capacity building of community and voluntary groups and organisations. Often around motivation, life coaching as people are out of the habit of working and often don't follow a structure to their days.

Where they volunteer to get involved in community groups, it's often apparent that the skills around time keeping, speaking correctly in meetings and appropriately to elected members etc can sometimes be a large area of need.

What evidence of the scale and nature of these issues should we be aware of, and where are there gaps in the evidence?

I as a Community Development Officer both within a regeneration project in one of the top 10 Socaila Output Areas in the county.

I am also a trainer and facilitate and develop organisational skills of volunteers and community groups running community buildings such as libraries and community centres.

Often the fall outs between committee members are purely based on not having developed skills such as speaking and listening, taking turns, respecting another persons point of view etc. Many of these sort of skills most of us develop in the work place, yet if you have never worked, there are social skills and interpersonal skills missing.

How do you want to tell us more, now and in the future?

I think there needs to be more support and funding opportunities to the Voluntary sector organisations to develop these skills. The training that used to be provided and the peer mentoring that used to take place, took several years to yield fruit, yet the groups that were worked with intensively in these sort of areas during that short period of times are the groups that are surviving through these difficult times and many of them are actually thriving.

David Hounsell
The Children's Society
SSO

Where can you see 'obvious gaps' in capacity building provision: what's worked well (or not so well) in the past, and why?

The VCSE sector is full of 'if only we had the time and expertise' dilemmas when it comes to areas such as transformation, systems development, commercial and legal insight, business case development etc. The Children's Society found that £50k grant from the Impact Readiness Fund turned an 'if only' into a delivered project. The fund bought extra time, focus, and partnership with an external provider that complemented expertise. Small, quick capacity building grants are a must-have for a sustainable sector that can generate and deliver on social investment.

What evidence of the scale and nature of these issues should we be aware of, and where are there gaps in the evidence?

I am not sure about a synthesised report, but ask anyone working in impact, product, or commercial roles (all crucial for social investment) and they will tell you that VCSE organisations, especially small-to-medium sized ones, need grants focused on capacity. Unsurprisingly the public and general donors don't find this sort of giving particularly attractive. Therefore general fundraising wont ever meet that need.

How do you want to tell us more, now and in the future?

I, and my colleagues, would be happy to advise on the VCSE experience. This is crucial for the future of investment in the sector.

Paul Halfpenny

Northern Social Investment group Ltd

SIFI

Where can you see 'obvious gaps' in capacity building provision: what's worked well (or not so well) in the past, and why?

The obvious gap is how to establish longer term relationships between the capacity builder and the capacity buildee! The whole process is reductive - needs are identified and isolated, discreet pieces of work are commissioned and delivered, piecemeal change is made. For whole company change to occur an ongoing relationship - and perhaps one in which both parties take some share of the risk - should be established. Otherwise "capacity building" as it has been practiced in the third sector for generations will continue to nibble at the problem. (<http://www.thirdsector.co.uk/infrastructure-providers-fail-meet-needs-small-organisations/infrastructure/article/1108049>)

What evidence of the scale and nature of these issues should we be aware of, and where are there gaps in the evidence?

"Evidence" in social investment is a touchy subject - it's not exactly creative commons.

How do you want to tell us more, now and in the future?

You lead, I'll follow! I like the use of the Google suite of tools.

Sam Tarff

Key Fund

a leading social investor in VCSEs wishig to trade or wishing to grow their trading base

Where can you see 'obvious gaps' in capacity building provision: what's worked well (or not so well) in the past, and why?

poor and insufficient technical support to enable VCSEs to transition to more sustainable trading and earned income revenue streams which is pre investment readiness

investment readiness for VCSEs including clusters, prospective supply chains and consortia of smaller organisations which to deliver public service contracts from local or national commissioners

support for peer to peer networks and knowledge transfer for organisations that have raised repayable investment to grow

CPD academies locally based to train,develop and up skill the future leaders of VCSEs equipped with the business and entrepreneurial toolbox to meet the future opportunities and challenges of the sector in the future

Lack of capacity for SIIFI to gauge quality customer experiences, loan fund analysis of sector clusters to understand what works, what needs to change and lessons learned to share/ inform future investment and support decisions

lack of funding to effectively communicate case studies in an informative and useful way as opposed go glossy PR material

What evidence of the scale and nature of these issues should we be aware of, and where are there gaps in the evidence?

15 years of working with clients to access social investment

Alex Whinnom

GMCVO

VCSE support and development organisation

Where can you see 'obvious gaps' in capacity building provision: what's worked well (or not so well) in the past, and why?

Having read the high level draft strategy - obvious gaps in the capacity building support required are:

- analysis of market and market segmentation, understanding demand v need (many VCSEs confuse need for demand and make assumptions about markets)
- besides leadership and time to think, there is a need for support with cultural change within organisations still more used to spending than earning
- besides help with business models and finance modelling, a need for help with constitutional forms (e.g. subsidiary trading vehicles, joint ventures etc) and tax (e.g. VAT)

I'd like to make a general plea also that organisations proposing to provide capacity building should be themselves social enterprises with experience of trading or developing a social enterprise; we find there are some consultants and LIOs keen to offer advice without having any practical knowledge

What evidence of the scale and nature of these issues should we be aware of, and where are there gaps in the evidence?

Assertions based on a wide range of work we've done over the last few years, including peer mentoring scheme, hosting community entrepreneurs, experimenting with small investments coupled with capacity-building, acting as lead body for large contracts etc. Please ask me if you want to know more.

We have been doing a lot of work with partners in GM/c on social value, awareness by commissioners and companies is good, but there is a need for more robust ways to measure and evidence social value WITHOUT resorting to monetising it.

How do you want to tell us more, now and in the future?

We hope you'll attend a big social enterprise event in GM/c on 24th Nov.

Platforms - all the usual really. We use Evernote for sharing policy and research info

Ben Carpenter
Social Value UK
Membership Body

Where can you see 'obvious gaps' in capacity building provision: what's worked well (or not so well) in the past, and why?

There are two main gaps in capacity:

- 1.) Capacity for measuring and reporting on social impact. Many organisations still struggle to collect the information that they 'need' to report to their funders.
- 2.) Capacity for managing and maximising social impact. Very few organisations are collecting the information that they need to help them make decisions about how to improve their service. This is also about a lack of capacity to implement and embed useful systems for data collection.

What works well:

Social Value UK have been promoting a set of principles for over 7 years. These principles provide a framework for organisations to use when accounting for the value they create. They can be applied at different levels of rigour so that an organisation can embed a system of impact measurement that is proportionate to their needs. It allows an organisation to do both: collect the information they need to report/measure social value and manage/maximise value.

What evidence of the scale and nature of these issues should we be aware of, and where are there gaps in the evidence?

NPC published a report in 2012 that revealed: "Funders' requirements were seen to be key drivers of charities' monitoring, evaluation and impact measurement practices. Internal motivations, such as learning and improvement, were seen as less important."

[file:///C:/Users/Ben%20Carpenter/Downloads/Making-an-impact.pdf]

Through our involvement with the SE100 index we know that there is only a small handful of organisations that are actually managing and maximising social value. This supports our anecdotal evidence however this is a gap and we would be keen to see more evidence of how most organisations are not collecting information that leads to changes in service delivery to maximise impact.

How do you want to tell us more, now and in the future?

Happy to stay involved with your proposed meetings/groups etc.

It's maybe worth us sharing that Social Value UK is the largest (and the only member led) network of impact measurement practitioners in the UK. Since 2007 we have been supporting individuals and organisations to improve the way they measure and manage their social value. We would be delighted to draw upon our diverse membership to help support this consultation. Our members spans the public, private third sectors with representatives from a range of actors including delivery orgs, funders, advisors, legislators and academics.

Re on-line tools - We have created a Social Value self assessment tool that allows organisations to see how well they are applying each of the 7 social value principles [<http://socialvalueuk.org/what-is-sroi/principles>] Rolling this out to a wider group and collecting the results could help gather evidence.
