

“IMPACT-ICYE”

Practical Guide for Assessing the Impact of Long-Term International Volunteering

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Annexes¹

1. Impact of Cross-Cultural Volunteering on Hosting Organisations – Three Cases from Finland, ICYE Sample Assessment Report by Hanna Rajala, Maailmanvaihto - ICYE Finland
2. Impact of International Voluntary Service on Volunteers in Finland, ICYE Sample Assessment Report by Tim Küver, Maailmanvaihto - ICYE Finland
3. Impact of Volunteering on “Efterskole” 3. Projects Hosting Long-term International Volunteers, ICYE Sample Assessment Report by Uffe Engsig, Dansk ICYE

¹ Annexes can be found on www.icye.org/news-a-activities/current-and-past-activities#seminars

1. Introduction

Although the added value of long-term international voluntary service is undisputed, its impact on the lives of the volunteers, host projects and local communities remains an under-researched area. How does volunteering make a difference? What exactly does the international volunteer learn and gain from the experience? To what extent and how exactly does it influence their daily life and life plans? What do host projects gain? How does international volunteering facilitate intercultural learning?

Acknowledging the evident lack of empirical evidence, the IMPACT-ICYE practical guide has been developed to assist host and coordinating organisations to assess the impacts of international volunteering. It offers guidelines and tools that are simple, easy to use and adaptable in keeping with the diversity and complexity of the contexts within which long-term volunteering plays out.

We would like to extend a warm thank you to all the participants of the “Training on Cross-Cultural Volunteering Impact” in London for their contributions and heated discussions that led to a set of tools that could be tested in the field. A warm thank you to ICYE-UK and ICYE Finland–MaaIlmanvaihto for their hospitality and efficient organisation of the training and the evaluation meeting respectively! Likewise, ICYE Denmark, ICYE Finland and ICYE Austria for the considerable time and effort spent in carrying out the sample assessments on home ground, analysing data and compiling reports. Their assessments and reports have provided specific contexts and examples that proved valuable to the production of this practical guide. Notably, we would like to mention the head of the Institute for Volunteering Research (IVR), UK, whose support and expert guidance took us forward at every stage of this project.

This practical guide therefore combines the diverse practical experiences and local realities of coordinating and host organisations in Europe with the research knowledge and expert inputs by the Institute for Volunteering Research. We hope it provides the required knowledge and guidelines for research and also a new way of approaching impact assessment, and gives the vast project of volunteering impact assessment a fresh impetus within the ICYE Federation.

2. Background and Rationale

These are some questions you should ask yourself and points to consider before you embark on a research project:

Why do an impact assessment?

- An impact assessment can provide information that you don't already know, especially from the perspective of the beneficiaries of the ICYE programme
- An impact assessment will provide concrete evidence (more than just anecdotes) that can demonstrate the impact of long-term international volunteering to people outside of ICYE (potentially to be used for public relations, marketing, lobbying)
- An impact assessment can help to build constructive partnerships with host projects, international volunteers and National Committees

How the findings can be used

- To provide evidence to help gain recognition, funding, more volunteers, more projects, useful for marketing, influence (long-term) policy, etc.
- To improve practices, e.g. volunteer/host project matching, volunteer management, etc.
- To help to prioritise discussions (helps us to find out what is most important to our programmes, e.g. motivation of volunteer vs. skills)

The approach that is needed

- Impact assessment offers a new learning opportunity and requires a willingness to learn and improve.
- Feedback/impact can be negative and positive so it requires openness and readiness to hear the negative ('warts and all'). There is a need to be self-critical and to learn from others (reversal of perceived roles – who is learning from whom, educators are also the learners)

Things to consider at the beginning of an impact assessment

- An impact assessment requires a (long-term) commitment
- Plan a realistic timescale
 - See section on methodology for the different processes that need to be considered;
 - The time of year is very important – when can you *best access your volunteers* (at the end of the year/before the end of the year); for a *host project consider holidays* (summer holidays, Christmas, etc.).
- What costs could be incurred? How much money would you require?
- How much time will be spent by staff carrying it out?
- Are there any specific requirements for your National Committee?
- Seek support from outside (the ICYE Federation, other National Committees, local universities, researchers/students, etc.).
- Take into account training needs for the people who will run the impact assessment.
- Think through who will see the results and whether this will affect the information you collect/need.
- "What are the limitations" – impact assessment cannot solve all problems

3. Good Practice Guidelines

Some important guidelines to follow when undertaking impact assessment:

Ensure that you are undertaking an impact assessment for the right reasons

- To learn and improve, and to increase impact.
- Not just to tell a positive story – be ready to hear the whole story, it's about understanding good and bad and how they can be linked to each other.

Gather only what you need

- Use existing data – but only if it is public data (i.e. published data or data that has the consent of the respondents to be made public).
- The questions you ask / data that you collect should be linked directly to what you are trying to find out. Do not collect data that is not relevant to what you are trying to find out.

Do it ethically

- Tell people why you're doing it – make sure the people you talk to know what the information will be used for, why and where the information will be published / shown.
- Protect people's anonymity. It's vital that people cannot be identified in results of the assessment. This ensures trust and that you will gain more honest answers.
 - You can collect data such as age, sex, nationality, etc. (but you should explain why).
 - You cannot show data that can identify a specific person.
 - For example you cannot have a name next to a quote or have a person's nationality, sex or age (which could then be used to work out who the person is).
 - For example if you have one male and 10 females filling in a questionnaire then in the results you should not use he/she as the answers from the one male could be identified.
 - The only exception would be when a person or organisation either requests or has given explicit consent to be identified in a study.
- Anonymity of the respondents of impact studies must be maintained under all circumstances. Revealing the names or even offering suggestions as to the respondents of the study could lead to time consuming and expensive lawsuits.

4. Glossary of Terms

Here are some of the terms frequently used in this practical guide. These terms may have different meanings in different contexts and settings, and we therefore explain what we mean by them in this practical guide and with reference to volunteering impact assessment. You could consider including a glossary of the relevant terms in questionnaires or surveys.

1. Beneficiary

A person or organisation helped by or benefitting from someone or something (i.e. the recipient of a grant from a foundation or institution. OR: the beneficiaries of a volunteering project generally include the host projects and its service users, as well as the international volunteers).

2. Clients / Service users

A person served by or directly receiving services from another person or an organisation. A client can be a beneficiary (i.e. a person with disability receiving the services of the centre for assisted living. Or: children in a school).

3. Coding

Coding refers to a process through which data are categorised to facilitate analysis. Codes are most often words or short phrases in your data that draw your attention due to their recurrence and connection to the aims of your study. Coding is therefore principally an act of organizing the data collected and of introducing an interpretation of it.

4. Culture

Culture is not so much about tangible things like books, paintings, folk dances – this could be described as national culture, but rather a process or a set of practices. In the words of Stuart Hall (1997: 2, 4)²:

Primarily, culture is concerned with the production and the exchange of meanings – the ‘giving and taking of meaning’ – between the members of a society or group. [...] Members of the same culture must share sets of concepts, images and ideas which enable them to think and feel about the world, and thus to interpret the world, in roughly similar ways.

5. Data

The information and material collected for a study (includes recordings of interviews, filled in questionnaires, notes based on observations by the interviewer for example on the dynamics of the focus group. The data can consist of interview transcripts, observation field notes, journals, documents, literature, photographs, videos, websites, email correspondence, etc.).

6. Focus group

A focus group is a qualitative research method relying on interaction within a group of people to draw on respondents’ perceptions, feelings, beliefs, attitudes, experiences and reactions towards a product, service or concept.³

² Hall, S. (1997) “Introduction.” In: Hall, S (Ed.). Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices. London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi: Sage Publications & The Open University, pp. 1-11.

7. Host family

A host family is a family that hosts a volunteer from abroad for a specific period of time. A host family could be a couple with or without children, a single parent or even one individual.

8. Host project

A host project is a host organisation or a host placement.

9. Impact

- The “difference” that volunteering makes
- This can include the results of volunteer’s activities – the changes, benefits, learning or other effects that result from volunteering on the different stakeholders and their short / long term changes

10. Respondent

A respondent is a person who replies to something and thus provides the data that are being gathered in a study (e.g. answering a questionnaire, being interviewed or participating in a focus group).

11. Sample size

The proportion of a population selected for contact or data collection (e.g. the sample size for a volunteering impact study in Germany could comprise the 50 young people who volunteered in Germany from 2012-2014).

12. Staff

All persons involved in the running of activities at a host project (including paid employees, local volunteers, interns, etc).

13. Stakeholders

All the different players involved for example in the field of international voluntary service: the volunteers, sending organisations, host families & projects, host coordinating organisations...

14. Volunteering

- Of an individual’s freewill, unpaid and of benefit to the wider community/environment
- Formal volunteering (through a group, club or organisation, e.g. voluntary service)
- In the context of this guide, volunteering and volunteers refers to Long-term International Volunteering and Long-term international Volunteers.

15. Well-being

A good or satisfactory condition of existence; a state of good health, happiness; welfare.

The following two terms are described to clearly distinguish between impact assessment and evaluation and monitoring activities (which are regularly undertaken within the framework of international volunteering programmes):

16. Evaluation

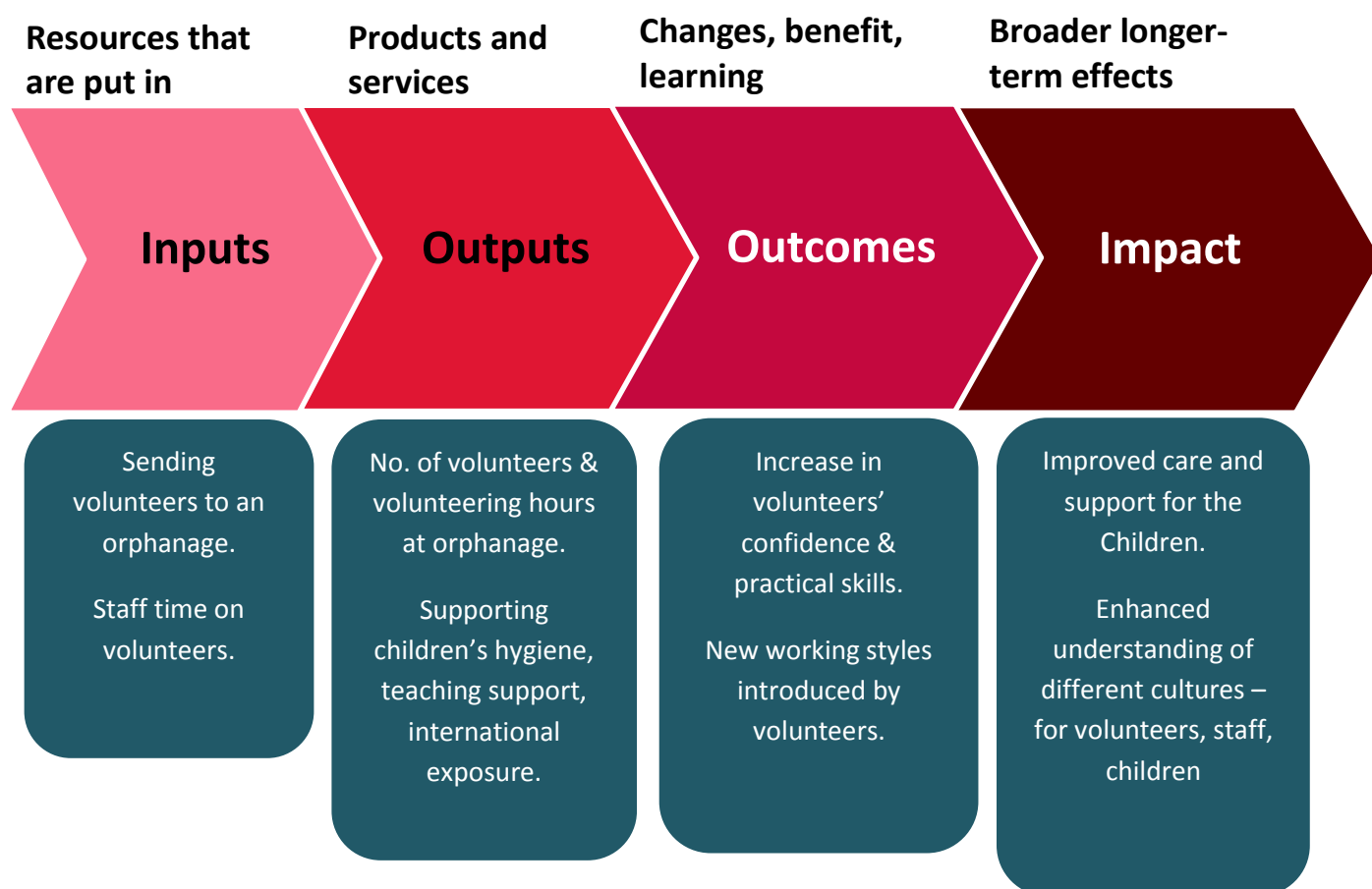
The systematic collection and analysis of data needed to assess and make programmatic decisions. It involves taking stock of where things are on a regular basis. Personal data can be collected but the anonymity of the respondents of an evaluation should be maintained by keeping this information internal (not to be published).

17. Monitoring

Supervising activities in progress to ensure that they are on course in meeting the aims, objectives and targets of the programme

³ Gibbs, A. (1997) „Focus Groups.” In Social Research Update, Guildford: University of Surrey.
www.sru.soc.surrey.ac.uk/SRU19.html

5. Process of change



6. Types of impact to explore

Impacts arise in different contexts and on the following page we focus on the different groups that are impacted by volunteering. We have defined below five dominant categories of impact:

Physical / Material Impact: the volunteer as a part of the host project in the process of creating goods and receiving services in general. This impact is more common at an organisational level.

Economic Impact: benefits or cost with financial value centred on the work of the volunteers. This impact is more common at an organisational level.

Human / Personal Impact: in focus are the knowledge, skills and health of people. This can be received or given (created).

Social Impact: the interpersonal relationships that develop between people during the volunteering period.

Cultural Impact: arises from the sum total of interpersonal contacts creating a sense of identity and awareness of one's self and others.

The different types of impact are interwoven and interdependent, and often hard to discern. It may therefore not always be easy to differentiate one type of impact from another.

7. Who to speak to

When conducting impact assessment, it should be clear that there are different groups to be questioned:

- Volunteers
- Staff
- Host families
- Beneficiaries / clients
- Other stakeholders
- Members of the wider / local community

The graph shows that the following groups should be the center of interrogation:

- Volunteers
- Host project / Staff / Host families
- Beneficiaries / clients
- Other stakeholders
- Members of the wider / local community

Graph1: Different groups that could be impacted on; the darker shades indicates the central focus of the assessment studies



The impact being measured often acts simultaneously on more than one of the groups; so remember to specify the focus of investigation (e.g. cultural, social impacts, etc.). You should prioritise those groups that you believe will give you the largest amount of desired information and the groups that are most affected by your work. For example, if you want to know something about social impact, you should question the volunteer or the people working and living with him/her, which would include the staff and beneficiaries of host projects and host families.

8. How to do it – methodologies

There are two broader approaches to impact assessment – quantitative and qualitative approaches. Some studies use a combination of the two approaches.

Quantitative Methods answer questions like: How many? When? Where? How often?

- A Quantitative method could be a questionnaire.
- These provide numerical data that can be statistically analysed (for example the percentage of volunteers who have learnt a new language).
- It is possible to do research with a large number of people but the results will be broad. Often the results provide information that can be explored further with qualitative approaches (for example answers to a questionnaire might show that 80% of volunteers would recommend taking part in an ICYE programme, but you would need to ask more in depth (qualitative) questions to find out why).

Qualitative Methods answer questions like: Why? What? How?

- A Qualitative method could be a one-to-one interview or a focus group
- These provide information on views, attitudes or experiences
- Results can give a more in-depth understanding about impact although these methods allow research with a much smaller group of people.

As each method has its advantages and disadvantages, using a combination of both methods you can get a more detailed understanding of impact. For example, by using both methods you can get statistics and quotes.

One-off impact assessments and repeating impact assessments (tracking and longitudinal)

- Ideally you should aim to repeat the impact assessment at regular intervals (e.g. every year if possible) as this can gather more information and track progress over time. Where you track the progress of the same group of research respondents over time through regularly involving them in the impact assessment, this approach is called longitudinal research.
- It can also be referred to as tracking, which could include doing a questionnaire for volunteers at the beginning and end of their year of volunteering and comparing the results (exploring 'distance-travelled'), or doing a focus group with staff from the host project at the same month in each year for multiple years.
- If you can track international volunteers over a longer period of time you will be able to gather more information on the longer-term impact for them, but if you can't do this you will still be able to look at the shorter-term impact.
- If you want to compare results of questionnaires between different years then you need to make sure you use the same wording in the questions, otherwise it will not be directly comparable.
- However, if you only do an impact assessment once you can still gather valuable information, so consider questions that can only be used on a one-off basis as well as questions that can be repeated between different impact assessments.

9. Methods



Methods



9.1. Questionnaire

A questionnaire is a series of questions concerning certain topics / areas of interest. There can be closed questions with a predefined set of answers (e.g.: yes or no as an answer). Open questions can also be part of a questionnaire producing more detailed information about the respondents' experiences / thoughts / opinions.

Advantages

- It can be easily sent to a large number of participants / organisations.
- It is possible to receive a large amount of information with comparatively little investment of resources.
- The results can be presented in an illustrative/graphic manner and can form a general overview.

Disadvantages

- If you have low response rates, the data collected will be impossible to analyse.
- The descriptive character of the questionnaires only gives limited data, meaning you often don't know why or what the reasons are for something.

Challenges and Solutions

- To deal with low response rates, the value of the study should be explained to the respondents. You may also want to offer an incentive or a prize draw to encourage people to respond.
- A well designed / precise questionnaire can boost response rates.
- As time is a limiting factor, the questionnaire should not be too long (see Annex 1 - page 8; Annex 2 – page 3; and Annex 3 – page 4 for time taken for sample assessments in Finland and Denmark).
- Tell respondents the approximate time it will take to fill out a questionnaire.
- The study should be carried out at a convenient time to maximise the number of respondents (e.g. not when people are away on holiday).

Questionnaire for Volunteers

Through the following questionnaire, we aim at measuring the impact of long term international voluntary service on participating volunteers. Impact can happen on the following five different categories (see section 6).

9.1.1. Main Questionnaire: Volunteers

(Should be administered towards the end of the programme in the host country)

Dear Volunteer,

We would be grateful if you would complete this questionnaire which will help ICYE to get information and assess the impact of your volunteering. Your responses will remain confidential and will not be published or shown to anyone else.

The questionnaire takes about 20 minutes to complete. We thank you in advance for your help!

Personal data

Male ☐

Female ☐

Other ☐

Age: _____

Country of origin: _____

When did you start your Voluntary Service abroad in [add host country]?

Month / year: ____/____

Part A - Human / Personal Impact

1. What was your main motivation for volunteering abroad?

2. What do you think are your strengths and weaknesses?

3. What kind of problems did you experience during your stay in [add host country]?
(e.g. feeling alone, homesick, problems at work, language barrier). Please explain.

4. To what extent have you been able to resolve problems/difficult situations in your host country? Please rate on a scale from 1 to 5. Please check any one box:

| | | | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Not at all | | Partially | | Completely |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |

9. What would you consider your biggest achievement during your stay in [add host country]?

10. Have you experienced a change in your emotional and psychological well-being during the international voluntary service? Did you find out something you about yourself that you did not expect?

11. What was the most important experience/aspect/thing during your time abroad?

Part B - Social Impact

12. To what extent did your social network expand during your stay abroad (e.g. did you make new friends)? Please rate on a scale from 1 to 5. Please check any one box:

| | | | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Not at all | | Partially | | Completely |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |

13. Do you feel that you contributed to the work of your host project?

Please rate on a scale from 1 to 5. Please check any one box:

| | | | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Not at all | | Partially | | Completely |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |

14. If so, do you feel that your contribution was recognised and appreciated by the staff and/or clients of the host project. Please rate on a scale from 1 to 5. Please check any one box:

| | | | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Not at all | | Partially | | Completely |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |

15. Which skills did you gain through your volunteering? Please rate your competency in the skills you gained on a scale from 1 to 5. You can add other skills that you may have gained at the bottom of this table (please write the skill(s) in the column where 'other' is given). Please check one box for each skill.

| SKILLS | Not applicable (0) | Basic Level (1) | (2) | Intermediate level (3) | (4) | Fully competent (5) |
|---|-------------------------------|----------------------------|------------|-----------------------------------|------------|--------------------------------|
| Communications skills | | | | | | |
| Learning a new language | | | | | | |
| IT (Information technology, computer, etc.) skills | | | | | | |
| Tutoring or teaching children, youth, or adults | | | | | | |
| Caring for infants and/or children in a day care facility | | | | | | |
| Promoting gender equality or empowering women and families | | | | | | |
| Promoting environmental sustainability | | | | | | |
| Combating HIV/AIDS, malaria or other infectious diseases | | | | | | |
| Providing other medical or dental health care or prevention | | | | | | |
| Providing assistance for the elderly | | | | | | |
| Providing physical therapy or other assistance to people with disabilities | | | | | | |
| Collecting, preparing, or distributing, food, crafts, or other goods | | | | | | |
| Improving management capacity such as fundraising or strategic planning capabilities | | | | | | |
| Encouraging economic growth through micro-enterprise, agricultural, or rural development | | | | | | |
| Other | | | | | | |

16. Have your life plans changed during your experience abroad? (e.g. education, career, etc.)

Yes ☐

Please specify:

No ☐

17. Has your international voluntary service made you more likely to continue volunteering or get involved in e.g. in the work of NGOs, political organisations, community organisations, environmental organisations?

I will do more ☐

I will do less ☐

I will do more or less the same ☐

PART C - Cultural Impact

18. To what extent do you feel that your volunteering abroad has made you aware of the influences of your culture / cultural background on your behaviour? Please rate on a scale from 1 to 5. Please check any one box:

Not at all

☐ 1

☐ 2

Partially

☐ 3

☐ 4

Completely

☐ 5

19. As a result of your volunteering abroad, did you notice a change in the way you interact with people from different cultural backgrounds? If yes, please explain.

Yes ☐

Please specify:

No ☐

20. How would you rate the overall experience in your host country?

Please rate on a scale of 1 to 5. Please check any one box:

| Very negative (1) | Negative (2) | Neutral (3) | Positive (4) | Very positive (5) |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Thank you very much for answering the questions!

Just finish the survey by clicking the DONE button below (you can't log in again then).

9.1.2. Main Questionnaire: Host Projects

Dear project,

We would be grateful if you would complete this questionnaire which will help ICYE to get information concerning positive experiences and challenges faced by your organisation through the hosting of international volunteers for either 6 or 12 months. Your responses will remain confidential and will not be published or shown to anyone else.

The questionnaire takes about 10 minutes to complete. We thank you in advance for your help!

Background information

Name of Host Project _____

Country _____

Location _____ Urban ☐ Rural ☐

1. Since when has your organisation been cooperating with ICYE and hosting / working with international volunteer(s)?

- 1 year ☐
- 1-2 years ☐
- 3-5 years ☐
- 6-10 years ☐
- 11 years or more ☐

2. Does your organisation have a volunteer manager/contact person for the international volunteer(s)?

Yes ☐ No ☐

3. Could you state your connection with the international volunteer(s) in your organisation?

- Supervision ☐
- Work with ☐
- Other ☐ Please specify: _____

4. On average, how many hours a week do the international volunteer(s) work in your organisation? Please check any one box:

- Less than 10 hours ☐
 10 – 20 hours ☐
 20 – 30 hours ☐
 30 – 40 hours ☐
 More than 40 hours ☐

5. On average, how many hours a week have you spent with the international volunteer(s)? Please check any one box:

- Less than 1 hour ☐
 1 – 2 hours ☐
 3 – 4 hours ☐
 5 – 6 hours ☐
 7 – 8 hours ☐
 9 – 10 hours ☐
 More than 10 hours ☐

6. What kind of contact do you have?

- 1 to 1 meetings ☐
 Group meetings ☐
 Social activities ☐
 Daily work activities ☐

7. Which of the following statements best describes the amount of time you spent with the international volunteer(s)? Please check any one box:

- I would have liked to spend more time with the volunteer ☐
 I spent an appropriate amount of time with the volunteer ☐
 I spent more time with the volunteer than I wished to ☐

8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements.

Please use a scale from 1 – 5 to rate your answers. Please check one box for each statement.

| Statements | Don't know (0) | Strongly disagree (1) | Disagree (2) | Neither agree nor disagree (3) | Agree (4) | Strongly agree (5) |
|--|-------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| It is necessary that the staff are informed about the volunteer's role | | | | | | |
| It is necessary that the students/children/clients are informed about the volunteer's role | | | | | | |
| The volunteer distracts the classes/work of the organisation/... | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| The volunteer is welcome in the local community | | | | | | |
| It is easy to get in touch with the volunteer at the project | | | | | | |
| The duration of the volunteer's stay is appropriate | | | | | | |
| The volunteer has the required skills for his/her to carry out his/her duties | | | | | | |
| It is necessary that volunteer is supervised during the stay | | | | | | |
| It has been clear to me what kind of activities I could use the volunteer for | | | | | | |

9. Do the benefits of having an international volunteer outweigh the challenges?

Yes ☐

Please elaborate

No ☐

Please elaborate

I don't know ☐

Impact on volunteer

In the following we ask you to assess some of the volunteer's competences. If you have had more than one international volunteer at your organisation, please give us an overall assessment.

10. Indicate the volunteer's [language...] skills on arrival

Beginner ☐ Basic ☐ Fluent ☐ I don't know ☐

11. Indicate the volunteer's general communication skills (other than language) on arrival. If you have had more than one international volunteer at your organisation, please give us an overall assessment.

Very limited ☐
Limited ☐
Fair ☐
Good ☐
Very good ☐
I don't know ☐

12. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements concerning the importance of the international volunteers' language skills.

Please use a scale from 1 – 5 to rate your answers. Please check one box for each statement.

| Statements | Don't know (0) | Strongly disagree (1) | Disagree (2) | Neither agree nor disagree (3) | Agree (4) | Strongly agree (5) |
|---|-------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| The volunteer's ability to write in the [National language] is important | | | | | | |
| The volunteer's ability to write correct [English/French/Spanish/Chinese ...] is important | | | | | | |
| The volunteer's ability to speak the [National language] is important | | | | | | |
| The volunteer's ability to speak [English/French/Spanish/Chinese ...] is important | | | | | | |
| The volunteer's general communication skills are more important than specific language skills | | | | | | |

13. Have the international volunteer's language skills improved over the voluntary service period? If you have had more than one international volunteer at your project, please give us an overall assessment.

- Yes ☐
 No ☐ (Jump to point 16)
 I don't know ☐ (Jump to point 16)

14. Have the improved language skills enabled the international volunteer to take on more challenging tasks? If you have had more than one international volunteer at your project, please give us an overall assessment.

- Yes ☐
 No ☐
 I don't know ☐

15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about the international volunteer. If you have had more than one international volunteer at your project, please give us an overall assessment. Please use a scale from 1 – 5 to rate your answers. Please check one box for each statement.

| Statements | Don't know (0) | Strongly disagree (1) | Disagree (2) | Neither agree nor disagree (3) | Agree (4) | Strongly agree (5) |
|---|-------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| The volunteer has become more outgoing | | | | | | |
| The volunteer has become more self-confident | | | | | | |
| The volunteer has become more comfortable speaking [National host language] | | | | | | |

Impact on Host Project

In the following questions we ask about what the international volunteer's stay has meant for you and your organisation.

16. Have you introduced the international volunteer to activities in the local community outside of the organisation?

Yes ☐

Please give some examples

No ☐

17. How has the relationship between you and the volunteer been?

Very distant ☐
Distant ☐
Neutral ☐
Close ☐
Very close ☐
Not spent any time with the volunteer ☐

18. How has the relationship between the volunteer and the students/clients/children been?

Very distant ☐
Distant ☐
Neutral ☐
Close ☐
Very close ☐
I don't know ☐

19. How has the relationship between the international volunteer and the staff in general been?

- Very distant ☐
Distant ☐
Neutral ☐
Close ☐
Very close ☐
I don't know ☐

20. Have you noticed that the students'/clients'/children's interest in the international volunteer's culture (country or history, customs, traditions and practices) has increased during his/her stay? Please elaborate on your answer.

- Yes ☐
No ☐

21. Has the international volunteer's stay contributed positively to the work of your organisation? If so, please indicate in which area(s).

- Yes ☐ Please specify how or what area:

- No ☐

22. Has the international volunteer's stay led to any new ideas or initiatives in your organisation? If so, please indicate in which area(s).

- Yes ☐ Please specify how or what area:

- No ☐

23. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements. If you have had more than one international volunteer in your organisation, please give us an overall assessment. Please use a scale from 1 – 5 to rate your answers. Please check one box for each statement.

| Statements | Don't know (0) | Strongly disagree (1) | Disagree (2) | Neither agree nor disagree (3) | Agree (4) | Strongly agree (5) |
|---|-------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| The volunteer has had a positive effect on the staff | | | | | | |
| The staff have, in general, given the volunteer opportunities to talk about his or her home country | | | | | | |
| The staff have spent their free time with the volunteer, e.g. on trips, vacations or weekends | | | | | | |
| The students/clients/children have learned about the volunteer's home country | | | | | | |
| The volunteer has had a positive effect on the students/clients/children | | | | | | |

Do you have any comments, proposals or experiences with the volunteer that you wish to add?

**Thank you very much for answering the questions!
Just finish the survey by clicking the DONE button below (you can't log in again then).**

9.1.3. Main Questionnaire: Host Families

Dear host family,

We would be grateful if you would complete this questionnaire which will help ICYE to get information and assess the impact of the volunteering from your perspective as host family. Your responses will remain confidential and will not be published or shown to anyone else.

The questionnaire takes about 10 minutes to complete. We thank you in advance for your help!

Phase 1:

A: Period - Relation – Role

A1: How many times have you hosted volunteers? Please check any one box:

- First time ☐
- Only once ☐
- A number of times – less than 3 ☐
- A number of times – more than 3 ☐

A2: How long do they generally stay with you? Please check any one box:

- Short term - less than 6 months ☐
- 6 months ☐
- 12 months ☐

A3: How many people make up your home and who are they?

- Number of persons _____
- Age(s) _____
- Relation to each other _____

Phase 2:

B: Personal view

B1: Why did you decide to host volunteers?

B2: On a scale of 1 – 5, how much did you enjoy hosting volunteers?

- | | | | | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|------------|
| Not at all | | | Partially | | Completely |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 | |

B3: What do you like about hosting volunteers?

B4: What do you find difficult about host volunteers?

B5: Have the volunteers enabled you to try new things?

Yes ☐ If yes, please give examples
No ☐

C: Cultural effects on person

C1: Have your experiences with volunteers changed (influenced / had an effect on) your perception, opinions or lifestyle in any way? (e.g. opinion about foreigners, trying new food, etc.)

C2: Do you think volunteers are influenced by the customs, traditions and practices in your country? In what way and what part do you think you play in this?

Phase 3:

D: Future

D1: Would you recommend hosting volunteers to other families? (Why?)

Yes ☐
No ☐

Please explain why:

Thank you very much for answering the questions! Just finish the survey by clicking the DONE button below (you can't log in again then).

9.2. Focus Groups

A focus group is a qualitative research method based on discussion and interaction within a group of people to draw on their perceptions, feelings, beliefs, attitudes, experiences and reactions towards a product, service or concept.⁴

Why

- Focus groups are mainly used to get in-depth information. This could be the impact on a particular host project, on a type of host project, on volunteers, etc.
- It is a good way to involve people who are less likely to respond to surveys; participants are likely to give more elaborate, descriptive answers, partly as a result of group dynamics.

Who

A focus group could consist of people who are to some extent working with or communicating with the volunteer – or the volunteers themselves.

Planning

- Be clear about the purpose of your research and data collection.
- Consider the make-up of the group: Should it comprise people from different organisations with similar roles in connection with the volunteer? Or people from the same organisation with different roles?
- The venue and seating arrangements should encourage open and relaxed discussions.
- Questions should be relevant to all the participants. If you have questions more relevant to one group, you should consider having two separate focus groups.
- Get to know participants e.g. over coffee or tea before starting with the focus group. This could both provide you with valuable information and make the participants more relaxed during the focus group. Remember to ask for permission to use any of the information you receive during the informal socialising.

Using a combination of methods

- Your research could comprise just one or more focus groups. It could also combine two methodologies – focus groups and quantitative questionnaires – that could be connected and complement one another. However, they should be undertaken separately.
- Similarly, the focus group can also be combined with one-to-one interviews with the same respondents to gather further information, cross-check information and ensure that everyone's viewpoint is included.

Documenting

- The ideal way to document a focus group is by way of recordings and transcriptions.

⁴ Gibbs, A. (1997) „Focus Groups.” In Social Research Update, Guildford: University of Surrey.
www.sru.soc.surrey.ac.uk/SRU19.html

- Please note that transcriptions are recommended, but very time consuming. As a general rule, for every hour of recording, it would take someone between four and six hours to transcribe it verbatim. Professional transcribers are far quicker but can cost as much as 1 Euro per minute of recording.
- In case transcriptions are not possible, the recordings could serve to cross-check the minutes and to extract quotations.
- Remember to ask the group for permission to record the session.
- Technical issues: Be sure to check the equipment before you start the focus group or interview.
- Try out the recording device before conducting your focus group or interview.

How

The focus group should be facilitated by one individual. It could be the person responsible for the programme, or an external facilitator, e.g. an university student.

Advantages of an internal facilitator

- They know the program and are in a better position to get information needed for programme development.
- Members of staff of host projects and volunteers are likely to be more comfortable and motivated to speak to someone they know, someone who can influence the programme.

Disadvantages of an internal facilitator

- The respondents may not be openly critical.
- There is a larger risk of data manipulation.

Advantages of an external facilitator:

- More like to have an open-minded approach
- More likely to get an “out of the box” answer.

Disadvantages of an external facilitator:

- Higher risk of misunderstandings / misinterpretations.

The facilitator

- Should steer the discussion and keep participants on topic
- Keep on time
- Stop one or two people dominating the discussion and bring in the quieter participants
- Create an open and relaxed atmosphere, where people are able to give information freely
- Avoid leading or closed questions (e.g. yes / no answers)
- Facilitating is a skill that gets better with practice. You could do a practice focus group within your organisation before you conduct one with the host projects.

Size of group, duration

The group should have between 3 and 10 participants. It should not be longer than 60 to 90 minutes. It is a good idea to include opening rounds and introductions, interactive discussions and activities.

Structure of the focus group

- Ideally the focus group should be semi-structured. The questions for the focus group are prepared beforehand and divided according to the themes.
- During the focus groups, answers can be further elaborated upon, and additional questions asked. For example (see annexes), the themes presented in the sample questions for focus groups have been divided into main questions and additional questions.
- In case of repeated, tracking research and impact assessments where you are repeating focus groups, it is important that the main topic areas are asked every time.

Introduction: Ethics, thank you for coming, presentation (5-10 minutes)

3 phases:

Phase 1: easy start question (5-10 minutes),

Phase 2: 3-5 main topics (40-50 minutes),

Phase 3: Future and closure (5-10 minutes)

Ending with: Thank you for your help – information about feedback – what happens next. (5-10 minutes)

See sample assessments in Denmark and Finland presented in annex.

Practical issues

- The venue should be easy accessible for all participants.
- It is a good idea to provide refreshments and travel expenses
- Send invitation to respondents, which will facilitate reflection prior to the focus group.
- You could conduct focus group as part of another activity or event which brings together the respondents.

Focus groups could serve to strengthen the network for the participants and be a learning experience for everybody involved.

9.2.1. Main Questions: Staff of host projects

Duration: 60 – 90 minutes

Phase 1

A: Period - Relation – Role

A1: Since when has your organisation been cooperating with ICYE and hosting / working with international volunteer(s)? (1 year, 1-2 years, 3-5 years, 6-10, 11 years or more)

A2: Could you describe the role of the international volunteers in your organisation?

Additional question:

A3: Could you describe your working relationship / connection with the international volunteers?

Phase 2

B: Personal view

B1: Please describe your best day with an international volunteer?

B2: What do you think is the greatest benefit of hosting international volunteers?

B3: How have the international volunteers affected your personal life?

Additional questions:

B4: Have the volunteers enabled you to try new things? (food, music, other practices)

B5: How has the working culture changed since the volunteers arrived?

B6: Do you have a particular activity you like to do with the volunteer? If yes, what activity and why?

C: Cultural effects on person

C1: What have you learned about the culture and traditions of the international volunteers?

C2: Have your experiences with international volunteers changed (influenced / had an effect on) your perception, opinions or working style in any way? (e.g. opinion about foreigners, trying new food, etc.)

C3: Do you think international volunteers are influenced by your customs, traditions and practices? In what way? What part do you think you play in this?

Additional questions:

C4: Has something changed in your working environment since you started hosting / working with international volunteers?

C5: How have the international volunteers influenced you/your life since they arrived?

C6: What have you told the volunteers about your culture or country?

Phase 3

D: Future

D1: Do you look forward to hosting International volunteers in the future? (Why?)

D2: Would you recommend hosting International volunteers to other organisations? (Why?)

Additional questions:

D3: Please describe your ideal volunteer?

Thank you very much for answering the questions!

9.2.2. Main Questions: Host families

Duration: 20 minutes

Phase 1

A: Period - Relation – Role

- A1: For how long have you hosted volunteers? (number of years, 1st time / only time)
 A2: How long do they generally stay with you? (short term, 6 months, 12 months)
 A3: How many people make up your home and who are they (age and relation to each other)?

Phase 2

B: Personal view

- B1: Why did you decide to host volunteers?
 B2: How does the volunteer fit into your family? (e.g. like a new family member, guest, hotel service, etc.)
 B3: What do you like about hosting volunteers?
 B4: What do you find difficult about host volunteers?
 B5: How have the volunteers influenced your family life?

Additional questions

- B6: Have the volunteers enabled you to try new things?
 B7: Describe your best day with a volunteer.
 B8: Do you have a particular activity you like to do with the volunteer? If yes, what activity and why?

C: Cultural effects on person

- C1: What have you learned about the culture and traditions of the volunteers you've hosted?
 C2: Have your experiences with volunteers changed (influenced / had an effect on) your perception, opinions or lifestyle in any way? (e.g. opinion about foreigners, trying new food, etc.)
 C3: Do you think volunteers are influenced by your customs, traditions and practices? In what way? What part do you think you play in this?

Additional questions

- C4: As a result of hosting volunteers, has anything changed since you started hosting volunteers?
 C5: Have the experiences with volunteers made you think differently about your own country, culture, traditions?

Phase 3

D: Future

- D1: Would you recommend hosting volunteers to other families? (Why?)
 D2: Please describe the ideal volunteer you would like to host?

Thank you very much for answering the questions!

10. How to make sense of the data – analysis

General Considerations

There is no best way to conduct a study analysis. There are different reasons why you conduct a study. Without a proper understanding of the reasons that are associated with the project, the results may not be able to answer the root causes of the impact assessment. It is therefore crucial to thoroughly investigate the reasons/context behind the project and then start with the analytical part.

For an impact assessment study, where you started out by setting guidelines with respect to the structure, sample size, categories of measurement and data collected, the next step would be to design a proper format for data entry, storage, analysis, etc.

1. *Cleaning your data*

- a. For quantitative data, there is usually a lot of junk in the data (e.g. errors or blank responses) and one should go through the data keeping this in mind. It might be that people fill out the questionnaire even though they are not the main respondents and this could lead to confusion while conducting your analysis.
- b. Using a different code when people haven't answered (this is important if you are using a statistical programme to analyse your data): If a question has been left blank (not answered), do not delete it because it is equally relevant to your analysis. You can label it as "NA" (Not Applicable) or "-99" to ensure that the computer programme, if you are using one, recognises it.
- c. Check for duplication of responses and delete duplications.
- d. If people have only answered just one or two initial questions but nothing else, delete these responses as they do not contribute anything to the study.

2. *Data Storage, data protection and anonymity*

- a. The way you store data is relevant. Only those directly connected with the research should have access to the data. After you finish writing your final report, get rid of all copies possibly stored on different storage devices, and store only one copy of your data so that there is no possibility of it falling into the wrong hands.
- b. Personal details need not be stored. In fact, remove all details like names or anything that could identify a person. Instead use initials or codes (e.g. a, b, c, d; OR 001, 002, 003) for names of volunteers, host projects, clients, etc.
- c. Make sure you save data carefully. There are guidelines to protect data. SRA – The Social Research Association (UK) provides guidance on research ethics and data protection. See

http://the-sra.org.uk/sra_resources/research-ethics/ethics-guidelines/

Common ways to analyse data for questionnaires and focus groups

Analysing focus groups and interviews

You generally receive qualitative data when conducting focus groups and interviews.

1. *Using transcripts*

- a. The recordings could be transcribed manually – this requires a minimum of five hours of transcribing for one hour of recordings.
- b. The process could be sped up with the assistance of the following programmes:
 - InqScribe (freeware) – www.ingscribe.com
 - F4 (freeware) – www.audiotranskription.de
 - atlasti.ti (additional benefit: transcribes and analyses data) - www.atlasti.com
 - NVIVO (additional benefit: if you import the transcript in word, it assists with the analysis) – www.qsrinternational.com
- c. You could also just transcribe the most relevant quotes, passages or key sections from the recordings and not the entire recording.

2. *Identifying points of consensus or disagreement, and quotations*

- Read the transcripts.
- Identify things you find important, interesting and relevant. You do this several times.
- Underline the points that will in the next steps make up the themes.

3. *Highlighting themes using coloured pens (in transcripts)*

- Certain points and topics will reappear and you can mark each different topic with a specific colour. If you find another topic you mark it with another colour. So you get a coloured document. This is the “coding” process. The text which is not important will not be marked (left blank).
- In case you find it difficult to identify themes, think back to your research questions. Selecting themes is a good way of informing the structure and formulating the final report.
- You can use a computer programme to help you do this (e.g. NVIVO). The computer will follow the above-mentioned procedure, helping you structure the data.

4. *For focus groups you could include results from flipcharts, post-its and observations (notes of the person running the focus group) as your data.*

Analysing questionnaires

You generally receive quantitative data when using close-ended questionnaires. For qualitative data follow the procedure described above for focus groups and interviews.

Using different software

- SurveyMonkey – creates survey questionnaires and produces graphs and tables
- Microsoft Excel – produces graphs and tables (but not questionnaires)
- OpenOffice (freeware) – produces graphs and tables (but not questionnaires)

For those who have internet access problem, using the SurveyMonkey will be difficult, use printed questionnaires which you should digitise and throw away the original paper copies. It is important to consider the cost and time implication of this.

After data is stored and cleaned, you should consider once again: What do you want find out?

An important consideration: You may want to contact a local university/ social science department in your city/country to either undertake a study or just the analysis.

11. Reporting and dissemination

Please keep in mind the following when writing / preparing a report:

- Don't assume your reader has specific knowledge and avoid jargon and acronyms.
- Consider who will be reading the report and adapt accordingly – for example if the report was to be read by someone high in government you would want it to have key points (e.g. an executive summary), however if you were to present to a university researcher you might want to include more detail on methods.
- Also consider specific requirements of certain groups (e.g. translation).
- Make the report visually attractive (using appropriate graphs, diagrams, etc. – see examples provided below).
- Don't be afraid to include negative results. It is important to be honest and open and negative results can also help to validate positive ones.
- Protect the anonymity of participants of the assessment (don't include names, personal details that may identify someone, etc.).
- Include information of the number of participants in the study and the total 'population'. If there are 50 volunteers in the programme (total population) and 30 are included in the study (participants) these numbers should both be included in the report.
- Results should be displayed as percentages when you have at least 50 and ideally 100 respondents. For smaller response numbers the actual number should be used and not the percentage (for example 5 out of 20 and not 25%). It is good practice to include the total number of respondents when displaying results in a graph/diagram. Using actual numbers is more accurate, and using percentages when there is only a small number of respondents can be misleading in terms of the size of the study and the validity of the results.
- Before publishing ask someone who has not been involved in the impact assessment (ideally with less knowledge on the topic) to look over the report to ensure that findings are clearly explained, and to general proofread.
- When using quotes:
 - If you are using direct quotes ensure no changes are made.
 - If people or organisations are mentioned in the quote those words must be replaced for example "I worked with Bob at ICYE-UK, it was great" would read "I worked with [name of person] at [name of organisation], it was great"

Other Important considerations:

- It is good practice to give the final reports to all those who have taken part in the study.
- It is also good practice to thank people for taking part in the study.

Outline of a report

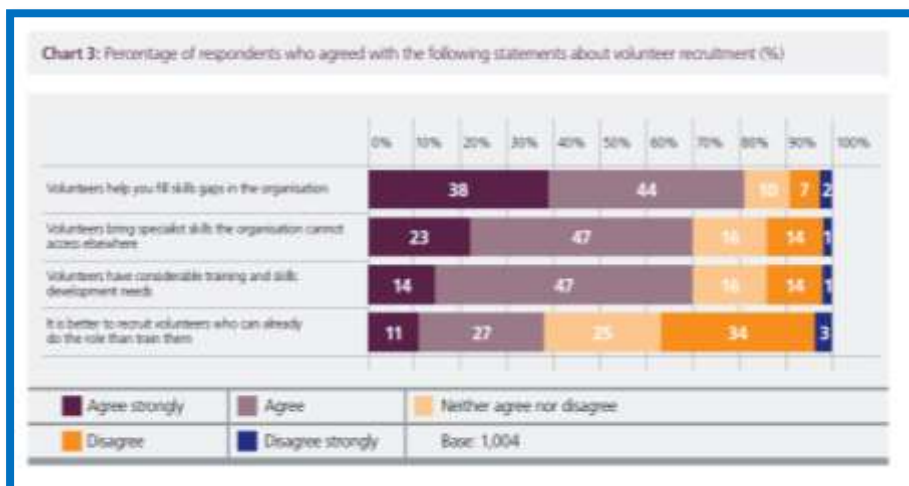
The structure of your report will depend largely on the scope of your study, its target groups, methodology used, etc. The outline given below illustrates the main points that should be included and address in your research report.

- Title page
- Tables of Contents
- Acknowledgements
- Abstract
- Introduction
 - A brief outline of the study
 - Rationale for the study
 - Aims of the research
 - Sample size and target group
 - Definitions / Terms often used in our report
- Theoretical Framework (if relevant)
- Methodology
- Analysis and Findings
- Discussion: Process of Change
- Final Conclusion
- Annexes

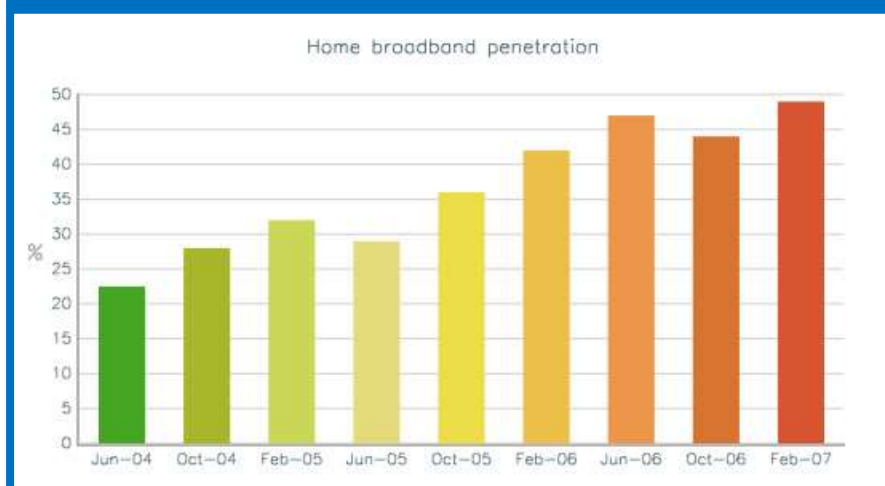
Please also Section 12 II for examples of research reports.

A few examples of visual data presentation

Charts



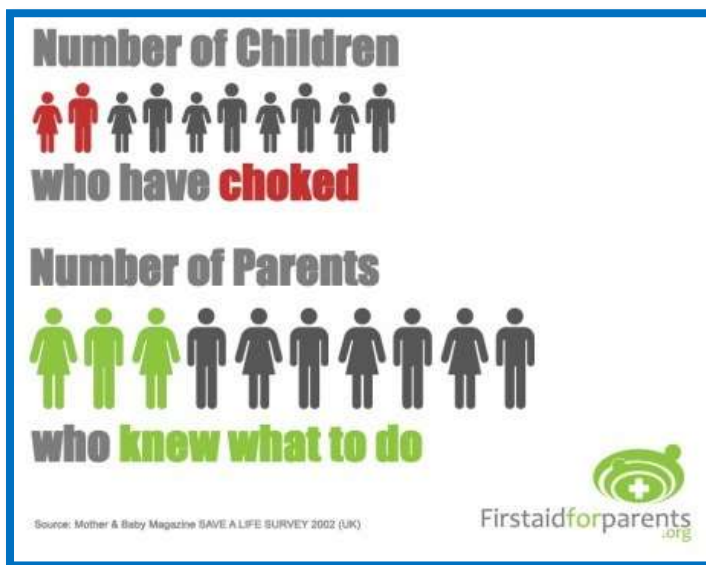
Graphs



Info Diagrams



Info Diagrams



Word Clouds



Web content



SurveyMonkey



12. Other practical considerations

Risks and common pitfalls

- **Time:** The entire field research and analysis may take a considerable amount of time. See annexes (Annex 1 – page 8; Annex 2 – page 3; and Annex 3 – page 4 for time taken on the sample assessments in Finland and Denmark) for an idea about the amount of time you should calculate to undertake impact assessment.
- **Resources:** Consider financial and human resources before you start. Give your staff or co-workers conducting the research incentives to encourage and motivate them.
- Make sure that elaborate notes are kept for all eventualities (e.g. in case the person conducting the research quits the project / organisation suddenly)
- Try to fit in and carry out the data collection (focus groups, interviews, questionnaires) for your research during already planned activities (e.g. during the final evaluation of volunteers, meetings with host projects, etc.).

Don't try to do it all! You don't have to use every single method in this practical guide or address all the players involved in volunteering. Think about what is most important to your own organisation while considering human and financial resources, as well as time constraints.

Accessibility and involving people with different support needs – being inclusive

- The language of this practical guide is English as it enables us to address a large number of people. At the local level, it is necessary that the questions for focus groups, interviews and survey questionnaires are translated in the local language to include as many people as possible.
- Consider whether the methods are appropriate for people with disability: Accessible venues for people with wheelchairs, using survey programmes that are usable with visually impaired people (SurveyMonkey meets these criteria), etc. Use what you can, and not necessarily everything.

Working with and involving co-workers, interns, etc. to help with the research

- Try to offer some incentives or rewards to those helping with and/or undertaking the research to encourage and motivate them, and to show your appreciation for their hard work.
- Make sure that those involved in the study receive the support and training they need to conduct research, and they know why they are doing it and how to go about it.

Case studies and practical examples

See Annexes 1, 2 and 3 for the sample assessment reports by Dansk ICYE and Maailmanvaihto – ICYE Finland.

13. Further information

Sources of information on

I. Different methodologies

1. Volunteering Impact Assessment Toolkit. A practical guide for measuring volunteering, Institute for Volunteering Research, UK (2004)
<http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/products-services/publications/volunteering-impact-assessment-toolkit>
<http://www.ivr.org.uk/search?f=1&q=Volunteering+impact+toolkit>
2. Volunteering Impact Assessment Toolkit - Volunteer Investment Value Audit (VIVA) -
[http://www.ivr.org.uk/images/stories/Institute-of-Volunteering-Research/Migrated-Resources/Documents/V/VIVA-bulletin-\(second-edition\).pdf](http://www.ivr.org.uk/images/stories/Institute-of-Volunteering-Research/Migrated-Resources/Documents/V/VIVA-bulletin-(second-edition).pdf)
3. The CES Resource Guide: Evaluating outcomes and impact, Charities Evaluation Service (CES), UK (2013)
<http://www.ces-vol.org.uk/tools-and-resources/Evaluation-methods/evaluation-resource-guide-tools>

II. Other impact studies in international voluntary service

1. Valuing Volunteer Management Skills - http://www.ivr.org.uk/images/stories/Institute-of-Volunteering-Research/Migrated-Resources/Documents/V/Valuing_volunteer_management_skills.pdf
2. Management Matters - http://www.ivr.org.uk/images/stories/Institute-of-Volunteering-Research/Migrated-Resources/Documents/M/management_matters.pdf
3. National survey of volunteering in England (2007) -
http://www.ivr.org.uk/images/stories/Institute-of-Volunteering-Research/Migrated-Resources/Documents/H/OTS_Helping_Out.pdf
4. Measuring the impossible - Scoping study for longitudinal research on the impact of youth volunteering (2010) - <http://www.ivr.org.uk/component/ivr/measuring-the-impossible-scoping-study-for-longitudinal-research-on-the-impact-of-youth-volunteering>
5. The Impact of Returned International Volunteers. A scoping review (2008) -
http://www.ivr.org.uk/images/stories/Institute-of-Volunteering-Research/Migrated-Resources/Documents/R/returned_volunteers.pdf

6. International Voluntary Service in SADC. Host organisation perspectives from Mozambique and Tanzania, Volunteer and Service Enquiry Southern Africa VOSES (2011) - http://www.vosesa.org.za/international_volunteering.php
7. International Service Perspectives from Weltwärts and ICYE Volunteers, Center for Social Development, Volunteer and Service Enquiry Southern Africa VOSES (2011) – <http://www.vosesa.org.za/resources/111204%20International%20Service%20Perspectives.pdf>
8. Participatory Research on International Volunteerism for Development in Kenya: Provisional Results, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Forum - International Forum on Development Service Forum International du Volontariat pour le Développement – http://www.unite-ch.org/12archiv/archiv09_study/ParticipatoryResearch-Contributions-International-Volunteerism-Kenya.pdf
9. The impact of long-term youth voluntary service in Europe: A review of published and unpublished research studies, AVSO – Association of Voluntary Service Organisations and proMENTE social research (2007) – http://www.academia.edu/2893624/The_impact_of_long-term_youth_voluntary_service_in_Europe_A_review_of_published_and_unpublished_research_studies
<http://www.slideshare.net/promente/promente-avso-research-impact-of-youth-voluntary-service-in-europe>
10. Exploring and Assessing Intercultural Competence (2007) – <http://csd.wustl.edu/Publications/Documents/RP07-01.pdf>

14. Contacts

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