

Assessing the Social Benefit of Community Media: A Toolkit for Community Radio

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1. Who and what is this Toolkit for?

1.1. Why assess Social Benefits?

This Toolkit is for community media in Ireland,¹ to help them to assess the level and nature of social benefit that they generate for their communities.² It deliberately moves away from the idea that the benefits of community media come solely from listening or viewing, and from the notion that the size of the audience is the most important parameter in assessing impact. Community media certainly generate benefits for their audiences, but it is just one among a range of ways in which they contribute to the community's well-being.

At the most comprehensive level, adapting the tools in this Toolkit to your particular station and implementing them, should yield the following:

- 1 An in-depth understanding of the *nature and range of social benefits* generated by your station, and the ability to *demonstrate these to others*;
- 2 An overview of the *relative importance of each type* to your community;
- 3 A well-grounded description of *dynamics of those benefits* i.e. how they are generated.

There are several advantages for a community station to adopting this approach.

- It can identify a wide range of benefits that are generated, locating it firmly in the community development sector.
- Written up in an effective way, the results generated by this approach allow stations to demonstrate to a range of funders the value of community media.
- If stations follow the framework recommended here, the data each generates can in principle be aggregated with that of others to build an ever richer understanding of the sector as a whole and its role in society, which can in turn be used for effective sector-level advocacy.
- Maybe most important, using this handbook can reveal to station staff, volunteers and others the wealth of social benefits that are actually being generated, but are seldom recorded or even acknowledged. Most stations are too busy just doing what they do, to step back and review how much they mean to their communities. Identifying and celebrating the range of benefits can also encourage stations to record them on a routine basis, and so to consciously begin to plan for how they can serve their community even better in the future.

1.2. How does this differ from a conventional approach?

The core methodology highlighted here begins with three key stakeholders in community media:

- Volunteers and staff most directly involved in it;
- Listeners that engage most actively with it;
- Community organisations with which it works, and to which it offers support and services.

¹ While this focuses specifically on community radio, it is hoped that it will be useful for, and adapted to, Community Television.

² The term 'social benefit' is used in the Broadcasting Act 2009 Section 64 (a)(i) with reference to community sound broadcasting. It states that programme material must have the objective of "specifically addressing the interests of, and seeking to provide a social benefit to, the community concerned".

It explores in-depth the views and experiences of each of these groups, and some are identified for further distillation into narrative stories that capture the dynamics of how community media can affect change. Then working outwards from these key stakeholder groups, the methodology assesses how benefits disseminate on to the wider community.

Rather than beginning with the entire catchment area, and trying to work out the size of, and impact on, audiences – as a conventional media listenership study does – this methodology assumes that the community station is part of a wider social dynamic, part of the network of community groups and organisations that exist for the purpose of generating benefits for and with their communities. It explores how the station fits within these dynamics, and the specific contributions it makes. Some of the benefits generated by the station accrue directly to individuals and groups; others are mediated through the many community organisations that stations engage with on a regular basis.

For these reasons, the central focus of this methodology is not on audiences as such, but on a much wider array of ways in which the community interacts with the Station. And while the prohibitive cost of undertaking general public audience surveys is acknowledged, this is not the reason for deploying a different approach. Rather, this approach recognises that many of the social benefits generated by community media come from engaging with the station in ways other than just listening – volunteering and training, promoting and advertising, advocating and supporting, being there for people and groups when they are needed, offering a welcoming hub to the community. At the same time, the benefits to be had from tuning in to the station are not ignored. The methodology seeks views about this from all the groups targeted in the research.

1.3. Where did the idea of the Toolkit come from?

The BAI has a Community Broadcasting Policy that reflects the 2009 Act provisions and sets out in more detail the characteristics of such services. It includes some expectations in relation to evaluation of community broadcasters.³

Community broadcasters use a variety of quantitative and qualitative evaluation tools to assess performance in the context of community interaction and delivery of social benefit. These provide some valuable information to the broadcasters, BAI, funders and communities served. Yet the sector and the BAI identified a need to explore the development of a methodology that is more focused on the unique nature of their operations, one that can also measure their performance in the context of the statutory requirements that relate specifically to a social benefit to the community served.

In February 2018, the BAI convened a *Community Media Working Group*, in the context of the BAI Strategy Statement 2017-2019⁴ which focused on greater sustainability in the Irish audio-visual sector and on increased participation in community media. A report was commissioned and delivered to the Working Group in January 2019, and the BAI developed a *Community Media Action Plan* based on the recommendations.⁵ Workshops and discussions continued during 2019 between the BAI and the community media sector, and the idea of this research – to pilot a methodology for assessing social benefit of community media – was seen as a positive and practical goal.

³ They can be accessed at <https://www.bai.ie/en/about-us/#al-block-7>

⁴ <http://www.bai.ie/en/about-us/our-strategic-goals>

⁵ Niamh Farren (2019) *Community media in Ireland – Sustainability and Participation*. A Community Media Working Group Report.

The BAI and Community Radio representatives appointed by CRAOL formed a Steering Group to take the matter a step further. Tenders were invited for the provision of consultancy services to work with the Steering Group on the following:

- (a) Devise an evaluation methodology that will provide concrete qualitative and quantitative measures of how individual community stations are performing against a range of statutory requirements and in particular how they are delivering social benefit to the community served;
- (b) Pilot this methodology with at least four selected community radio stations;
- (c) Based on (a) and (b) present a final methodology that can be rolled out across the community broadcasting sector to concretely measure the performance of stations particularly with regard to the delivery of social benefit.

In June 2019 the contract was awarded to Nexus Research cooperative and the work was completed in April 2020.

1.4. Who is the Toolkit for and What is in it?

For reasons of resources this Toolkit targets specifically the community radio sector, but community television can generate the same benefits as community radio and faces many of the same challenges. Hopefully this Toolkit can be adapted for community television in the future.

The central idea of the Toolkit is to enable a community station to produce a comprehensive social benefit assessment, written up in a professional manner that can be used for advocacy, fund-raising or other purposes, and can be compared across the sector. Producing a report to this level would require research expertise, probably external, and this Toolkit is intended for use by such an expert.

Yet some stations may not require this full research scenario at a given moment, or have access to the resources needed. Furthermore, the diversity of community radio stations in Ireland has become clear in researching this Toolkit and testing the tools, ranging from the smallest stations run almost entirely by volunteers to sophisticated multi-studio establishments with multiple paid staff.

Many of the tools presented here can therefore, with some effort and minimal research expertise, be implemented by stations themselves, enabling them to explore and understand the benefits they bring to their communities.

The Toolkit has the following sections, each with its own purpose.

Section 2 below describes what is termed the *Framework for Assessing the Social Benefit for Community Media* (SB Framework, for short). An assessment of social benefit must begin with a clear understanding of what it is, and the types that in principle community media can generate. It means that different stations will be able to compare, and to aggregate, results meaningfully. More than that, the SB Framework also suggests indicators of progress, and points to where information can be found on them.

A brief reference overview of tools and survey instruments contained in the Toolkit is in **Section 3**.

Section 4 then goes into more detail on each one, and is the most substantial section. In a step-by-step process, it shows how to use each tool in turn, describing the advantages and disadvantages and the resources required.

Section 5, drawing on pilot studies in Tipperary Mid-West FM and Dublin City FM, offers many examples of the kinds of information that can be obtained from this, and of how to combine results from different sources when looking at specific social benefits.

The Annexes contain practically useful material, including Survey questionnaires that have been fully tested and piloted.

2. A Framework for Assessing the Social Benefit for Community Media

At the heart of the Toolkit is the **Social Benefit Assessment Framework** (SB Framework) for community media. It has been designed based on a review of the literature on community media in Ireland and more widely, and a consultation process with the community radio sector, through CRAOL. It plays a couple of very important roles.

First, it offers a **clear definition** of what we are looking for, in terms of social benefits, how we can *identify* them, and how to *measure* them when we find them.

Second, it applies a **coherent and uniform set of concepts** about social benefits that will allow stations to *compare their results* with each other. It also means the results can be *aggregated into a single set of data* that will gradually paint a wider picture of the community media sector in Ireland – which is very useful for promoting and advocacy for the sector.

2.1. Definition and Types of Social Benefit

The **definition used here of social benefits** (SBs, for short) arising from Community media is below, elaborated to include the six concrete types – a typology of social benefits:

“Benefits to individuals or collective actors in the community that enhance their lives socially, culturally or economically, or in terms of development, empowerment and/or well-being, that otherwise would not have come about.”

SB 1: Individuals, especially minorities and those marginalised, are growing in confidence and creativity and/or reinforcing a sense of belonging, directly from engaging with the Station.

SB 2: Individuals are enhancing their employment prospects, through gaining skills and confidence.

SB 3: Community members are informed and aware of what is happening around their community.

SB 4: Community members are responding more effectively to issues—local to global—because they have access to diverse viewpoints and to more and better information.

SB 5: Collective actors (CBOs, NGOs etc.) are facilitated, and reinforced in their capacity, to achieve their goals.

SB 6: The community sense of identity and cohesiveness is enhanced.

The **SB Framework** includes more than just this expanded definition, adding two other elements that are important for conducting the research.

First, each type of social benefit has an associated set of **indicators**, that offers evidence of how this social benefit is in fact being achieved. Thus, evidence regarding SB 1 (“Community members are informed and aware of what is happening around their community”) might be that community members are *using social event information* broadcast by the Station.

Second, an indicator must have a *source from which evidence can be gathered* – otherwise, it cannot be used effectively. Two types of sources are included in the Framework: Evidence that is gathered using the main tools and methodologies here; and evidence that can be gathered inside the station through examining and documenting its activities and interactions with others.

Table 1 in the following pages thus includes three columns, one referring to the specific social benefit involved (SB1 to SB6); a column describing the indicators linked to this social benefit; and the third giving a list for each SB of where the evidence might be obtained, from the external research process (from the ‘Stories’ or specific survey questions) or internally within the station perhaps through a form of Social Audit.

Terminology used in the SB Framework:

A **comment on how certain terms are used** will be useful in interpreting the SB Framework:

Individuals: People, in their private capacity, in the station target area. The term is used when the benefit goes to a specific person, rather than a group of people; and often that person might be marginalised or isolated by disability, poverty, geography, age, culture or other factors.

Community members: Where the specific benefit goes to broad groups of people rather than to specific individuals.

Active listeners: Highly committed regular Station listeners, many of whom engage in ways beyond passive listening, and phone-in with requests, and use marketplace or job-search services.

Collective Actors: All non-state, non-profit groups, such as registered NGOs or charities CBOs, cooperative enterprises, partnerships, sports clubs, campaigns, and resident and tenancy associations, active in the catchment area and working to achieve social benefit there. These are also called *engaged organisations*.

Station Participants: All those directly involved in station activities, including staff, Management Committee or Board members, general members, programmes producers, volunteers and interns.

Other Stakeholders/indirect Stakeholders: Organisations or individuals not necessarily resident but present as service providers (education, health, safety etc.), political representatives, religious leaders etc. The Station does not directly target these as beneficiaries.

2.2. A Theory of Change Approach to Social Benefits Mapping

Each of the six types of social benefit is generated by the Station in a different way, sometimes through a combination of different activities, with several different preconditions, and often through working with one or more partners. Each follows its own dynamic in terms of affecting change. As a preface to the SB Framework, it is worth mentioning another tool or approach examined during this research, one that is designed to help understand these dynamics, and how change comes about. This is called a **Theory of Change (ToC) approach**, and an initial draft of applying this approach to community media, linked to the SB Framework, is contained in Annex 1. The advantage of a Theory of Change is that it focuses on outcomes rather than just outputs. As the Farren report observes when it comes to choosing a methodology that is credible to funders and stakeholders:

“The distinction between outputs and outcomes is also important. Outputs are quantitative data, e.g. numbers of people involved in station activities. Outcomes are the change that occurs as a result of an activity.”⁶

In short, a Theory of Change approach maps the “pathways of change”, the sequence of steps by which we believe we can affect change, and influence the outcomes desired. The process of developing a ToC Map begins with the final objective – what you want to achieve – and works backwards to the preconditions of this happening. In this case, the precondition can be seen to be the six specific social benefits. But these in turn have preconditions, which of course can be influenced by the activities of the Station.

Developing a ToC map, as in Annex 1, might encourage a more dynamic understanding of the different routes taken to achieving each of these benefits, and hence lead to better planning and evaluation in the future. However, what is presented in Annex 1 is only a beginning, intended to stimulate reflection, and significant additional work would be required to turn it into a useful tool.

The SB Framework is below. Note that the column “Source of Evidence” refers to questions in different surveys instruments these are to be found in the following Annexes:

- *Active Listener Survey* in **Annex 2.2**
- *Station Participants Survey* in **Annex 2.3**;
- *Collective Actors Survey* (also called the *Engaged Organisation survey*) in **Annex 2.4**.

⁶ Niamh Farren (2019) *Community media in Ireland – Sustainability and Participation*. A Community Media Working Group Report. Page 8.

Table 1: Framework for Assessing the Social Benefit of Community media: Definition, Types and Indicators

Definition of Social Benefit from Community Media: “Benefits to individuals or collective actors in the community that enhance their lives socially, culturally or economically, or in terms of development, empowerment and/or well-being, that otherwise would not have come about.”		
SB Benefits	Indicators of Social Benefits of each Type	Sources of Evidence*
1. <u>Individuals</u> , especially minorities and those marginalised, are <u>growing in confidence and creativity</u> and/or <u>reinforcing a sense of belonging</u> , directly from engaging with the Station.	SB1 is being achieved through... 1.1. Placements from community organisation working with marginalised/disadvantaged people 1.2. Station volunteers making programmes and in administration and support 1.3. training of marginalised/ disadvantages individuals; and taking in interns from external entities 1.4. isolated or marginalised individuals listening to radio programmes addressing their interests	<u>Research output:</u> 1.1. ‘Stories’ that include individual cases 1.2. Collective Actors Survey (Q9) 1.3. Station participant Survey (Q3; Q4; Q5 open) 1.4. Active Listener Survey (Q6 open box; Q7; Q8; Q11 open) <u>Possible internal Station evidence:</u> 1.5. Feedback to programmes from marginalised individuals, such as isolated older people or people with disabilities 1.6. Number of volunteers, placements, trainees/interns, 1.7. Number, length and type of trainees, including final surveys 1.8. ‘Open-door’ practice for anyone to drop in and socialise 1.9. Personal testimonies collected or submitted
2. <u>Individuals are enhancing their employment prospects</u> , through gaining skills and confidence reinforcing community identify	SB 2 is being achieved through... 2.1. media training that enhances vocational prospects. 2.2. volunteer opportunities that enhance employment prospects through personal development and skills acquisition 2.3. staff experience and training that enhance their vocational prospects.	<u>Research output:</u> 2.1. ‘Stories’ that include individual cases. 2.2. Collective Actors Survey (Q9; Q10 open) 2.3. Station participant Survey (Q3; Q4; Q5 open) 2.4. Active Listener Survey (Q6 open box; Q11 open) <u>Possible internal Station evidence:</u> 2.5. Surveys completed on completion of training 2.6. Follow-up surveys and contacts regarding employment e.g. references for job seeking 2.7. Personal testimonies from individuals

<p>3. <u>Community members are informed and aware of what is happening around their community</u></p>	<p>SB3 is achieved through the use by community members of information broadcast by the Station, in the form of...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3.1. regular bulletins of everyday information such as traffic, weather events etc. 3.2. specific social bulletins such as death notices, social events, etc. 3.3. transactional information services such as Job Search or Marketplace delivered free or at low-cost 	<p><u>Research output:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3.1. Collective Actors Survey (Q10 open) 3.2. Station participant Survey (Q5 open) 3.3. Active Listener Survey (Q6 open box; Q9, Q11 open) <p><u>Possible internal Station evidence:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3.4. A description and log of all such information broadcast (where relevant, supplementing Voices on Air reporting) 3.5. Levels of response for transactional information services 3.6. Volume of submissions for social event and community broadcasting diary
<p>4. <u>Community members are responding more effectively to issues—local to global—because they have access to diverse viewpoints and to more and better information</u></p>	<p>SB 4 is achieved through the station:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.1. producing/broadcasting content and format that addresses local to global, with diverse views presented in a balanced and constructive format, in studio and outside broadcasting 4.2. providing facilities and resources for volunteers to do the same, covering issues of local interest and concern 4.3. referencing local advocacy groups when reporting on news items 4.4. actively engaging in the community through projects, advocacy and interactions on issues or local interest and concern 	<p><u>Research Output:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.1. Stories covering the theme. 4.2. Collective Actors Survey (Q10 open) 4.3. Station participant Survey (Q5 open) 4.4. Active Listener Survey (Q6 open box; Q9; Q11 open) <p><u>Possible internal Station evidence:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.5. Description and log of issue-based programmes (where relevant supplementing the Voices on Air reporting) 4.6. Evidence of i) absence of other media cover on relevant issues; ii) other media coverage repeated from the Station 4.7. Level of contact from community on coverage 4.8. Keeping record of active engagement activities (4.2, 4.3)
<p>5. <u>Collective actors (CBOs, NGOs etc.) are facilitated, and reinforced in their capacity to achieve their goals</u></p>	<p>SB5 is achieved through the Station...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5.1 providing airtime to local CBOs to discuss and present their work, issues and requests to the public 5.2 facilitating CBOs to produce dedicated regular slots or entire programmes, including training and facilities 5.3 actively collaborating, beyond broadcasting, with collective actors for advocacy and joint work on issues relating to social benefit 	<p><u>Research Output:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5.1 Stories from collective actors 5.2 Collective Actors Survey (Q2-Q7, Q10 open) 5.3 Station participant Survey (Q4 open box) 5.4 Active Listener Survey (Q6 open box; Q8 open box; Q11) <p><u>Possible internal Station evidence:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5.5 Keeping Record of support provided to groups (5.1-5.2) 5.6 Description of collaborative projects (5.3)

6. <u>The community sense of identity and cohesiveness is enhanced through interaction and collective action.</u>	SB6 is achieved through the Station... 6.1. bringing diverse community groups in interactive programmes to discuss local issues, including to deal with conflicts and tensions 6.2. helping to mobilise community members around issues of concern locally, for collective action, advocacy, etc. in an inclusive manner	<u>Research Output:</u> 6.1. Stories covering the theme 6.2. Collective Actors Survey (Q10 open) 6.3. Station participant Survey (Q5 open) 6.4. Active Listener Survey (Q6 open box; Q11 open) <u>Possible internal Station evidence:</u> 6.5. Descriptive examples of programmes (6.1) 6.6. Specific examples of helping to mobilise the community
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* **Certain standard Survey questions include as options each of the six social benefit types, asking respondents to rate their importance. To prevent clutter, the following standard questions are omitted from the Framework: *Active Listener Survey Q7 and Q 8; Station Participant Survey Q3 and Q4; and Collective Actor Survey Q9.* See Annexes 2.2 to 2.2.**

3. Brief Review of Existing Methodologies

Community broadcasters have undertaken various research exercises in the past to assess their performance, both nationally and internationally, each of which is suited to different requirements and contexts.

3.1. Representative Audience Sampling.

Media sectors generally are often concerned mainly with the size and nature of the audiences they secure. This is of critical interest to commercial media in particular, since the return to shareholders depends crucially on their audience numbers and their likely listening patterns. It is an issue also for public service media, given their remit to serve all sectors of the population.

Audience surveys aiming to reach a representative sample of a given catchment area have also been used by community media over the years, often looking at wider issues.

The benefits of this form of conventional market research are clear: It can in principle generate statistically valid data on the characteristics and wider views of audiences and the public.

- As early as 2005, **NEAR FM commissioned TNS/MRBI** to undertake a face-to-face, broadly representative, structured survey of 300 adults within its catchment area. Beyond listenership *per se* (about a quarter had listened to NEAR FM) and their demographics features, it looked at level of satisfaction, preferences for different types of programmes, overlap with other stations' audiences, and key strengths.
- **CRAOL commissioned a redC/Grey Heron** survey in 2012⁷. While it could not offer detail on individual channels, it did draw conclusions on the catchment area of CRAOL members as a whole. Its goal was "to determine awareness and listening habits for their network of community based radio stations overall as well as determining the awareness and use of the community supports that are offered by the stations." Face-to-face interviews with a sample of over 500 people were completed, with positive results in the level of awareness and listener numbers for community radio: over a third had listened to community radio the previous week.
- **Dublin City FM engages Kantar Media** to complete an annual listenership survey, using a combination of face-to-face interviews and an online (rewarded) panel. It is linked to their provision of live traffic news for all of Dublin, in an arrangement with Dublin City Council which pays for a number of staff to work on this. As well as the number of listeners (which was estimated at 131,000 during a given week in 2019, up from 125,000 in 2018), it provides data on gender, age group (under 35 or over 35 years), marital status, ownership, employment, whether they are the main shopper, and more. It also includes comparative views of DCFM listener in radio use and advertising, using "agree or disagree" queries: for instance 48% of DCFM's listeners agree with the statement "It's important to me to trust my radio station", as compared to a 36% average for all radio listeners.

A major barrier to undertaking this kind of research using national polling and research organisations is the high cost. The charge for a 300 person full survey may come in at over €10,000; while the DCFM Kantar survey costs €6,500. Statistical validity demands a highly structured sample and a

⁷ The report can be downloaded here:

https://www.dropbox.com/s/2rvod4bpzsd8jhs/CRAudienceResearchSummary_Public_finalV3.doc?dl=0

certain minimum number of responses. While that minimum remains the same whether listeners are counted in millions or hundreds, it rises significantly as the results sought become more detailed. National survey organisations may also maintain, at significant cost, a database of a representative sample, who are contacted on a regular basis for polls and surveys of this nature.

3.2. Combined Stop & Ask Survey

Some stations have adopted a different approach, sometimes taking a direct role in the research through their volunteer or support networks, and working with consultants.

- For instance, **Community Radio Youghal** (CRY104fm) engaged an experienced consultant to undertake a **listenership survey** in 2018⁸. The goal was to gain feedback from the local community on their listening number and habits, and to seek suggestions for improvements in programming and community engagement. A total of 257 individuals engaged in this evaluation: it included 193 one-to-one ‘stop & ask’ surveys in the streets, homes and communities in Youghal and rural areas outside the town, and an online Survey advertised through Facebook and on air that yielded 42 responses; and five focused discussions with 22 representatives of a sample of community and sporting groups. Resources were limited to nine consultant days, and CRY104fm assisted by inputting the data.
- **Community Radio Kilkenny City** (CRKC) received a BAI’s Community Broadcasting Support Scheme (CBSS) grant in 2018 to complete a survey with somewhat similar goals i.e. looking at the extent and interests of listeners, and views on potential improvements.⁹ They employed a media consultant to plan and organise the one to one survey (including Stop & Ask, community and sports club visits) and a Website survey that reached a structured sample of 247 people living in Kilkenny City; and to personally undertake key-influencer interviews and a focus group discussion. In this case station volunteers were deployed to undertake the survey itself. A total of 20 consultant days were involved.

These surveys produce interesting and relevant results for the stations. Combining these with focus groups discussions and some interviews add to their depth. But they can be logistically difficult to organise and demanding in terms of the level of support required of the stations, and this discourages some from pursuing this approach. A key question is also the extent to which the results are actually representative: achieving randomness among a structured sample (for instance with a given gender, age and rural/urban background) is difficult, and national media polling organisations invest hugely in their panels, methods and training.

3.3. Qualitative approaches

For a community station, as compared to for instance a local commercial station, the *size* of the audience is less important than the *quality* of the interaction and the *composition* of the audience. This immediately points to a greater role for qualitative, as compared to quantitative, research.

- As early as 1996, **Nexus Research Cooperative** was commissioned by the **Independent Radio and Television Commission** (a predecessor of the BAI) to develop a methodology for evaluating

⁸ “Community Radio Youghal, CRY104fm, Listenership Evaluation 2018”, Community Consultants, 2018

⁹ “Community Radio Kilkenny City”, John Hackett Consulting 2019.

the success of the eleven pilot community radio licenses that were operating at that time.¹⁰ The goal was to design and pilot a methodology to assess “the extent to which radio stations have achieved the aims set out in their original submissions and detailed in their contract.” The main methodology developed comprised a set of evaluation workshops and self-evaluation activities bringing station and community stakeholders together for structured discussions. This was preceded by interviews with the stations (which were undertaken by the IRTC for the pilot). While a detailed qualitative methodology was produced and tested, it did not later see wider adoption by stations, beyond the six that participated at the time.

- Internationally, an interesting methodology that has been applied to community radio is called **Most Significant Change (MSC)**, a research approach designed to identify and document key outcomes from a given initiative within a community.¹¹ MSC builds on the knowledge of stakeholders, especially target groups, of the outcomes as they experience them. Many ‘Stories’ are collected by interview and other means in which the community and others describe their experience of outcomes from the station’s activities. These Stories are reviewed and discussed. The most important are identified and ranked in order, and may be subjected to further analysis to explore the dynamics and potential for expansion or replication. The output of MSC is not just the validated Stories. The most important and lasting effect can be a renewed focus on what the initiative is trying to achieve and how success can be monitored.¹²
- In 2016, **CRAOL commissioned Ipsos MRBI** to undertake a qualitative study called *Perspectives on Community Radio in Ireland* of community radio listeners, and their views on all media, with a specific focus on whether radio delivers on freedom of expression (as covered by Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights). However, the goal was quite narrow, and the methodology was intended to take a snap-shot of the issue from a total of 27 dedicated listeners across four community stations.¹³

Some qualitative approaches look mostly internally into the systems, processes and activities of community media

- **NEAR FM in 2009 commissioned a partial ‘social audit’**, funded by the CBSS, to look at certain internal aspects of governance— decision-making, resource management, and creating an enabling and inclusive ambiance – and how this is related to, and driven by, their ethos.¹⁴ The ultimate goal was to strengthen the organisational capacity and vision of the project. It used a survey of volunteers and station, a dozen one-to-one interviews, and three focus groups with, respectively, staff, volunteers and management. The approach enabled a fine-grained look at how the different groups regard the station and contribute to its character as a community station that had gone through a significant period of expansion.

¹⁰ Two reports were produced: “IRTC Pilot Community: Final Evaluation Methodology” (1996) and “Pilot Community Radio: Evaluation Workshops Final Report” (1997) Nexus Research Cooperative, 1996 and 1997. The current consultant was the main author of both.

¹¹ For an outline of the approach see: <https://mande.co.uk/special-issues/most-significant-change-msc/>

¹² For an application to community radio in Africa see: “Most Significant Change: A tool to document community radio impact”, (2007) Birgette Jallop, in *Measuring Change Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation in Media and Development Cooperation*. CAMECO.

¹³ To access the report see: <https://craol.ie/about/research/>

¹⁴ “A bit of magic dust”: Aspects of a Social Audit of Near media Co-op”. 2009, Maria Gibbons

- A comprehensive system to undertake an internal social audit was developed in Nepal in 2008, which had early on developed a large community radio sector. In part to facilitate reporting to donors, the **Community Radio Performance Assessment System (CR-PAS)**¹⁵ includes an elaborate set of indicators for each of several features of community radio, including participation and ownership, governance, programmes, financial management, networking, and others. The indicators, of which there are dozens, are designed to be objectively verifiable (for instance: “the radio has put in practice the system and mechanism of deciding the membership fees in consultation with the people in the defined community” or “radio carries out impact survey of its programs.”) and are scored to indicate the level of development of each station. The manual is designed around the national characteristics of community radio there but nevertheless has a degree of universal applicability.
- An approach widespread among community stations in Ireland, called **Voices on Air**, examines how successfully a station represents diverse community voices within its programme output. Community stations in receipt of support under Pobal’s Community Support Programme (CSP), a majority of stations, use performance indicators as a measure of such diversity. On a six monthly basis each station reports the *number of identifiable voices featured on air* as a primary indicator. Stations receiving the CSP support also commit to carrying out regular community research, to profiling demographics, understanding needs, and gauging engagement with the service. This approach too has its pitfalls and limitations. It is for instance difficult to make a direct connection between diversity and outcomes in terms of social benefits, and the quality of programme content is difficult to assess. (See Annex 2.6.)

The above is not a comprehensive account of the efforts that community stations in Ireland go to to examine their impact and how they achieve it. For instance, some stations routinely keep a record of interactions with community members, such as positive phoned-in comments and physical visits to the stations. They record the nature and types of programmes broadcast as part of their license obligations. When they are applying for, or renewing, their license, they often produce a comprehensive report about their catchment populations, schedules and so forth. Some of this information can be more systematically captured and reused in the context of building a picture of social benefits generated by them.

3.4. Conclusion

It is no accident that none of the **representative audience surveys** are concerned specifically with exploring or quantifying the specific *social benefits* generated by community media. Their main focus is the number, composition and preferences of listeners, which is understandable especially for the commercial media sector. Such an approach can provide useful information - community stations too would like to know how many and what type of people are listening to their programmes. Furthermore, targeted questions can glean views on, for instance, how station listeners or others use information and ideas broadcast, though these remain at a very general level.

A major drawback is cost - the 2016 IPSOS MRBI Report above cost about €16,500, and the redC/Grey Heron report in 2012 about €18,000. There is a very high cost to reaching a verifiably

¹⁵

https://wikieducator.org/Community_Media/Radio/CR_Performance_Assessment_System#Performance_Assessment_Guideline

representative sample of the public. Furthermore, since community radio programmes often attract a relatively small proportion of the overall population, the number of *relevant* listeners reached by a survey (i.e. those familiar with the programmes) can be quite small. This cost/reach ratio, combined with the general nature of the views obtained, and the fact that many social benefits are generated by factors other than listening, means that the general public listenership surveys as a methodology, is unsuitable for examining social benefits.

The **combined Stop & Ask surveys** are somewhat less secure in terms of how accurately they can claim to represent the views of the general public. Yet, combined with in-depth interviews and some focus groups discussions, they can deliver a more in-depth view of what the community station means to the community. Furthermore, by using the resources of the station, they can keep costs down while still retaining a claim to reaching a representative sample

Qualitative approaches are better suited to examining in detail at avenues of causation between station activities and generating outcomes for people and organisations. Externally-oriented in-depth interviews and focus group discussions can get to the level of detail needed to paint a convincing picture of how the station achieves benefits, often through engaging with intermediary organisations and addressing hard-to-reach and excluded minorities. Only one of the above is explicitly dedicated to analysing the social benefits generated by the community stations, the Most Significant Change approach. This goes further, by attempting to (quantitatively) rank the importance of the different benefits brought about by a station to its community.

Internally oriented qualitative approaches, supplemented by quantitative indicators, can also reveal something about whether stations are putting in place the preconditions and processes that would increase the likelihood of generating social benefit, and whether stations are consciously planning and working to achieve that goal.

Nevertheless the qualitative approaches reviewed here, too, have limitations especially in offering empirically verifiable results on a sound social-scientific basis.

Above all, and it should come as no surprise, this methodology review reveals that no single approach is adequate to the task at hand here i.e. to convincingly demonstrate and quantify, even in an approximate manner, the nature and extent of social benefit generated by community media. What is needed is to combine several approaches to adapt to the diversity of community stations in Ireland, with some innovation around how existing research methodologies can be refined to suit this purpose. To the fore will be qualitative approaches, and especially those that can combine certain quantitative elements that can generate rounded and convincing research results.

Yet there is a challenge here.

Stations are under financial pressure and research and evaluation are, understandably, often considered something of a luxury. BAI has acknowledged this through establishing the Community Broadcasting Support Scheme (CBSS). However the funding provided has been declining over the years, generally due to the absence of sufficient demand from the sector, and now has a total of €25,000. The scheme, as currently structured, may no longer be suited to supporting the kind of evaluation that is required to measure social benefit, and more structured support might be required.

4. Methodology Toolkit: An Overview

A selection of research tools are introduced here that we believe, in various combinations, are best suited to achieving a convincing analysis of social benefits based on the Social Benefits Framework described above. Drawing on previous experience, most of them are especially designed for and piloted during the research. Each produces evidence of a different kind that, in combination and through aggregation of results, converge on an overall assessment of the social benefit being generated by a community radio station.

These methodological approaches and tools, with the potential to contribute to social benefit analysis, are of four kinds. (Annex 2 goes in some depth into how to go about implementing each.)

4.1. General Catchment Survey

Probably the only feasible way of doing a survey of the general catchment population is through the use of a “Stop & Ask” technique. This deploys volunteers (or, at much higher cost, professional interviewers) to carefully selected locations and venues to interview people individually, and uses various techniques to achieve a broadly representative sample of the population. The goal can be both to obtain basic listenership data for the Station as compared to other stations, and (optionally) to gather relatively straightforward information from Station listeners.

Although a pilot was not been completed using this technique for this research (it proved impossible in the time available and in the locations selected), examples of successful deployment, with external professional support, by community radio stations are given in the previous review section.

In addition, this research is supporting an ongoing exploration between NEAR FM and Griffith College, to see whether such a survey, or something similar, might be integrated as a module into their academic course. If this process is to be successful (which will become clear during 2020, then this might provide a model that can be replicated elsewhere.

4.2. Purposive Sample Surveys

The three surveys below all target individuals or groups with a degree of commitment to the Station, and are thus purposive samples. The idea is that these surveys engage with those who are most familiar with the Station and are hence likely to be able to provide views and information about it. On the other hand, as such, they cannot claim to be representative of radio listeners in general, of volunteers, or of community development organisations. All three surveys have been fully piloted during this research in Tipp Mid-West and Dublin City fm.

- An **Active Listener Online Survey**: This is an online survey promoted on air specifically to more dedicated and active Station listeners. They tune in (often live streaming) at least a couple of times a week; entering competitions, submitting music requests, or visiting the Station. Among Tipp Midwest FM Survey respondents, 54% had entered a competition; 50% had requested music; and 30% had visited the station; with the figures for Dublin City FM at 55%, 49% and 8% respectively. Their views are thus highly informed concerning the station, though not necessarily representative of the listeners as a whole.
- A **Station Participant Survey**: This is a survey, which can be completed online or by hand (and later input), of all those involved directly in the Station. They include volunteers (making programmes or in support roles), interns, Committee members, ordinary members (for instance,

if it is registered as a cooperative) and paid part-time or full-time staff. Again, these are likely to be committed to the ideals and work of the Station, and not representative. But the goal is to explore how many benefit in unique ways and to tap into their wealth of knowledge about the Station. Among survey respondents, 80% from Tipp Mid-West and 60% from Dublin City FM believe it is extremely important to the community.

- **An Engaged Local Organisation Survey:** This survey reaches as many “collective actors” as possible i.e. non-for-profit organisations active in the community in generating social benefit, that engage in some way with the Station. For the Pilots, the surveys were circulated to lists of organisations held by the Stations that they also use for general dissemination; but it is important, in order to achieve a high response rate, to edit the list to those who have interacted with the Station previously. Among Tipp Midwest respondents, 82% had participated in a radio programme; and 59% of Dublin City FM had. The purpose is to get their considered opinions of the Station and the outcomes of their interactions with it, along with their wider views.

4.3. “Stories” of Social Benefit

The final methodological tool highlighted here also uses a purposive sample, in that the Stories are not selected (and in fact cannot be, in practice) as a *representative sample of the social benefits generated* by the station. Rather they are selected as prominent examples of different kinds of benefits that can be generated, a spread that covers the typology of social benefits outlined earlier. But what is unique about them is the depth to which they go, and the firm focus on social benefits and how they are generated in practice.

This approach is adapted from the Most Significant Change methodology mentioned in the review above. The basic unit of the methodology is the Story: a short, structured description of a specific type of benefit generated by an initiative, usually gathered from beneficiaries themselves and using supporting material. The approach then, based on the Stories, uses participative techniques to assess which are most beneficial to the community. A tailored use is made of the approach here.

New Stories have been gathered and documented in this research through one particular method (though existing Stories and testimonies have also been edited and adapted, provided by CRAOL members before the Féile)¹⁶. That method is through *direct expert interview* usually with the subject of the Story, verified with others and/or available documentation, and written up following a template. When drafting and verification are complete, each Story was reviewed against the list of benefits, and a simple score used to give an opinion of which social benefits it is most relevant to.

Different types of Stories are covered: Individual volunteer programme makers; Training course graduates; community organisations that interact with the Station; and Stories directly from the Station’s own actions. But others are possible: all they have in common is that they capture a social benefit generated by the Station. The purpose of Stories is always the same: To explore an actual experience of social benefit in some depth; to explain its context, the inputs and the outputs, and what it means to the beneficiary; and then to identify where it fits within the SB typology.

¹⁶ See the associated report: “The Social Benefits of Community Radio: A Compendium of Stories”.

4.4. Station Interactions, Process and Content analysis

When considering social benefits, it may also be valuable for a Station to look to its specific outputs i.e. its own productions, as well inwards to its processes, practices and interactions.

The **Voices on Air** tool for assessing the level of diversity represented in programmes, described in the review, is already in use, and can readily be adapted by Stations to supplement indicators of social benefits. Furthermore, some Stories (including a couple recorded during this research) describe the social value generated by radio programmes that consciously target marginalised groups, by ensuring that members of this group participate directly in the programmes (and hence would be counted in Voices on Air) and by seeking out and disseminating information of special interest to that community. Thus Voices on Air can help to illuminate the wider social impact.

Other Station processes and practices may also be relevant to specific social benefits, and should be included in an analysis. For instance the Framework, in Section 2 above, specifically refers to evidence that can be gathered by stations internally:¹⁷

For instance, In relation to SB1: “individuals are growing in confidence and creativity” examples of internal evidence station evidence include:

- The extent and type of feedback to programmes from marginalised individuals, such as isolated older people or people with disabilities;
- Number of volunteers, placements, trainees/interns supported by the Station;
- Number, length and type of trainees, including final trainee surveys results;
- ‘Open-door’ practice for anyone to drop in and socialise.

Or in relation to SB 2 “Individuals are enhancing their employment prospects”, examples of potential evidence the Station could gather are:

- Feedback surveys completed on completion of training;
- Follow-up surveys and contacts regarding employment e.g. references for job seeking;
- Personal testimonies from individuals.

Each station might consider how best to combine these with other tools to reinforce the evidence.

4.5. Summary Advantages and disadvantages of each tool

Table 2 summarises the kinds of data and information obtained by each tool, summarising advantages and disadvantages.

¹⁷ Other examples may be found in the Community Radio Performance Assessment System, referenced in Section 3 above.

Table 2: Information from and key features of Each Tool

Tool	Information produced	Comment
General Catchment Survey		
"Stop & Ask" public survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Station listenership figures, as proportion of the public • Representative views of Station listeners as a whole, and comparison to wider public views 	<p>Advantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information is representative of the population as a whole so comparison can be made <p>Disadvantages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feasibility: It needs numerous survey collectors/volunteers, intensive planning and organisation, and external expertise • Large numbers of responses (300+), and careful design and control, are needed for accurate representative figures. • It is not intended to gain in-depth understanding
Purposive sample surveys		
Active Listener Survey (online)	Representative views of a committed listener sub-group	<p>Advantages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieves accurate figures for this sub-group • Large volume of qualitative SB comments • Low-cost; Can be implemented by the Station • Offers leads for later 'Story' follow-up <p>Disadvantages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Needs ongoing strong on-air promotion, and ongoing targeting to achieve large representative numbers • Excludes occasional and Station non-listeners
Station Participant Survey (online and hardcopy)	Representative views of all those involved in the Station	<p>Advantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High and representative response is possible • This group has strong varied knowledge of Station • Large volume of qualitative SB comments • Low-cost; Can be implemented by the Station • Offers leads for later 'Story' follow-up <p>Disadvantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excludes those previously involved, but no longer participate.
Engaged Organisation Survey (online)	Representative views of organisations that have interacted with the Station	<p>Advantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Captures benefits generated <i>indirectly</i> by the Station; • A large volume of qualitative SB comments • Low-cost, and can be implemented by Station • Offers leads for later 'Story' follow-up <p>Disadvantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Needs strong effort to get representative sample back
A Social Benefit Stories approach		
Social Benefit 'Stories'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-depth description of actual social benefits, how they accrue and to whom. 	<p>Advantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Captures actual dynamics of how benefits are created • Stories can come directly from community <p>Disadvantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most are entirely qualitative • Collection, Write-up and analysis need expert skills • Can be highly time-consuming

Station Process and Content analysis		
Voices on Air	Assess of the diversity of voices being broadcast by the Station	Advantages <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing methodology familiar to Stations • Gives a quantitative overview of programme content diversity Disadvantages <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficult to connect results directly to actual social benefits
Analysis of Station interaction and processes	Evidence of to social benefits from processes and interactions.	Advantages <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stations may already generate evidence of social benefit in community interactions that just needs to be identified Disadvantages <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Needs to be tailored to each specific Station.

These, then, are the basic component, and *Annex 2: Using the Toolkit: Instructions in Detail* also explores their advantages and disadvantages in a little more depth.

The next section looks at how to use them in combination in various ways.

5. Putting the Parts Together

The methodological approach proposed here combines tools selected from those described above. By combining the data gathered by individual tools, a picture emerges not just of a set of diverse benefits generated by the Station, but of where the Station fits within the wider community development process.

This section give an indication of the **various types of information and results that can be obtained using the methodological approach piloted during this research, and of different ways of presenting them.** It sometime contrasts the information coming from the two Pilot Stations, to illustrate contrasting results. The exclusion of certain tools, such as the Stop & Ask Survey, and the Voices on Air approach, both featured in the previous section, does not indicate that these have no place in the final selection a Station might make; only that they have not been piloted here. Stations will have their own experience of them, and the Stop & Ask is described in some detail in Annex 2.

5.1. The Collective Power of a Methodology

In short, the methodology combines the views, gathered in different ways by different tools. The views of the **general public** may be a part of this. And whether the resources are available to include this component will depend on the size of the catchment area, and the volunteer and logistic support available to the station. Most certainly, the view of the **key groups that interact with the Station** will be included. These groups are:

- *Active listeners:* Regular and committed Station listeners likely to interact in other ways with the Station;
- *Engaged organisations:* Organisations (also referred to as collective actors) that engage directly in some way with the Station;
- *Station participants:* All those active in and with a good knowledge of the Station including volunteers, staff, Committee and ordinary members and interns.

These groups have more, and broader, experience of the Station than anyone else. Their views can paint a picture of where the Station fits in the local and community dynamics, and how this translates into different kinds of social benefits.

The methodology combines surveys, which have both quantitative and qualitative elements, and **Stories** that are entirely qualitative and focus on narrative and dynamics. In terms of assessing social benefits, this approach can offer both an overview, comparing the different elements presented in the SB Framework against each other; and the possibility of drilling down into each of these, through combining all the data available about each.

A further element is also included: the potential for stations to undertake a type of once-off or ongoing ‘social audit’ of their processes and content. The analysis of the **diversity of voices on air** is one element that is already happening in many stations, but additional elements can also be included, that might explore whether the structures and processes are in place to maximise opportunities for, and awareness of the Station, regarding identifying and expanding the social benefits. While the Voices element has a specific methodology, the identification of components (such as Station guidelines and practices) that might suit the circumstances of different stations might have to be tailored to each station and they are not considered here.

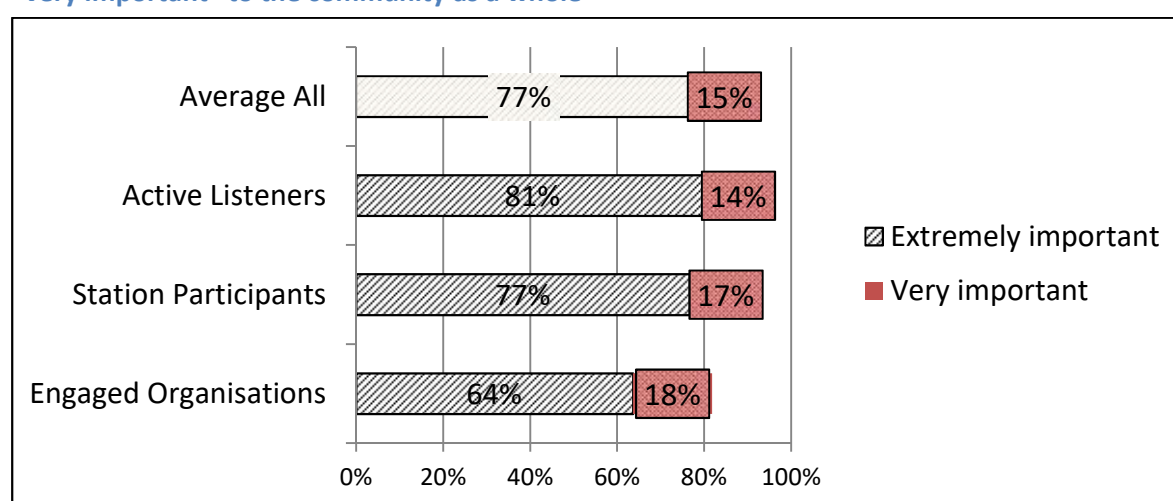
In what follows, aspects of the wider picture are presented first, using examples from the Pilot surveys in Dublin City FM and Tipp Mid-West; followed by a more in-depth look of each of the six social benefits in the Framework. They are not comprehensive – many results are not shown; and the contrasts sometimes highlighted between the two Stations are for illustrative purposes. They are intended to serve only as examples of the types of data that this approach can obtain.¹⁸

5.2. An Overview of Social Benefits

Importance to the Community

The most straightforward question to ask about a community radio Station is how important it is to the community it serves. Figure 1 below shows the percentage of different key stakeholder groups that responded with either “extremely important” or “very important” on the five step scale, when asked: “How important do you think the station is to the community as a whole?”

Figure 1 (n=78): % Stakeholders groups believe Tipp Mid-West FM is “extremely important” and “very important” to the community as a whole



¹⁸ The author is particular grateful to the two stations for allowing this data to be used for illustrative purposes.

Note that the question was *not* how important the Station is *to them individually* but to the *community as a whole*. While these key stakeholders are likely to have a positive view of Tipp Mid-West FM– why otherwise would they be involved with it – they also have wide experience of it. The results are striking. Among active listeners, a full 95% believe the Station is either extremely important (81%) or very important (14%) to the community as a whole; among station participants the figures are a little lower; and markedly lower still (though still very high) among engaged organisations.

The percentage of the combined groups responding to each of the options is shown below , this time for Dublin City FM.

Figure 2 (n=162): Importance of Dublin City FM to combined stakeholders

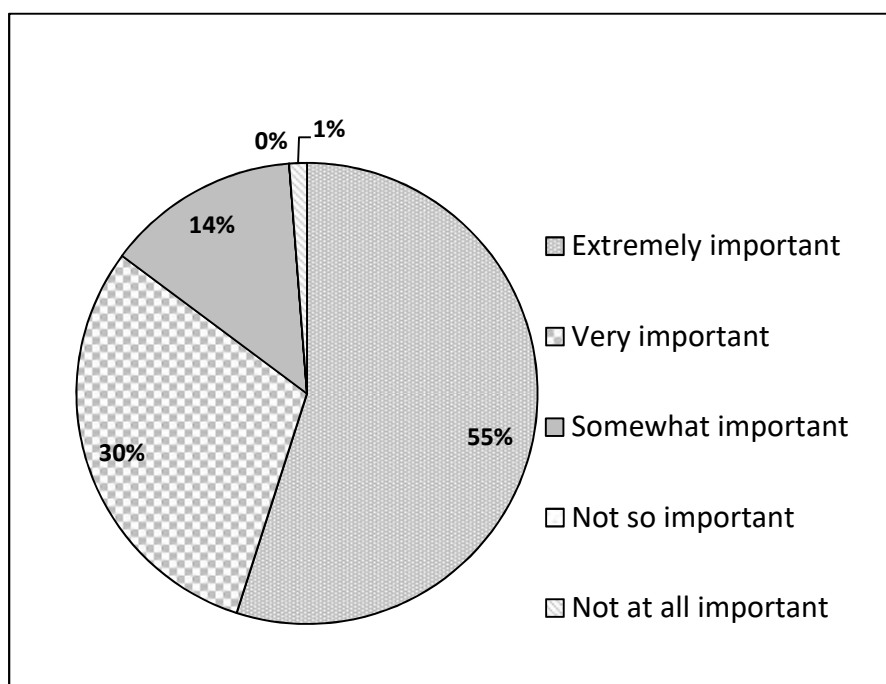


Figure 2 shows that 55% of the combined stakeholders believe Dublin City FM to be *extremely important* to the community as a whole, compared to 77% in Tipp Mid-West – perhaps not surprising in the light of the huge difference in the size of the catchment populations, and the fact that Dublin is served by several community stations.

The ‘active listener’ group¹⁹ explained their answers. While these are not necessarily representative of all listeners they give a good indication of what committed listeners like about the Station. The following are examples of comments by the 88 Dublin City FM listeners who responded:

- “DCFM is distinctly different to the other radio stations broadcasting. Less advertising, less likely to follow the obvious trends and fashion, more relevant to the local community, more diverse, more genuine, presenters who are more like me than those on ‘other stations’.”
- “Most commercial stations have don’t have “folksy” radio presenters - I mean genuine character.”
- “It fills the gap between commercial local radio stations (mainly music) and the national stations (mainly celebrity broadcasters with a tired and predictable format)”
- “Live Drive is best programme on any station and should be on air all day long.”
- “Impossible to function without LiveDrive and Good Morning Dublin and other shows. All provide vital, credible, up-to-date information.”

¹⁹ This option is included in the final version of the survey questionnaire of the other two stakeholders groups.

- “Provides a broad and community relevant programming; provides facility for volunteers to make contribution to society and participate in their personal interests.”
- “...it is essential that good quality local radio continues to broadcast varied and eclectic output, as well as dealing with local issues which often get overlooked by the national media and by the more 'commercial' local players.”
- “The fact that Dublin City FM has every type of programme any given person living in the capital could want. In my case, a show dedicated to people with disabilities, movie shows, and music programmes with presenters who know music like the back of their own hand. Some of us hate commercial radio. And that's unfortunately where most mainstream radio is these days. Dublin City FM is a breath of fresh air in comparison.”

Overall a number of themes emerge: the Stations' authenticity and absence of commercial tone; programmes that deliver valuable information (almost half single out *LiveDrive*, the interactive live traffic programme with data from Dublin City Council traffic control centre, and news such as *Good Morning Dublin*, their main morning programme, and local sports coverage); the diversity and range of specialist and minority interest; and its other activities such as volunteering

Tipp Mid-West had a similarly diverse range of comments:

- “I love everything about it! All the presenters the music and even the local obituaries it is so in touch with local people. If you can't get to mass it is the only way you can receive mass. It's about Tipperary ordinary people and if you live on your own it's pure company.”
- “Keeps me company day & night especially when I'm on my own”
- “I think it is great to see younger members of our community involved in the station, it adds another element and captures a younger audience.”

Importance to Individuals

Both station participants and active listeners were also asked for concrete examples of how *they themselves or others close to them*, benefited from the Station, personalising some of the benefits indicated above.

Some **comments from Tipp Mid-West active listeners** are below:

- “It is good for emotional and mental health and combats feelings of isolation. It provides a station that is proud of Irish music and culture and that includes Irish sports which is not found on slot of the popular radio stations. It celebrates the country people who are not represented on the main channels. It also reaches all ages.”
- “Know when things are on that I'm interested in supporting “
- “It is probably first place you will hear about something going on in your village or town.”
- “I learned about nature gardening and the services available in the local area”
- “Conditions of roads, i.e. during bad weather also being able to listen to mass on Sundays is extremely important ,other information deals with local clubs and organisations ,you also feel you remain part of the community even when immobile and unable to take part physically in activities.”

Station participants in Tipp Mid West, such as volunteers including programme makers, cite some further types of benefit, including the following:

- “The Station created an awareness around farm issues that affect everybody's lives”

- “I had an ad on air and got great publicity from it”
- “Due to my interaction with the radio station I got a week of work experience in the station giving me valuable insight into being on air and the work that happens around the radio”
- “I am here on a work placement scheme and I have learned a lot from working on reception. Seeing how everything works in the studio, meeting people and having a good rapport with people on the phone.”
- The “station gave massive support to a group of which I was a member to organise and advertise a school reunion in 2013 for gathering”
- “Very positive feedback from listeners makes me feel my volunteering is very much appreciated I am always happy to help out with fundraising, etc. I enjoy working on the station and sharing the music I play with the listeners and based on the reaction and feedback from the listeners, I think we get it right most of the time.”

5.3.Ranking Social Benefits

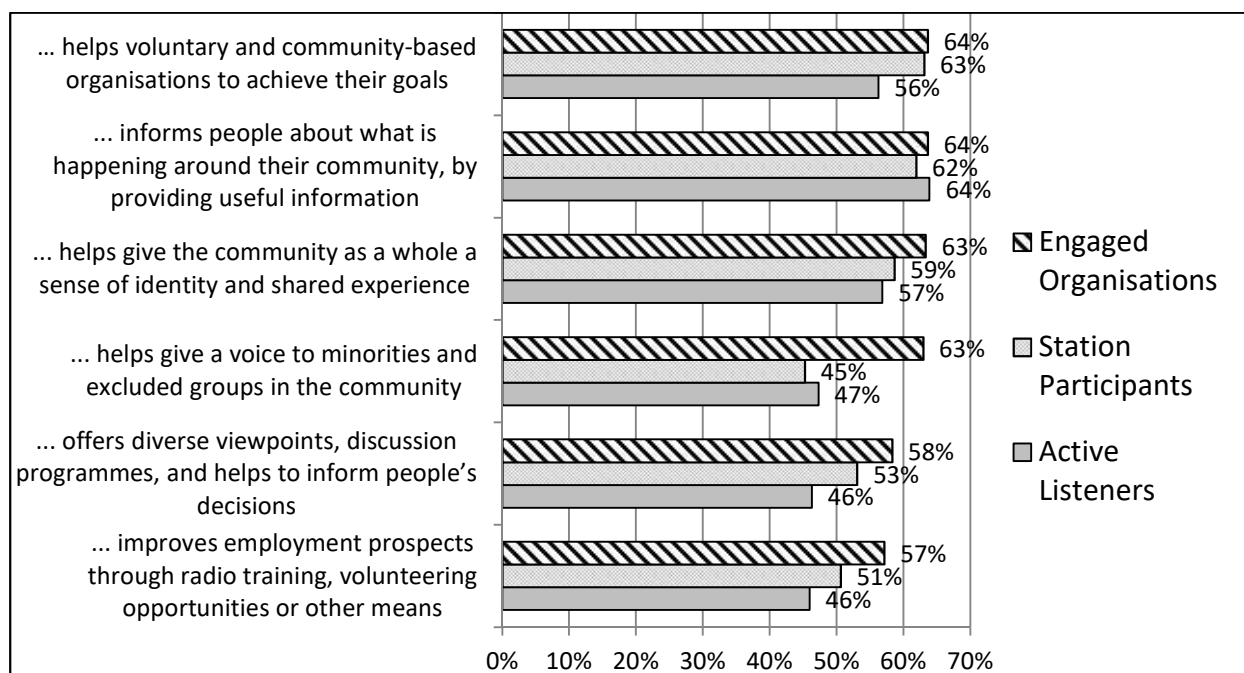
While views on the level and type of social benefits generated are important – and very positive- in both stations, they tell us little about which benefits are considered to be more important.

Here, the SB Framework comes into its own, by offering a distinct set of potential social benefit types, and all three stakeholder groups were asked their views on them.

The surveys took two approaches to this question.

The first asks each of the three stakeholder groups to agree or disagree with a set of statements, each concerning a specific social benefit. The results for Tipp Mid-West are shown below for each of the three stakeholder groups regarding the six different possible benefits. The level of agreement of each is in descending order overall.

Figure 3 (n=78): Level of agreement with: "Tipp Mid-West ..."

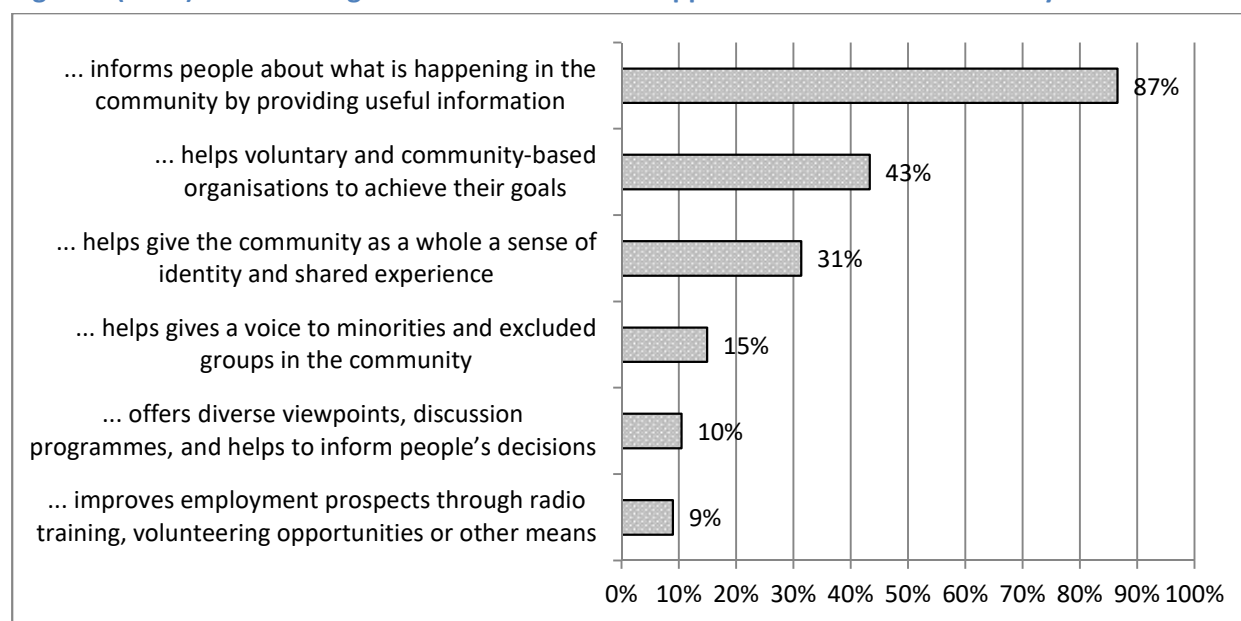


The scale used here is important. A 100% score would mean that all respondents ‘agree strongly’; while a score of 0% would mean that all respondents “do not agree at all”. A 50% score indicates

that they “agree somewhat.” Scores vary from group to group, and range from an average of 45% (just below “agree somewhat”) to 64%, which is moving well towards “agree strongly”.

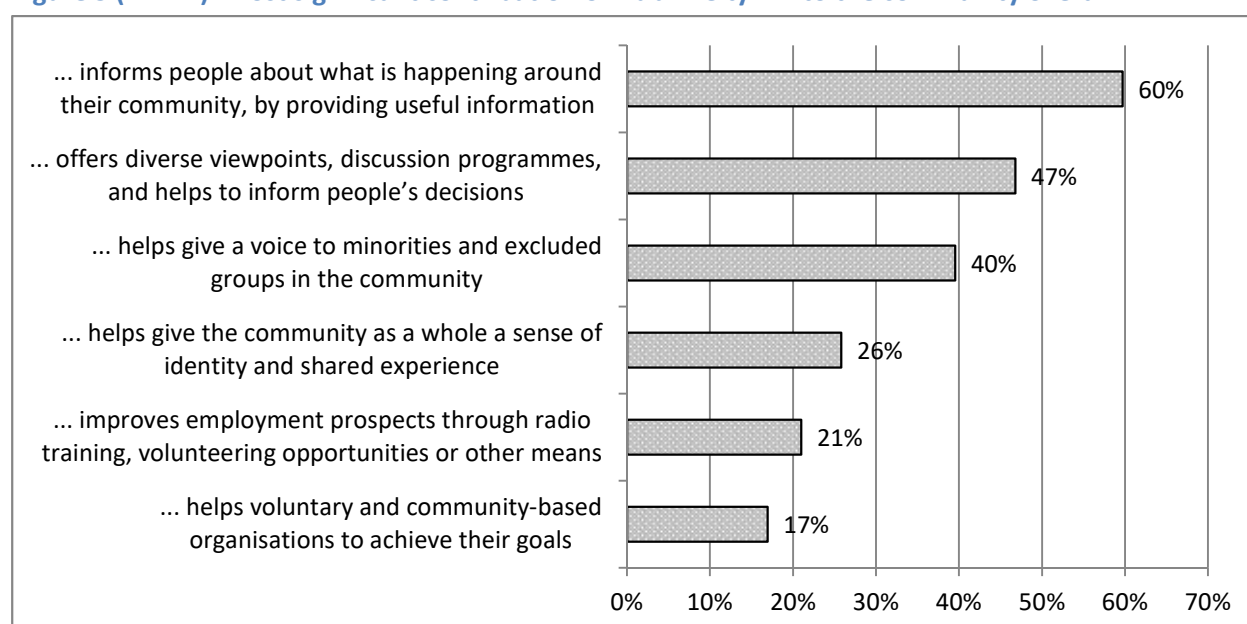
The second approach invites survey respondents to select the *two most important* from among these, and this offers a better basis to rank their relative importance. Figure 4 shows the response when Station participants and active listeners²⁰ were asked to name the **two areas** that Tipp Mid-West’s contribution to the community is **most significant overall**.

Figure 4 (n=67): The most significant contribution of Tipp Mid-West to the community overall



When the question was put to active listeners and participants in Dublin City FM, the results are shown in Figure 5.

Figure 5 (n=124): Most significant contribution of Dublin City FM to the community overall



²⁰ In the final Organisation Survey in the Annex, this question is added.

Although respondents in both Stations agree that providing information to people about the community is the single most important contribution, opinions regarding other benefits diverge. Many respondents in both stations also commented on the reasons for their selection, allowing a more detailed analysis of the thinking behind it.

5.4. The Benefits, individually

In looking deeper at the specific social benefits, the Stories come into their own.

Each Story, as can be seen in *Annex 7: Sample 'Stories' of Social Benefits*, is prefaced with a summary table, indicating its relevance to each type of social benefit in the Framework. The Tipp Mid-West Stories draw on the experience of organisations (Stories 2-6), volunteers (7 to 9) and of the Station itself (1), and Table 3 shows the relevance of each to each type of Social Benefit. The scores were given by the author of each Story, and 'xxx' means 'very relevant'; 'xx' 'somewhat relevant'; and 'x' 'slightly relevant'. (Note that these scores can be developed in other, more elaborate or participative, ways.) The column on the right indicates the number of stories relevant to each type of benefit, but is not related to how important that social benefit might be overall.

Table 3: Relevance of Tipp Mid-West Stories to Social Benefits

Type of Social Benefit: The Station...	Tipp Mid-West Stories (numbered list below)									#
		Organisations					Volunteers			
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
SB 1... helps give a voice to minorities and excluded groups in the community	xx	x	x	x			xx	x	xx	7
SB 2... improves employment prospects through radio training, volunteering opportunities or other means		x								1
SB 3... informs people about what is happening around their community, by providing useful information	xxx	x	xx	x	xx	x		xxx		7
SB 4... offers diverse viewpoints, discussion programmes, and helps to inform people’s decisions		xxx	xx			xx				3
SB 5... helps voluntary and community-based organisations to achieve their goals		xxx	xxx	xxx	xx	xxx		x	x	7
SB 6... helps give the community as a whole a sense of identity and of shared experience	xx	x	x	x		x		xx		6
Tipp Mid West Stories: 1: “A Hell of a Snow Storm” 2: Supporting Family Carers in Tipperary. 3: Supporting the Irish Wheelchair Association Centre 4: Moorehaven Centre.				5: Citizen’s Information Centre, Tipperary. 6: Knockanrawley Resource Centre. 7: Easy Listening with Paddy O’Leary 8: A World of Local Tipperary Sports 9: Eight Hours of Mary O’Brien’s Music						

Earlier it was concluded that Tipp Mid-West makes its most significant contribution overall to the community in the area of SB 3 (informing people); followed by SB 5 (helps voluntary and community

based organisations). To understand more about what this means in practice, the methodology can draw on a number of sources. These include the individual comments in the surveys of the different stakeholder groups. But for in-depth understanding of what is behind these short testimonies, the nine Stories offer detailed commentary.

Two examples below offer a flavour of the content available from the research, for each of these types of social benefit, but there is much more that would merit deeper analysis by the Station.

SB3: Informing people about what is happening around their community

Some Individual comments

- “I know when things are on that I'm interested in supporting “
- “It is probably the first place you will hear about something going on in your village or town.”
- “I learned about nature gardening and the services available in the local area”
- “It keeps the elderly updated to what is happening around Tipperary and not just the elderly but the people who may want to know what's for sale or what events are happening.”
- “Conditions of roads, i.e. during bad weather also being able to listen to mass on Sundays is extremely important, other information deals with local clubs and organisations...
- “There were several benefits personally and that I know of 1) Postponement of a match due to bereavement announced on the radio 2) A friend got a job which was read out on the Jobline. 3) Got somebody to look after my garden the man had put his name in the Jobline. 4) Got information on a book that was available on the life of Sean Hogan 5) Received a lot of information from the farming programme regarding deadlines for applying for subsidies etc. 6) Very good company at night when I can't sleep 7) My mother was an invalid for years before she dies and looked forward to the weekly Mass and the Holycross Novena.”

Seven of the Stories can be consulted for further in-depth analysis. Below the relevant points in a couple of them are briefly summarised, as examples.

Story 8: A world of local Tipperary Sports. Stevie O'Donnell, in his 50s, attends about 400 sports fixtures a year across Country Tipperary, and reports on them all. He broadcasts results and commentaries in regular bulletins on Tipp Mid West radio, and on Website and Facebook, reaching not just the local population but a large diaspora who retain their interest in local sports. No other media outlet carries such a variety and wealth of local sports information and commentaries.

Story 1: A Hell of a Snow Storm. The snow and wind from storm Emma in 2018 made most roads in Tipperary impassable. Local media were forced to shut down live broadcasting as it was impossible or too dangerous to access the studios. A staff member and volunteer from Tipp Mid-West, aware that a major part of their audience comprises isolated older people in rural areas and after an overnight closure of live broadcasting, braved the elements early the next morning to provide the only live update on the situation for the remaining days of the emergency. More important, for many of those living alone, this offered comfort and company during a very difficult period, responding to numerous phone calls and calls for assistance, liaising with public services and sending out constant updates. It was solely the commitment to the community, and especially to that particular audience, that motivated them to work during these circumstances

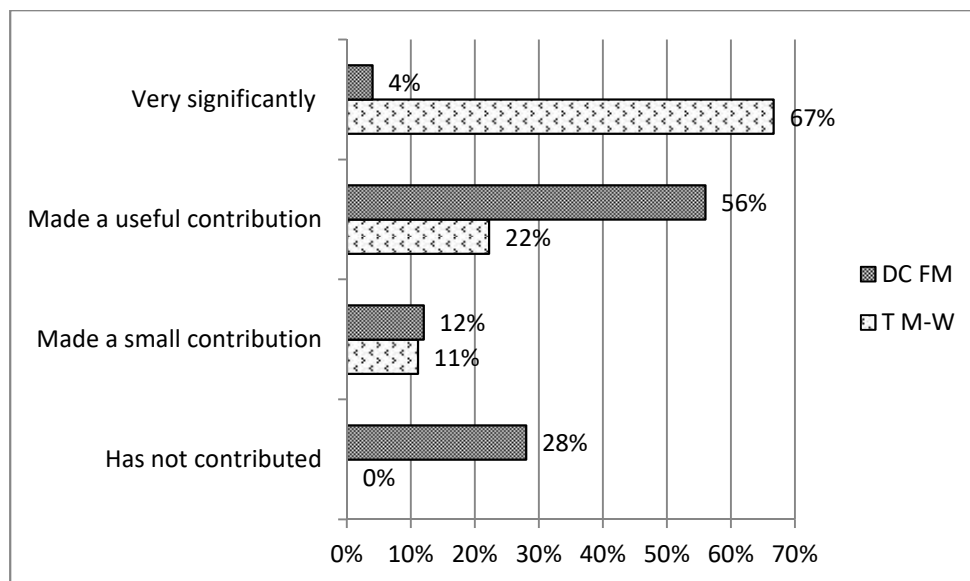
SB5: helping voluntary and community-based organisations to achieve their goals

The survey of organisations that engage with the Station seeks their views regarding the value of their interactions. There were 11 valid responses in Tipp Mid West of the 25 contacted (a 44% return rate); and 32 valid responses to the Dublin City FM survey.²¹

The following question addressed this form of social benefit:

Q7: In relation to achieving your organisational goals and/or delivering your service, please indicate whether the Station has, on one or more occasion, contributed:

Table 4: Contribution of Station to Engaged Organisations' Goals/service delivery



Overall, organisations that engage with Tipp Mid-West feel the Station makes a more significant contribution than do their counterparts in Dublin. (However, the number of such organisations interacting with Dublin City FM is likely to be larger which would tend to multiply the overall impact.)

Some Comments

Individual comments shed more light on the nature of the interactions:

- “The station goes to great lengths to enable community groups to advertise themselves, outline their ethos, make a call for assistance and speak up for those who may be unable to do so for themselves.”
- “Statement of fact the station informs people and helps voluntary and community based organisations to achieve their goals.”
- “Any local person or group use the community diary as their only means of letting the community know about its aims and fundraising i did this 3 times i ran dances for the local hospice raising just under €15,000.”
- “The radio station is the first port of call for on air interviews to plug fundraisers.”
- “Gives a voice to community groups to promote charity events, fund raiser, etc.”

²¹ One was excluded as they had not heard of Dublin City FM. Dublin City FM used a very large mailing list that included numerous organisations that had had no significant contact with the Station.

Here too, it is the Stories that offer most detail, seven of which are relevant. Three are briefly summarised below.

Story 2: Family Carers Ireland Centre. The FCI Centre in Clonmel works closely with Tipp Mid West Radio in key areas of their work, including: contacting and getting information to carers in the home, especially in rural areas, to encourage them to avail of their services; supporting advocacy of local TDs to influence national policy; and helping to recruit part-time care workers to offer respite to carers in the home. The level of benefit, in terms of enabling them to deliver their services and engage in all activities, they describe as very significant. Without Tipp Mid West, they believe that the reach and impact of their work would be considerably weaker.

Story 3: Irish Wheelchair Association Centre. Tipp Mid-West has broadcast five major features covering the IWA South Tipperary in the last 12 months or so, several of them recorded in its Tipperary town Centre or other outside venues. It also broadcasts numerous smaller information items. The informational, promotional and advocacy value of all of these is regarded, by the Centre Manager, as “highly significant”, and in some cases, the Centre’s impact would be much lower in the absence of the Tip Mid-West platform. It thus acts as a significant ‘magnifier’ of many of their actions.

Story 4: Moorehaven Centre. Moorehaven Centre provides a range of supports to adults with mild to moderate intellectual disability. The Centre Manager rates Tipp Mid West’s contribution overall to its capacity to achieve its goals as “very significant”, across four main dimensions: It promotes the Centre with the public, publicising the services available and encouraging clients to come forward; it is critical to the success of their fundraising events in several ways; it provide highly valued placements for many clients; and it enables them to recruit relief personnel, especially, for the Centre at no cost.

5.5. Other Information Gathered

In addition to the information above, the online surveys gather further information and views that might be of interest to the Station, from each of the Stakeholders groups.

Active Listeners

From Active Listeners, data is gathered with the following questions (some answer as shown):

Q1: Did you listen to [Station name] at any point during the last week?

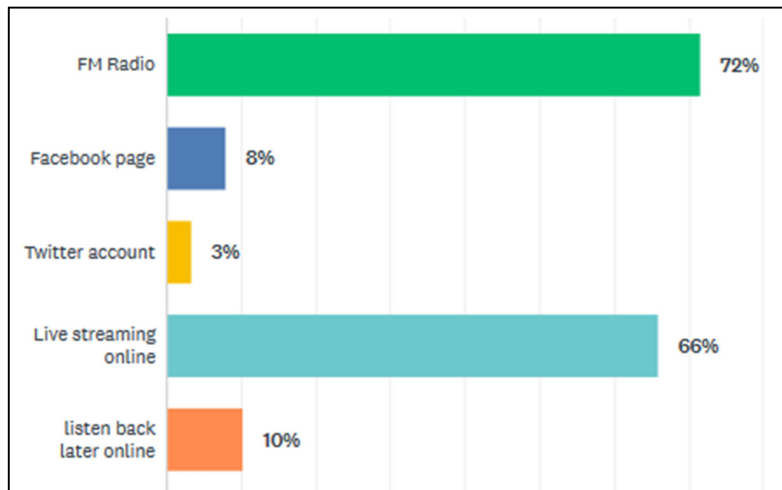
- In Tipp Mid-West FM , of 37 responses , 97% answered ‘yes’.
- In Dublin City FM, of 90 responses, 93% answered ‘yes’.

A second question put them listeners is as follows:

Q2: By which means have you accessed [Station Name] (Choose all relevant)

Responses are shown in Table 5.

Table 5: Ways Dublin City FM listeners access the Station



It indicates that listeners of Dublin City FM access the Station in a variety of ways, with a surprising number using online streaming. (Note that many use more than one means of access.)

A space is also given to note means of access not on the list. These include the *TuneIn* and *Irish Music Radio and News* apps, and even one listening from the Astronomy Ireland Website.

Q3: In general, how often do you listen to [Station Name]?

Of Dublin City FM active listeners 47% listen daily or most days; and 42% a couple of times a week; while the Tipp Mid-West active listener group listen slightly more frequently at 58% and 36% respectively

Q 5: Have you ever contacted [Station Name] directly?

72% of Tipp Mid-West active listeners have directly contacted the Station, compared to 52% at Dublin City FM. They are then asked to indicate, from a list, what form that contact took. The most frequent response for Dublin City FM was “entered a competition” (54%), followed by “made a music request” at 48%; almost identical to Tipp Mid-West listeners who chose the same two at 54% and 50% respectively. However 31% had visited the station, compared to just 8% at Dublin City FM

A further question asked the **active listeners’ gender**:

In Dublin City FM the figure was 76% male, and in Tipp Mid-West 78% female. Such a clear divergence is anomalous and, though beyond the scope of this exercise, it merits further investigation. The contrast seems to rule out the idea that either gender is more likely to complete an online survey. The figure may even be representative of all listeners – for instance there could be more male car drivers, and Dublin City FM has a very strong traffic service that attracts listeners. Either way, such a divergence emphasises the need to obtain a larger number of responses to increase the statistical likelihood of it being a representative sample. (This is addressed further on.)

The age profiles of listeners were also different in the two stations, but not by so much:

Table 6: Age Profile Dublin City FM

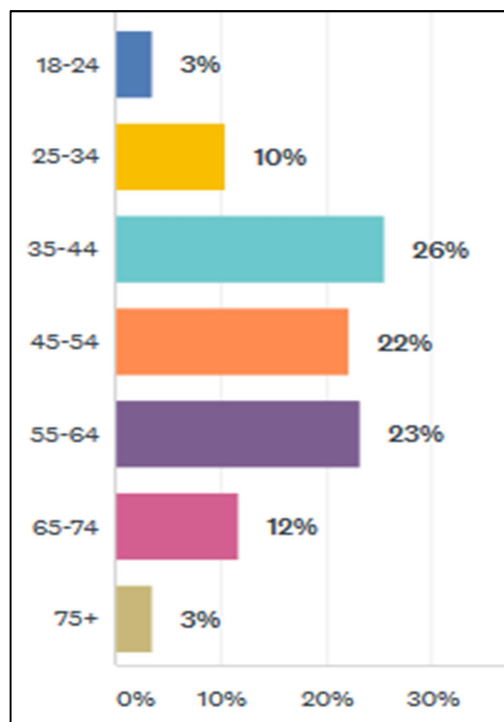
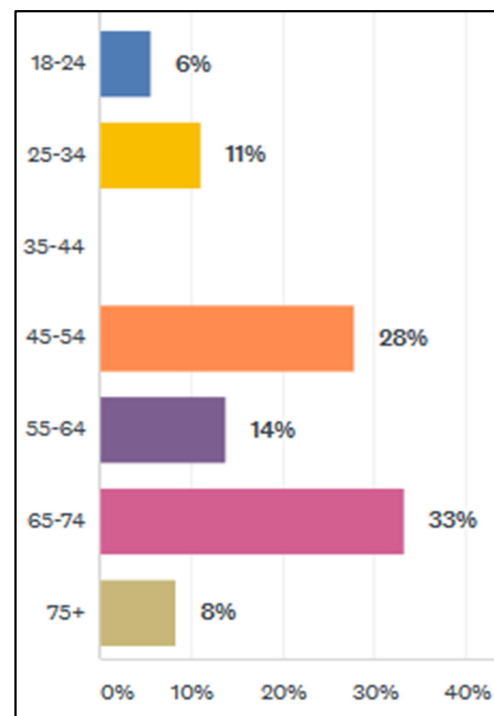


Table 7: Age Profile Tipp Mid-West



The Dublin City FM has a normal curve, with a dip in the middle; while the Tipp Mid-West shows a complete absence of listeners within the 35 to 45 years group and a very high percentage of 65 years.

Finally, respondents were asked about their **physical location**, and the results suggest a dispersed set of listeners for both Stations.

Station Participants

Less additional information was sought from the other two groups.

Station Participants had a good response rate: in Tipp Mid-West: 30 from a total of about 42 responded (many were completed not online, but on paper), giving a response rate of over 70%; and in Dublin City FM, of the 128 contacted, 48 (38%) responded.

They were asked the following additional points:

Q 1: Please indicate your relationship with the Station:

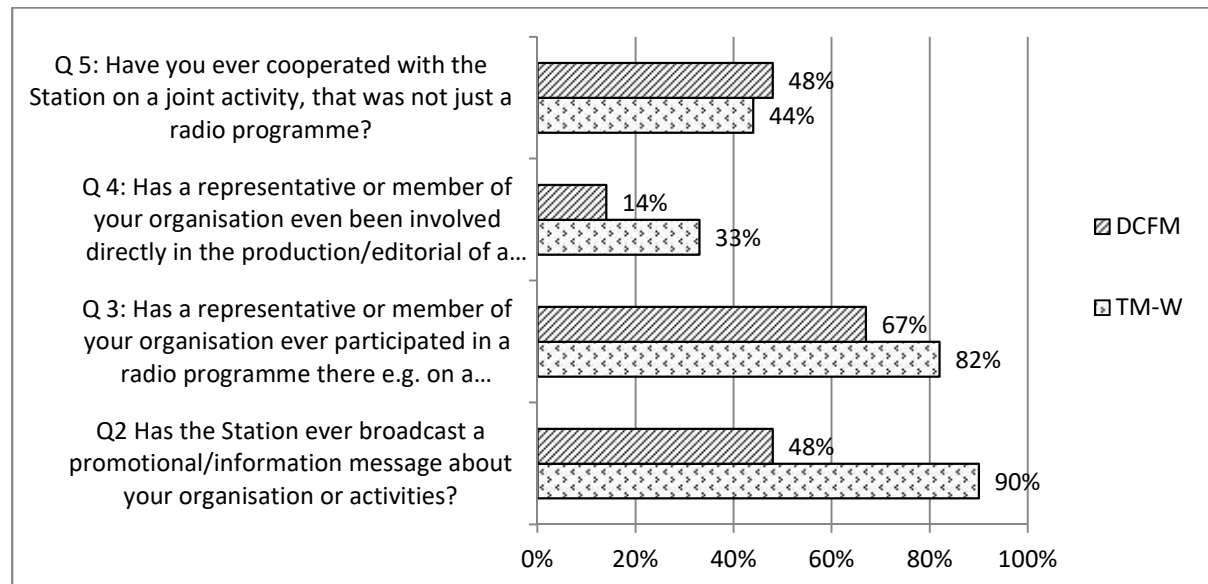
The options given (from which they could choose more than one) were: paid staff; volunteer; Committee/Board members; and general members, and an 'other' options is also possible. In both Stations it was mainly volunteers who responded: Two thirds in TIPP Mid-West, and 71% in Dublin City FM.

Basic demographics of age, gender and home location were also recorded. In Tipp Mid-West, two thirds were over 55 years of age compared to half in Dublin City FM, and 64% male and 67% male respectively.

Engaged Organisations

Several questions concerned the nature of interaction with the Station. The following shows the percentages that confirmed they have engaged in the activities described.²²

Table 8: Interactions between Engaged Organisations and Station: Positive Responses



While they vary between the two Stations (with generally a higher level of interaction between community organisations and Tim Mid-West as compared to Dublin City FM), the level of interactions on both Stations is significant. Each of these questions also had an open response option, containing more detail about the interaction.

²² In the following figures, those who said they were unsure or did not know – about 6% to 10% - are excluded in the calculation.

6. Next Steps

The main goal of this research is to produce a set of tools and methodologies for use by community media organisations, tailored specifically community radio, to generate accurate and convincing evidence concerning the extent and nature of social benefits they generate.

This includes both a *feasibility* component – whether the approach is affordable and can be implemented in practice - and a *suitability or capacity* component – whether the tools are likely to generate evidence that, on the one hand, is accurate and verifiable and, on the other, enables deeper insight into the unique characteristics of community media and how they interact with their communities.

A community station considering taking up this approach must first explore both of these questions.

6.1.Feasibility

With regard to feasibility, this research considers a number of factors:

- the limited financial resources that are available to community media to undertake research activities;
- The potential existence of non-financial resources, such as volunteers and access to community groups, schools or others willing to contribute;
- The potential role of the CBSS is supporting this kind of research. The BAI has indicated that up to €10,000 could be made available to individual community stations if a credible methodology is available to assess social benefits created.

This research acknowledges the value of undertaking professional listenership polls and surveys, while at the same time pointing to their high cost and limitations when examining the issue of social benefits. From the outset it was recognised that this approach is neither financially feasible nor methodologically suitable for evaluating the benefits generated by community media as part of the wider community development sector.

The options outlined here are more affordable and, while they would require at least some professional research input (which could be funded from the BAI's CBSS), they bring into the equation the non-financial resources that a Station might also be able to contribute.

Furthermore, the resources in this Toolkit should considerably simplify the research process (including designing and testing survey instruments), and therefore reduce the time and effort involved. Although the limitations of the BAI Community Broadcasting Support Scheme²³ have been indicated above, including the fall in its value to €25,000 annually, the availability of a credible and useful methodology could spark a review and renewal of the scheme.

Based on documentation available and on the Pilots undertaken, the following is an estimate of the number of research days required to implement the main methodology components. The requirement, in days, of external research expertise are separated from those of the Station staff:

Stop & Ask Survey, if it is judged to be appropriate to the catchment and feasible for the Station:

- *External Research Support*: **10 to 12 days** (without report writing);
- *Station coordination*: **5 to 10 days**;

²³ See <https://www.bai.ie/en/broadcasting/funding-development-3/>

- Survey volunteers 15 * 2 or 3 = **30 to 45 days**.

Three Purposive Sample Surveys: Active Listeners, Station Participants, Engaged Organisations:

- *External* research Support to oversee process and results cleaning: **6 to 8 days**;
- Station contribution: Compiling lists, encouraging responses: **3 to 5 days** (staff, volunteers).

‘Stories’ of Social Benefits, about 10 or 12 for the Station:

- *External* research support: Interviews, write up: **5 to 6 days**;
- Station contribution: identifying candidates, securing agreement: **2 to 3 days**

Aggregating Results and Report Write up from all the above:

- *External* research support: Analysis and report writing: **8 to 10 days**.

Combined External Research Support: A total of 29 to 36 days.

Overall – and this conclusion is reached with many provisos - probably two of the three above research approaches could be supported with a budget of €10,000, to a level where results would be credible and the Final Report professionally produced and presented. (If Stations can access an experienced researcher as a volunteer, the requirements would obviously be less.)

Note also that the Station may gather additional evidence to include in the analysis, such as the Voice on Air material and other internal evidence.

6.2. Methodology Capabilities

Can the suite of methodologies proposed here, in different combinations, generate the plausible and accurate information and knowledge needed, to show convincingly that community media generates valuable and sustained benefits?

The short answer is yes, it can. It will not be expressed as a single financial figure: this was never intended as a cost-benefit analysis since such an exercise is inappropriate to valuing the diversity of social benefits generated. But the approach proposed here can convincingly demonstrate *an order of magnitude* of benefits, as perceived by the community itself; it can describe fully the *diversity and nature of these benefits*; and it can enable a *much deeper understanding of how community media support ‘pathways of change’ towards achieving social benefits*. All of these will situate community media firmly in the community development sector, and allow it to escape its misplaced identification with the mainstream and commercial media sector and all that implies. It can thus facilitate a *new conceptualisation of community media* to emerge in the minds of those outside the sector who can influence its future.

In concrete term, properly implementing the core elements of this methodology could yield the following:

1. **How important is the station to the community, and why?** An accurate account of how different key stakeholder groups, that have at least some experience of the Station, rate its contribution to the community as a whole, and why they believe this to be the case.
2. **Which specific benefits are most important, to whom, and why?** The views of these key stakeholders groups about **different types of social benefits generated by the community stations**, and a **ranking of their importance**, along with a wealth of information on the thinking behind this.

3. **How are these benefits generated, the dynamics between community and station?** Each of the six types of social benefit in the Framework can then be examined in depth, separately, to paint a rich, in-depth and dynamic account of how, in practice, the station can achieve that benefit, drawing on concrete evidence from inside and outside the stations, and using the Stories to illuminate the dynamics of how the community engages with individuals, organisations and the community more widely as part of its social development fabric.
4. **Are there compelling Stories of Community Benefits?** The Stories have a value in themselves, to build and deepen understanding of what community media really is; to illuminate insights that will stick in the memory; to celebrate what often goes unnoticed and is taken for granted; and to motivate actions to go on identifying and recording more stories and achievements for the sector
5. **What do the wider public think?** Moving more towards conventional media research, an estimate of the listenership of the Station overall, and of the views and preferences of the listening public, could be gained through a Stop & Ask survey – an output deliberately left till last as it may not be feasible for all community stations, and effective and credible implementation is resource intensive, both financially and for the Station.

Thus, when considering whether to proceed, a community station must weigh up the costs associated with this research, in terms of their volunteer and staff availability and the grant that might be available, taking into account their specific catchment size, their orientation to the community and current pressures. They must also explore what they would do concretely with the results emerging, how they would contribute to their ongoing work sustainability, financially in terms of attracting support, in deepening links within their community, and in improving their sustainability and enhancing their social benefit creation. A clear examination of the methodological options available, including what evidence they themselves might generate internally, would also be needed, to determine the combination that would be best for them.

It is also worth pointing at the point to the **potential for the community media sector more widely**, of this kind of social benefit research.

CRAOL has overseen this process in part because it recognises a benefit to aggregating the research results from many stations, to provide a picture *of the sector as a whole*. The motivation behind building a Community Media Social Benefit Framework is not just to enable individual stations to engage in this kind of research. It is also to enable CRAOL and community media to compare results between stations, and furthermore to build a larger picture of the benefits of community media nationally. CRAOL can thus bring the case for supporting community to different agencies, policy makers and other stakeholders to ensure that it receives the right types and amount of support.

Annex 1: Theory of Change and Social Benefit of Community Radio

The Theory of Change (ToC) map overleaf was developed early in this research, in discussion with the CRAOL/BAI group overseeing this research. It corresponds loosely with the final SB Framework, but is included here only as a useful way to *conceptualise and visualise* how community media potentially achieve their goals in relation to generating social benefits. It is not a definitive or even, at this point, approximate account of the dynamics of community media and social benefits.

Nevertheless, if community stations begin to implement the methodological approach presented here, it does offer a starting point to map out visually how community media work; the ‘avenues of change’ that they initiate and support, and how their internal processes and external factors influences these. This process would also be filled-out with a detailed narrative of the ToC map.

The way to read a ToC map is to focus first on the bottom (yellow boxes): an (incomplete) set of challenges that community media face in achieving their goal of generating social benefits. Now attention should be switched to the box at the top. This shows the ultimate objective i.e. that *social benefits are being maximised to the community* to which these can be seen as initial blockages. A *Theory of Change* then looks to preconditions of this desired long-term outcome, and works its way back down to the bottom, in a (reverse) set of causal linkages.

In this case, the typology of social benefits can be inserted (the green boxes) as a first set of preconditions.

The next step is to identify the preconditions to these, the social benefits. This is where speculation begins, and a full Theory of Change process would bring people together – initially those involved in the stations – to explore these issues for themselves.

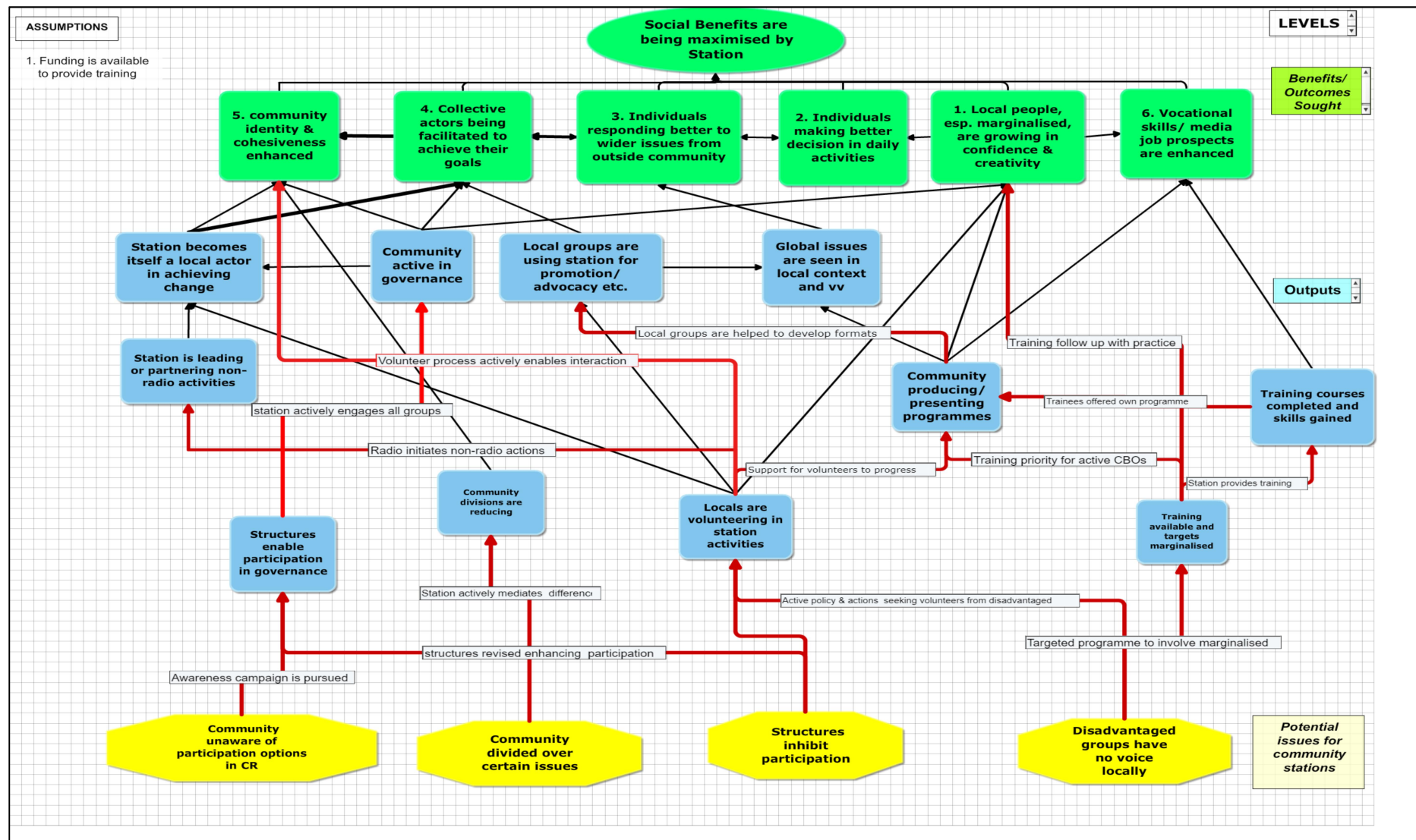
Thus the boxes in the ToC map represent “states of affair”, that may at the same time be *preconditions* (to higher objectives), and *outcomes sought or outputs to be achieved*. Specifically they *do not represent* actions or interventions. The arrows are *causative, logical, links* leading from a precondition to an outcome, and many of these can be influenced by the station to achieve or reinforce the outcome/output. Thus many of the arrows represent specific (in red) station actions.

For example, Outcome 6 on *enhancing job prospects* has preconditions that people have completed training courses to gain the skills, or that volunteers are programme producers (both blue boxes). The Station can make this happen (red arrows) through providing training, maybe enabling some to become producers; by actively recruiting volunteers directly into programme production (especially from marginalised groups); and so forth; and a precondition to this might be that the station has an active programme to target marginalised groups.

Or Specific Objective 5, *that community identify and cohesiveness are enhanced*, might have preconditions that community members are involved in the governance of the station which thus them together (which in turn might presuppose that the Station actively promotes its policy of community participation); that the station is bringing together large numbers of volunteers from all around the community; or that the Station actively engaging in reducing community tensions (for instance through mediating disputes); and the Station itself has become an active CBO in areas other than media for instance by provide a hub for the community to meet.

These examples just illustrate the use of this tool. In practice, a station gets stakeholders together to create its own maybe ToC map, enabling a shared understanding of how it generates social benefits.

Figure 6: Draft Theory of Change Map of Community Media and Social Benefits



Annex 2: Using the Toolkit: Instructions in Detail

This extended Annex examines the implementation in practice of each of the tools in turn, offering a basic ‘how-to’ guide for each one.

It is important to stress that an assessment of the social benefits generated by the Station can be developed **only through a combination of several of these tools**. Deciding on which to use, and how to combine the results, was addressed above in *Section 5 Putting the Parts Together*.

Here, each tool is examined from the perspective of **implementing it on its own**, and not as part of a larger package.

A2.1: A General Catchment Area Survey: “Stop & Ask”

What is it

In a “Stop & Ask” survey (also called an ‘intercept’ survey, to distinguish it from door-to-door), researchers conduct a short questionnaire interview of a sample of people they approach in public places such as shopping centres and busy streets. The sample can also be supplemented by targeted destinations such as sports clubs, youth centres, or retirement homes. The major challenge, especially if any of the latter groups are added, is to ensure that the sample is representative of the wider population. A door-to-door can also be deployed, particularly where the station catchment area covers a relatively small and clearly delineated urban area.

Advantages

Its main advantage is that a large number of interviews can secure a *representative sample of the public*, gathering specific data as well as basic views and opinions. If this is achieved, the Station can gain statistically valid figures on, for instance, the level and type of awareness about the Station, the listenership levels and, for these listeners, their views about the Station.

Overall, **this is the only feasible way to assess general awareness and listener levels of a community radio Station**. The alternative is to use commercial companies such as JNLR/IPSOSI or Kantar, which is prohibitively expensive.

Disadvantages

There are some significant disadvantages and challenges.

- Professional expertise is required to plan and execute this approach. To use a professional survey company for all the work, including employing dedicated researchers to complete the survey, is probably beyond the resources of a community Station. However, an expert can be employed to design, oversee and analyse the survey, while the interviews are carried out by volunteers. This option requires significant logistical investment from the Station and an established volunteer or other support network.
- The number of people, or proportion of the community, who listen to a Station is just one factor in assessing the level of social benefit generated, and not usually the most important one. This approach would therefore have to be accompanied by the use of other tools, outlined here, to capture other aspects of social benefit, and sufficient resources would have to be available for these too.

- Designing and reaching a sample that it is representative of the catchment population is a difficult task. Being 'representative' would normally refer to key parameters such as age, gender and urban/rural; and, ideally, others such as household size, type of employment and level of education. Logistically, and in terms of cost, it is difficult to ensure that those interviewed conform to these parameters, and in the right proportions. Weighting the sample is one means to compensate for imbalances within those interviewed. For instance if the actual sample is highly skewed towards a certain age group, their responses can be given a lower weighting. This is a highly technical task, and the more weighting that is applied, the greater the sample size must be to achieve representativeness.

Resource Requirements

Resource requirements in terms of external expertise, logistics and volunteer mobilisation are high. The possibility of using volunteers (transition school pupils who have a relationship with the school, or station volunteers) was explored with two Pilot Stations, Tipp Midwest and ROS FM, and both concluded that the resources involved in, and the logistics of, mobilising the number of volunteers needed were too high, at least at that time.

But it remains a feasible option in the right circumstances.

Stop & Ask Surveys have been carried out by other Stations. As mentioned, one such was Community Radio Kilkenny City (CRKC), who received a BAI CBSS grant in 2018 to employ a media Consultant to plan and organise the Survey, and to personally undertake certain components of it (e.g. stakeholder interviews). Station volunteers were deployed to undertake the survey itself. Although the focus was not on social benefit, it was successfully implemented and the information generated was useful to the Station. This proves its feasibility in principle.

However, a **second option** is also explored for this Guide: whether a Station might partner with a local third level institute. An in-depth analysis is being completed working with NEAR FM and Griffith College to assess whether the process of undertaking a face-to-face public survey might become part of the curriculum for a course in media studies. If this succeeds it may become a model for how other Stations and third level institutions can implement this approach, to a high quality and with low cost. CRAOL and BAI will have the final analysis and conclusions.

Stages and Tasks in a Stop & Ask Survey

A detailed plan for this kind of survey would be tailored to the specific circumstances of the Station. Some general stages and tasks can be identified, however.

The following is intended not as a detailed plan, but rather to give an indication of the main Tasks involved in using this particular tool on its own, for an external expert but also a Station.

Phase 1: Planning, design and resources

Task 1: Survey key parameters

Some key decisions must be taken first.

- How to go about getting a representative sample. This includes identifying the key demographic parameters of your sample such as sex, age group, and urban/rural. Additional parameters, such as occupation, can be sensitive and their feasibility would have to be examined. The total

number of interviews needed will depend on the diversity of the sample, but about 250 to 300 is usual.

- Where your interviews should take place: They might include different towns and villages, at different times of day, and in different types of locations. Specific hard-to-reach groups, such as retired people or those living in isolated areas, could be targeted where they are to be found.
- The number of researchers/volunteers needed: This will be based partly on the above, taking into consideration how many interviews could be completed in an hour, the travel involved, and so forth. For instance, 10 researchers would need to complete 25 or 30 each, but the number obtained per hour in main streets, rural areas or targeted groups would vary greatly.

Task 2: Researcher identification, contact and training

Since this step may take a long time to prepare, it should begin very early on.

- Secure the agreement of your volunteer group: Several groups have been used in the past by community Stations, including transition year students from a school friendly with the Station, and station volunteers themselves. It might also be useful to approach Volunteer Ireland (<https://www.volunteer.ie/>). It may take some time to identify the right group, and to secure their availability when you need it.
- Motivate and train your volunteers: This should be done by someone with expertise in this kind of work, and will require perhaps half a day of intensive training including role play, and some practice afterwards. Because of the difficulty of getting volunteers together at once, it may require more than one training session.

Task 3: Survey service, instruments, materials and detailed plan

The online survey software must be selected, the instrument designed and finalised, materials obtained for the volunteers, and a detailed execution plan developed.

- Select the online survey software to be deployed: Ensure the provider selected, for use in survey design, input and analysis, supports the features you need. It is not a complex survey and numerous options are available.²⁴
- Refine the Survey Instrument: *Annex 3: Active Listener and Public Survey Instruments* **contains a Survey Instrument (questionnaire) that can be used for this purpose**, based on the above SB Framework. Additional questions *must be added at the start* aimed at the general public (and not just Station listeners). A few further questions could also be added for the Station's own use. However, overloading it will increase the completion refusal and the rate time needed to complete it (especially for any freehand answers). The survey instrument should be piloted, preferably by the researchers/volunteers.
- Develop the researcher support materials: Although professional companies provide computer tablets to their researchers, more cost effective for these volunteers are a clip-board to write on,

²⁴ You can check some here: <https://blog.capterra.com/best-free-survey-tools-power-your-research/> most with a free basic option. Examples include Survey Monkey <https://www.surveymonkey.com/>; Survey Gizmo: <https://www.capterra.com/p/72549/SurveyGizmo/> and Google Forms: <https://www.google.com/forms/about/>;

user friendly printed copies of the survey that are highly eligible and easy to complete, and a bag for storage.

- Produce a detailed survey execution plan: A detailed plan tailored for each user will enable each to know what they are to do and when, and their specific target groups, location and how to reach them (including transport). Critically, it must incorporate safety and security aspects especially if school students are used. The plan must be thoroughly discussed with the researchers, so ensure that they understand their tasks, and integrated into their training.

Phase 2: Interviews Implementation and Data Inputting.

This is the most challenging part.

Task 4: Survey execution

Over a period of days or weeks, the volunteer researchers may require, at times, a high level of support, ongoing monitoring and constant availability of those overseeing it, to respond to queries, needs arising and other issues. Some volunteers may be unable to complete their quota, and others may have to be encouraged to do more. This stage will inevitably face unanticipated challenges.

Task 6: Data inputting

The data can be input by the researchers into the software, soon after they complete them or later on, either on their own computers or via one made available to them. The written surveys should also be collected, after inputting, and some of them checked for accuracy.

Phase 3: Reviewing, weighting and analysing the Data

Once all the data is input, the final stage can begin.

Task7: Data Review, cleaning and weighting.

The data input should be reviewed for anomalies and cleaned where errors are found. A key question is whether the sample achieved is sufficiently representative (including after deleting certain responses), or whether post-survey weighting is required. Online software tends to have limited capabilities for analysis, for instance in terms of cross tabulations and data revision. It is likely that the data will have to be downloaded into a spread sheet or database, especially if weighting is needed, and analysis done from there. This is a job for an expert.

Task 8: Data analysis, documentation and integration

The final task is to analyse and document the results. A key point here, dealt elsewhere in this Guide, is how to integrate results with those of other tools, to produce a combined report on social benefit.

A2.2: Active Listener Survey

What is it

The Active Listener Survey is conducted online and promoted by the Station. In general, it targets regular committed listeners (who listen, for instance, more than one a week), who usually also interact with the Station in other ways such as phoning in with requests, visiting the Station premises, and so forth.

This survey was tested in Dublin City FM and in Tipp Mid-West. A key challenge is to secure a high number of completions, which requires significant, regular, on-air promotion.

Advantages

- A key advantage is that active listeners will have a good knowledge of many aspects of the Stations, including its broadcast (and internet) content and sometimes other areas, and more than likely will have views on the benefits it generates for them and for society more generally.
- It is low-cost and easy to implement, can be completed within a short time period, and can be undertaken by the Station itself.
- It can provide contact information and permission for more detailed follow-up, for instance with 'Stories', later on.

Disadvantages

- The respondents are not representative of all Station listeners; nor is it not possible using this method to find out just how unrepresentative they are. Claims to this effect must be avoided.
- It is not possible to estimate how numerous this group is.

Resource Requirements

The resource requirements are modest. Access to online survey software is needed and the associated skills. The Station, through its broadcasting, has the means to promote the Survey among its listeners. Basic analysis of the results requires some relatively straightforward analytical skills.

Stages and Tasks in an Active Listener Survey

All stages are relatively short and simple to implement.

Phase 1: Planning, design and Resources

Task 1: An overall survey plan

The plan will include the timescale, launch date, period for responses to come in, and how to manage promotion.

Task 2: Survey software and instrument

- Select the survey software to be deployed: Ensure the online survey package you choose can support the features you need. This is a simple survey and numerous options are available.
- Refine the survey Instrument: *Annex 3: Active Listener and Public Survey* contains a questionnaire designed for this purpose, based on the SB Framework. The number of questions is kept to a minimum but a few more could be added. For instance a Station might wish to know which particular programmes the respondent listens to most, or what other stations they listen to. But additional questions, and their complexity, should be minimised to maximise the number of responses. Any new questions should also be piloted, for instance by Station volunteers.

Task 3: Survey Access

The survey is accessed through the Website of the Station, and perhaps through the Facebook or other online presence. Dublin City FM prepared an automatic 'pop-up' screen on their home page so

that even casual browsers could click on it immediately. But a prominent link on the home page can also be used.

Stage 2: Survey execution

Task 4: Online Launch and promotion

After launch, the key factor in ensuring a good return is the extent and nature of broadcast promotion, which can be pre-recorded and played at regular intervals, and at different times of the day to catch different listener types. Direct presenter promotion, and even some discussion about the survey – for instance a slot on a regular discussion programme - would all improve the return rate. (For some stations, such as those serving a University, email contact can be used and be very effective.) The survey can be left open online for a period of several weeks, with the closure date announced from the outset.

Phase 3: Reviewing, weighting and analysing the Data

Task 7: Data review and cleaning

The survey responses should be reviewed for anomalies and cleaned where errors are found. For instance, where a large number of surveys have been completed from a single computer in a short period of time, the responses should be reviewed to check that they are from different people. If they appear to be completed by the same person, they should all be deleted.²⁵ It is also reasonable to eliminate certain responses in order to enhance the homogeneity of the group responding. For instance, if a respondent indicates that they never, or rarely, listen to the station or interact in other ways, their response could be deleted on the basis that they might have merely happened on the Website. The goal here is to gain the views of active listeners and users of the Station.

Task 8: Initial analysis and reporting

The survey software enables basic analysis and documentation of the results. How to integrate this data with data from other tools to prepare a wider report on social benefit is demonstrated elsewhere in this Guide.

Phase 3: Reviewing, weighting and analysing the Data

Once all the data is input, the final stage can begin.

Task7: Data Review, cleaning and weighting.

The data should be reviewed for anomalies and cleaned where errors are found. A key point to assess is whether the actual sample is sufficiently representative (even if it means eliminating certain responses), or whether post-survey weighting is required. Online survey software tends to have limited capabilities for analysis, for instance in terms of cross tabulations and data revision. It is likely that the data will have to be downloaded into a spread sheet or database, especially if weighting is needed, and analysis done there. This is a job for an expert.

Task 8: Analyse, document and integrate the data.

²⁵ Most online survey software packages allow you to choose whether to permit more than a single response from a single source. However, there may be cases where a few people access the same outlet, for instance a computer in a public area, so it may be best to retain this option.

The final task is to analyse and document the data. The issue of how to integrate the results with those from the other tools, to produce a combined report on social benefit, is covered elsewhere in this Guide.

A2.3 Station Participant Survey

What is it

Station participants are defined here as all those directly involved in Station activities, including staff, Management Committee or Board members, general members, programmes producers, volunteers and interns.

A Station Participant survey was tested in Tipp Midwest and Dublin City FM. Response rates, for obvious reasons, are likely to be relatively high but it is still important to maximise them.

Advantages

- This target group is likely to include many who have benefited significantly from the Station, often over an extended period of time. For some, it may be life-changing. Being able to identify and quantify (not necessarily numerically) these benefits will contribute significantly to an assessment of the overall social benefit generated by the Station. They will also have informed views on how the Station impacts on others in society and on the Community as a whole.
- The likely high response rate will mean it is highly representative of the overall group.
- It is low-cost and easy to implement, can be completed within a short time period, and undertaken by the Station itself.
- It can provide contact points for more detailed follow-up, for instance to develop 'Stories'.

Disadvantages

- This group is self-selecting and biased towards the station, since they choose to become involved. It is thus not at all representative of the community as a whole. However, this is a known bias and no claims are made for them to represent anyone other than themselves.

Resource Requirements

Few resources are required to implement this: Access to online survey software and the skills to use it.

5. If YES, what form of contact was it? (tick all that apply)

- ☐ Entered a competition run by the station
- ☐ Made a music request to the station
- ☐ Visited the station studio/office
- ☐ Had a classified message (buy/sell, employment etc.) broadcast for free
- ☐ Had a commercial message broadcast for payment
- ☐ Been interviewed or broadcast by the station
- ☐ Had other interactions e.g. phoned looking for information, donated CDs etc.

6. Overall, how important do you think that the station is to the community?

- ☐ Extremely important
- ☐ Very important
- ☐ Somewhat important
- ☐ Not so important
- ☐ Not at all important
- ☐ Don't know/not sure

If possible, please expand on your answer

7. Please indicate whether you agree with the following statements:

	Do not agree at all	Agree somewhat	Agree strongly	Don't know
a) The Station helps give a voice to minorities and excluded groups in the community	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b) The Station informs people about what is happening around their community, by providing useful information	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c) The Station offers diverse viewpoints, discussion programmes, and helps to inform people's decisions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d) The Station improves employment prospects through radio training, volunteering opportunities or other means	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
e) The Station helps voluntary and community-based organisations to achieve their goals	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
f) The Station helps give the community as a whole a sense of identity and shared experience	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

8. Of the above (repeated below), which **two** do you think are the most important in terms of actual benefits to the community as a whole? (select 2 only)

- ☐ a) The Station helps give a voice to minorities and excluded groups in the community
- ☐ b) The Station informs people about what is happening around their community, by providing useful information
- ☐ c) The Station offers diverse viewpoints, discussion programmes, and helps to inform people's decisions
- ☐ d) The Station improves employment prospects through radio training, volunteering opportunities or other means
- ☐ e) The Station helps voluntary and community-based organisations to achieve their goals
- ☐ f) The Station helps give the community as a whole a sense of identity and shared experience

Please give your reasons here

9. Can you recall examples of when you yourself:

	Yes	No
a) used everyday information provided by the community radio	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b) learned something new and interesting about issues that affect your community	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c) interacted directly with, or availed of other services, beyond listening, such as training/education courses provided by the station	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

10. Did any specific station activity or interaction (including the above) benefit you, or those close to you, in terms of quality of life, well-being, cultural or economic life?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

11. If YES to the above question, please describe the benefit in a little detail and how it helped you:

12. Please indicate your gender

☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Other/rather not say

13. Into which of the following age groups do you fit?

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Under 18 | <input type="radio"/> 45-54 |
| <input type="radio"/> 18-24 | <input type="radio"/> 55-64 |
| <input type="radio"/> 25-34 | <input type="radio"/> 65-74 |
| <input type="radio"/> 35-44 | <input type="radio"/> 75+ |

8. Where do you live (town/village/townland))

Annex 4: Station Participant Survey Instrument contains a questionnaire that has been fully tested. The survey is easily promoted through a Station's databases and contact lists, and by word of mouth. Basic analysis of the results requires relatively straightforward analytical skills.

Stages and Tasks in a Station Participant Survey

It is the easiest of all the surveys to implement, and has been implemented in Dublin City FM and Tipp Mid-West.

Phase 1: Planning, design and resources

Task 1: An overall survey plan

A basic plan will include the sources of contact information, promotion/dissemination plan and timescale.

Task 2: Survey software and instrument

- Select the online survey software to be deployed: Ensure it can support the features you need. This is a simple survey and numerous options are available.
- Refine the survey Instrument: The survey instrument in Annex 5 should be edited (the introduction etc.), based on the SB Framework.

Stage 2: Survey execution

Task 3: Survey launch and promotion

Survey access can be via computer, or (unlike the other surveys) by distributing printed copies to those who visit the Station. They can be returned to Station management (or others, to preserve anonymity) for inputting into the system. Distribution is through the Station database of volunteers, board member etc. and it can also be promoted by word of mouth among those visiting the Station at different times.

Phase 3: Reviewing, weighting and analysing the data

Task 4: Data review and cleaning

As elsewhere, survey responses should be reviewed for anomalies and cleaned where errors are found.

Task 5: Initial analysis and reporting

The survey software will enable basic analysis and documentation of the results. They can then be integrated with data from other tools, as described elsewhere in this Guide.

A2.4: Engaged Organisation Survey

What is it

The Engaged Organisation Survey attempts to reach as many "collective actors" as possible in the catchment area - non-for-profit organisations and groups active in the community whose goal is to generate social benefits for the community - who have interacted with the Station in some manner.

Dublin City FM and Tipp Midwest both implemented this survey. The key challenges include focusing dissemination of this survey as tightly as possible on the target group, and securing a high response rate.

Advantages

- This survey captures social benefits generated not directly by the Station itself, but indirectly through cooperating with, and supporting the work of, CBOs and groups active in the community. Their beneficial impact can be reinforced through the Station advertising their activities, helping to fund-raise and recruit volunteers, giving airtime and studio space to raise awareness, broadcasting their events, and so forth. Though usually indirect, these additional community benefits can comprise a major part of the Station's ultimate impact.
- The survey is low-cost and easy to implement, and can be undertaken by the Station itself.
- It can provide contact information and permission for more detailed follow-up later on, for instance for 'Stories'.

Disadvantages

- It is necessary to work at obtaining a good and representative return rate, and not just from those who have had the most extensive and positive interactions with the station
- The goal of getting the views of *those collective actors who use the Station most* must be explicit and clear. The objective *is not to 'gross-up' from these respondents*, and thereby to generate an overall estimate of the impact on, or benefit to, all those involved in generating social benefit in the community.

Resource requirements

The resource requirements are modest. A database of local organisations, falling within the definition of "collective actors" is needed, and it may require editing. So also is access to an online

survey software and the associated skills.

7. Into which of the following age groups do you fit?

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Under 18 | <input type="radio"/> 45-54 |
| <input type="radio"/> 18-24 | <input type="radio"/> 55-64 |
| <input type="radio"/> 25-34 | <input type="radio"/> 65-74 |
| <input type="radio"/> 35-44 | <input type="radio"/> 75+ |

8. Where do you live (town/village/townland))

9. Would you be willing to describe your interactions with and views about the station in more depth in a phone interview?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ If YES, please give your name and phone number.

Annex 5: Engaged Organisation Survey Instrument contains a suitable instrument tested by the Pilots.

Stages and Tasks in a Local Organisation Survey

These are similar to those of the two previous surveys, with appropriate adjustments.

Phase 1: Planning, design and resources

Task 1: An overall survey plan

The plan will include sourcing and cleaning the distribution list; and fixing the timescale, launch date, and period for responses.

Task 2: Survey software and instrument

- Select the online survey package: As with the others, the online survey package will be selected, ensuring that it supports the features required. This is a relatively simple survey.
- Refine the survey instrument: The Survey instrument in Annex 6 is designed for this purpose, based on the SB Framework. Additional questions can be added, and should be piloted, though it is likely to reduce the return rate.

Task 3: Secure and edit the organisation contact list

This is a critical task and may take some time. Most Stations will have compiled a list of organisations in the catchment area for use, for instance in promoting their activities or offering their services. Such a list may include organisations or companies they contact solely for advertising revenue or for general information dissemination. Since the purpose of this survey is to find out how the Station assists organisations to extend or reinforce their work with the community, *only organisations dedicated to such work, that have had interaction with the Station, are relevant to the survey*. Thus those with whom the Station has a purely commercial relationship should be excluded; as should those that have no relationship at all with the Station. Focusing the survey distribution list on only relevant organisations will, in practice, increase the response rate.

Stage 2: Survey execution

Task 4: Survey Distribution and Promotion

Invitations are sent by email to the organisations, if possible to a person who has communicated with the Station before. They respond directly by clicking on the link within the email.

Task 5: Improving the response rate

Efforts to improve the response rate are likely to be effective. A follow-up email would be useful, but phoning the organisation and is likely to significantly boost the response, for instance by ensuring that the right person has received the email. It may also reveal reasons why particular organisations are not relevant to the Survey, in which case they can be deleted from the target list (thereby increasing the valid response rate).

Phase 3: Reviewing, weighting and analysing the Data

Task 6: Data review and cleaning

The survey is targeted at individual organisations, and the distribution list will have been edited for relevance. Nevertheless some responses may be returned from organisations that have had no relevant contact with the Station, These should be deleted. As always, anomalies in responses should also be reviewed.

Task 8: Initial analysis and reporting

The survey software will enable basic analysis and documentation of the results. Integrating this with results from other tools is considered elsewhere in this Guide.

A2.5: 'Stories' of Social Benefit

The practice of documenting stories about the impact of an initiative on a community is the core tool of a methodology designed to capture the voices of community members themselves. It is called 'Most Significant Change'²⁶ and is deployed especially in poorer communities where an initiative might have multiple major impacts. As the title suggests, it uses these stories to rank the changes that the community has seen. This Toolkit adapts that approach to the context of community radio.²⁷

What is it

At the heart of this methodology, enriching and deepening the analysis, is the idea of recording Stories, drawing on the views of the community about the social benefits that are enabled or reinforced by community radio. Each Story describes one or more concrete benefit resulting from the activities of the Station, and supplies sufficient context and detail to enable the reader to understand the nature of the benefit, the role of the Station, and the manner in which it is achieved. Each Story is also related back, through a summary table and simple scoring, to the Social Benefit

²⁶ Reference

²⁷ Another example of adaptation to community radio can be seen here, though the role and circumstances of community radio described are very different to those in Ireland

Framework.

8. How important do you think that the station is to the community as a whole?

- ☐ Extremely important
- ☐ Very important
- ☐ Somewhat important
- ☐ Not so important
- ☐ Not at all important
- ☐ Don't know/Not sure

9. Please indicate whether you agree with the following statements:

	Do not agree at all	Agree somewhat	Agree strongly	Don't know
a) The Station helps give a voice to minorities and excluded groups in the community	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b) The Station informs people about what is happening around their community, by providing useful information	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c) The Station offers diverse viewpoints, discussion programmes, and helps to inform people's decisions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d) The Station improves employment prospects through radio training, volunteering opportunities or other means	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
e) The Station helps voluntary and community-based organisations to achieve their goals	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
f) The Station helps give the community as a whole a sense of identity and shared experience	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

10. Of the above (repeated below), which **two** do you think are the **most important in terms of actual benefits to the community as a whole?** (select 2 only)

- ☐ a) The Station helps give a voice to minorities and excluded groups in the community
- ☐ b) The Station informs people about what is happening around their community, by providing useful information
- ☐ c) The Station offers diverse viewpoints, discussion programmes, and helps to inform people's decisions
- ☐ d) The Station improves employment prospects through radio training, volunteering opportunities or other means
- ☐ e) The Station helps voluntary and community-based organisations to achieve their goals
- ☐ f) The Station helps give the community as a whole a sense of identity and shared experience

Please give your reasons here:

Annex 6: Template for Story Development contains the template, and a few samples are contained in

Annex 7: Sample 'Stories' of Social Benefits. A separate report can be consulted containing many more that were gathered and produced during the course of the research.²⁸

Different categories of stories can be discerned, the following among them:

- from collective actors, such as local CBOs, about their cooperation and interactions with the Station;
- from volunteer programme producers, about the impact on them and on their target listeners;
- from trainees, non-producer volunteers, and interns, at the Station about what it means to them;
- from the Station management, about initiatives it has led or taken part in with a particular goal;
- from active listeners, who have been affected by Station broadcasts or other interactions.

The goal is to produce a variety of Stories that cover different target groups and different types of benefits outlined in the Social Benefit Framework.

Advantages

- The greatest advantage of a Stories approach is that it provides concrete descriptions of the types and levels of social benefits generated by community radio and how they come about. This is especially relevant since community radio is often misunderstood by those not familiar with it, who tend to confuse it with local commercial radio and to focus on listenership as the key parameter of impact. While both are formally part of the media sector – they both broadcast – a fundamental distinction is that community radio is broadcasting for a different purpose, and engages in many non-broadcasting activities to achieve. *This more accurately situates it firmly within the community development and empowerment sector.* The Stories approach begins from that premise, and provides concrete evidence needed sustain this argument, and thus to inform and educate those unfamiliar with community radio.
- The Stories approach is based as much as possible on the actual experience of people. Where it is impossible to capture the views of final beneficiaries themselves, those of the people and organisations who work directly with them are recorded, offering credible evidence of benefits.
- The Stories approach is systematic, and through analysis is linked back to the Social Benefit Framework. This allows for a degree of aggregation of stories and, to some extent, an indication of which benefits are most important and bring the deepest or widest advantages.

Disadvantages

- Stories are, by their nature, highly qualitative, as also are many of the benefits that are described in them. It is therefore difficult to quantify or aggregate, in a conventional sense, the benefits documented. They are about outcomes for people's well-being, and go beyond the kind of outputs that tend to lend themselves to numerical analysis.
- Researching and documenting Stories is highly time-consuming.
- Producing stories requires research and writing expertise, that may not be available to Stations.

²⁸ *Introducing a Social Benefits approach to Community Radio: A Compendium of Stories* (2020) It is available on the CRAOL Website.

Resource Requirements

The approach is highly labour-intensive and skilled, and for most Stations this would entail contracting an external expert. It requires research and writing expertise, and familiarity with the purpose of the approach to ensure that Stories stay relevant. It is advisable to have a single person, or two working closely together, to complete all the Stories, in order to ensure consistency of each but also to gauge the importance of each Story compared to others. Practical logistical requirements are simple: the approach involves interviews, documentary review, writing, and analysis.

Stages and Tasks in producing Stories

Phase 1: Planning, design and resources

Task 1: An overall plan

The plan will include the target number of Stories sought, how to identify them and secure agreement from the relevant people, the time-scale and resources required.

Task 2: Potential Story identification

Several Many sources offer openings to identify the range of Stories needed:

- Most Stations here about significant outcomes from their work, but are usually too busy to look into them or even to record them. **Station Management**, consulting with others, can draft a list of organisations and station participants likely to have such stories to tell.
- The **responses from the four possible surveys**, of the general public, Station participants, engaged organisation and active listeners surveys, may reveal possible Stories (and permission can be sought in the survey to subsequently contact them).
- **Story interviews** can lead to other Stories being identified.

Task 3: Story selection and permissions

A full list of potential Stories identified can be narrowed down and prioritised, ensuring they cover the different types of target groups and social benefits. A total of 15 to 20 Stories would be ideal, to cover the range of target groups and of types of social benefit. However, resources may mean that the minimum of perhaps ten is feasible. Additional stories, however, can be added any time.

Permission must be secured from those identified, including the possibility of publishing the story (anonymised, if necessary and possible), and the logistics put in place to interview the people.

Stage 2: Gathering and Verifying Stories

Task 4: Interviews and documents

A number of contacts may be required with sources, perhaps initially by email or phone. The main data gathering will be by means of one or more interviews (by remote means is adequate) with key actors, preferably direct beneficiaries themselves, in the Story. Evidence should be sought (though might not be readily available) of the benefits, and relevant documentation. This is by far the most time-consuming element, and an expert researcher may need half a day or more on each Story, to secure agreement, make contact and schedule, complete the interviews, review documents, and complete the initial write up.

Task 5: Story Verification

Each draft Story should be circulated back to the interviewees for verification. Others, such as Station staff or volunteers, may also be able to contribute, by fleshing out and verifying elements in the Story. Although this task is not labour intensive, it may take some time to obtain the responses and comments required.

Phase 3: The Story and the SB Framework

Although each tells a story in itself, the value of this approach to the overall assessment is greatly enhanced by relating each to the SB Framework in a systematic manner.

Task 6: Relating Stories to the Social Benefit Framework

In Annex 8, a summary table prefaces each sample Story. Each table row contains one of the six Social Benefits, and those that are relevant to that particular Story are supplemented with a short comment on its impact. A column on the left then ‘scores’ the Story’s contribution to each social benefit on a simple scale: a single X for low impact and three XXX for high impact.

The table thus relates the Stories to the SB Framework, and offers a simple grading system in terms of its importance, permitting aggregation later into an overall table of all Stories the Station has completed. The aggregate Table also serves to refer the reader to the appropriate Stories for each type of Social Benefit.

The summary statement of a given to the SBs and the grading of each is, in the simplest scenario, undertaken by the Story’s author based on familiarity with the story and on expertise in the area.

However, more elaborate and participative processes could also be established for grading the Stories against the Social Benefits. For instance, and more in line with the Most Significant Change methodology, a small group of people could together examine all the stories, and reach a consensus on the importance of each documented benefit ranked against the Social Benefits. This approach would yield results with greater validity, relying less on the experience and knowledge of the individual. But it requires more time and effort.

Another Scenario might see the Stories circulated more widely, and ranked separately by a range of people with the average comprising the final score – demanding more time and resource still.

Anything but the most simple approach would also require deeper consideration of the ranking system used, and how to judge whether one instance of social benefit has greater impact, or wider application, than another. It will be up to individual Stations to decide on the most appropriate and feasibility approach for them.

As with the other tools, the final step of combining these stories with data from other sources is considered elsewhere in this Guide.

A2.6: Voices on Air²⁹

A number of Community Radio stations are funded by the Pobal’s Community Services Programme (CSP). In 2014 CRAOL and Pobal developed “Voices on Air” as ways of tracking performance and of measuring outputs.

²⁹ The sub-section was contributed by Mary Lennon of CRAOL.

Pobal funds stations “to make people feel connected to the community to which they are a part of” and this simple statement underpins key outcomes/impacts of Community Radio that are not delivered by existing commercial services. These are:

- (1) Reducing isolation
- (2) Promoting Inclusion.
- (3) Information.
- (4) Increase participation in community activity
- (5) Support for Community Organisations
- (6) Reinforcing community identity & cohesion

These were incorporated into the Social Benefit Framework above.

The benefits emerging from the provision of CSP funding for Community Radio can be difficult to measure, and the performance indicators below offer a mechanism to gauge whether a project is delivering on the CSP’s intended purpose. These performance indicators will be used in two ways:

- (1) To track the performance of the project throughout the duration of the contracts, through the provision of data on a 6-monthly basis through the CSP Portal (replacing the BPA)
- (2) To provide the basis of negotiation for future contracts through the setting of targets:
Community Radio stations enter into a social contract with the Department of Social Protection/Pobal.

A good indicator will also be useful in station planning, be integrated with station activities, and generated in a way that is not costly and is linked to verifiable evidence if audited. The following are the indicators agreed.

Primary Indicator: The number of identifiable voices featured on air in a given period.

Secondary Indicator: Number of weekly broadcasting hours

Other Core Commitments related to purpose: to carry out regular community research profiling demographics, understanding needs, & gauging engagement with service.

Below is a synopsis of the agreed document and the full document is available from CRAOL.

To meet Pobal Output the ‘Number of Voices on Air’ is recorded.

Definition: "Voices featured on Air" is calculated as "Identifiable by name & making a contribution of more than 30 seconds in a programme".

- Where someone makes a contribution on more than one programme, each contribution is counted.
- Should two people appear together from one organisation, both are counted so long as both are named and make a contribution.
- “Production team voices” should only be counted once in the reporting period (this refers to advertisements, news reports, weather reports etc.).
- Contributions are linked only to it featuring on air and is independent of how - e.g. phone interview, Outside Broadcast, location recording, panel etc. through stations are encouraged to record this to aid in planning.
- Repeat programming is not counted (double counting)

The following sample Excel Template is used to record Voices on Air:

Template guidelines						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All Voices recorded must be 30 seconds or more in length - Where someone makes a contribution on more than one programme, each contribution is counted. Should two people appear together from one organisation, both are counted so long as both are named and make a contribution. - Hints for making the file easier to fillout: Select the Column where you can define a selection of dropdown options (Column g - Target group output). Go to the Data Tab > select Validation > Under Criteria, select 'list of items' and then list all the items you want to include and seperate them with commas > Click save. If there is any cells which you do not want to use the validation, just right click on the cell and choose 'data validation' and click 'remove validation'. 						
	Date	Name of show	Name of person	Organisation involved	Target group to be reached (Specific or all)	Aim of output (If applicable)
Example	15/02/2016	Breakfast Show	John Mahon	NA	Island Communities	Information provision
Example	16/02/2016	Afternoon delight	Tony Wright	AWARE	Senior Citizens	Reducing isolation
Example	17/02/2016	News at 1	Alice Dolan	CRAOL	All	Promoting Inclusion

Annex 3: Active Listener and Public Survey Instruments

The survey of the general public, using a Stop & Ask technique, and that of the station's own listeners overlap considerably. The main difference is that a general public survey will encounter many members of the public who may not have heard of, or who seldom or never listen to or engage with the community station. This points to the strength of this type of survey: it can, if thoroughly implemented, get accurate information about what proportion of the public has heard of the station and listen to it (and what proportion has not) i.e. a general public listenership survey. Such a general public thus also records the basic demographics (age, gender, urban/rural etc.) of those not familiar with, or listening to the station, before terminating the interview.

However, once a public survey has established in the first few questions that the interviewee is a listener of the station, thereafter the same questions are put as are contained in the active listener survey. Thus, though the public listener survey was not piloted during this research, with the addition of a few preliminary questions, the same survey instrument can be used.

[Station] Listeners Survey

Thanks for opening the [Station] Survey!

This short survey (should take less than 5 minutes) will help us assess whether [Station name] really benefits the community, and if so, how. We want to hear the views of all our listeners, as well as examples of how the Station has helped you or others in their lives – practically, socially, culturally, economically – or helped community and other organisations to achieve their goals.

If you have any questions about the Survey, please contact myself, [name], Station Manager, at [email]; or with id you have a technical issues with the survey: [research] at [phone] or [email].

This survey will be open until [date].

We are very very grateful for your support.

1. Did you listen to [station name] at any point during the last week?

- ☐ Yes ☐ Not sure/can't remember
☐ No

2. By which means have you accessed [Station name]? (tick all relevant)

- ☐ FM Radio ☐ Live streaming online
☐ Facebook page ☐ listen back later online
☐ Twitter account
☐ Other (please specify)

3. In general, how often do you listen to [Station name]?

- ☐ Daily or Most Days ☐ A few times a year
- ☐ A couple of times a week ☐ Never
- ☐ A few times a month

4. Have you ever contacted [Station name] directly:

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

5. If YES, what form of contact was it? (tick all that apply)

- ☐ Entered a competition run by the station
- ☐ Made a music request to the station
- ☐ Visited the station studio/office
- ☐ Had a classified message (buy/sell, employment etc.) broadcast for free
- ☐ Had a commercial message broadcast for payment
- ☐ Been interviewed or broadcast by the station
- ☐ Had other interactions e.g. phoned looking for information, donated CDs etc.

6. Overall, how important do you think that the station is to the community?

- ☐ Extremely important
- ☐ Very important
- ☐ Somewhat important
- ☐ Not so important
- ☐ Not at all important
- ☐ Don't know/not sure

If possible, please expand on your answer

7. Please indicate whether you agree with the following statements:

	Do not agree at all	Agree somewhat	Agree strongly	Don't know
a) The Station helps give a voice to minorities and excluded groups in the community	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b) The Station informs people about what is happening around their community, by providing useful information	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c) The Station offers diverse viewpoints, discussion programmes, and helps to inform people's decisions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d) The Station improves employment prospects through radio training, volunteering opportunities or other means	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
e) The Station helps voluntary and community-based organisations to achieve their goals	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
f) The Station helps give the community as a whole a sense of identity and shared experience	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

8. Of the above (repeated below), which **two** do you think are the most important in terms of actual benefits to the community as a whole? (select 2 only)

- ☐ a) The Station helps give a voice to minorities and excluded groups in the community
- ☐ b) The Station informs people about what is happening around their community, by providing useful information
- ☐ c) The Station offers diverse viewpoints, discussion programmes, and helps to inform people's decisions
- ☐ d) The Station improves employment prospects through radio training, volunteering opportunities or other means
- ☐ e) The Station helps voluntary and community-based organisations to achieve their goals
- ☐ f) The Station helps give the community as a whole a sense of identity and shared experience

Please give your reasons here

9. Can you recall examples of when you yourself:

	Yes	No
a) used everyday information provided by the community radio	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b) learned something new and interesting about issues that affect your community	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c) interacted directly with, or availed of other services, beyond listening, such as training/education courses provided by the station	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

10. Did any specific station activity or interaction (including the above) benefit you, or those close to you, in terms of quality of life, well-being, cultural or economic life?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

11. If YES to the above question, please describe the benefit in a little detail and how it helped you:

12. Please indicate your gender

☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Other/rather not say

13. Into which of the following age groups do you fit?

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Under 18 | <input type="radio"/> 45-54 |
| <input type="radio"/> 18-24 | <input type="radio"/> 55-64 |
| <input type="radio"/> 25-34 | <input type="radio"/> 65-74 |
| <input type="radio"/> 35-44 | <input type="radio"/> 75+ |

8. Where do you live (town/village/townland))

Annex 4: Station Participant Survey Instrument

The following sample survey is for all those directly involved in the community station, as station members, volunteers, staff, Committee and Board members etc. It can be completed online, or in hard copy (and input online later). It is important to secure a high rate of return, so follow up will be needed. It would also be useful also to extend to former volunteers, Committee members or others (though extending the net too wide might reduce the return rate).

Survey of Participants in [Station name]

This survey is one of several we are doing to help us find out whether [Station name] is actually benefiting our community, and if so, how. We are keen to understand what those involved in the Station, like yourselves, think. And we want to identify and record examples of “Stories”, small or large, where something the community station did helped people in their lives – socially, culturally, economically – or helped community and other organisations to achieve their social goals.

Please complete this short survey, and at the end indicate whether you would be willing to be interviewed in a little more depth by phone or in person. (This is entirely optional.)

If you have any questions on how to complete it, please contact the researcher, [name] at [phone], or email]. You can also contact me, [name], the Station Manager, at [email].

Our sincere gratitude for your support.

1. Please indicate your relationship with the Station: (tick all that apply)

- ☐ Paid staff
- ☐ Volunteer
- ☐ Committee/Board member
- ☐ Member (general)
- ☐ Other (please specify)

2. Overall, how important do you think that the station is to the community?

- ☐ Extremely important
- ☐ Very important
- ☐ Somewhat important
- ☐ Not so important
- ☐ Not at all important
- ☐ Don't know/not sure

3. Please indicate whether you agree with the following statements:

	Do not agree at all	Agree somewhat	Agree strongly	Don't know
a) The Station helps give a voice to minorities and excluded groups in the community	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b) The Station informs people about what is happening around their community, by providing useful information	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c) The Station offers diverse viewpoints, discussion programmes, and helps to inform people's decisions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d) The Station improves employment prospects through radio training, volunteering opportunities or other means	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
e) The Station helps voluntary and community-based organisations to achieve their goals	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
f) The Station helps give the community as a whole a sense of identity and shared experience	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

4. Of the above (repeated below), which **two** do you think are the **most important in terms of actual benefits to the community** as a whole? (select 2 only)

- ☐ a) The Station helps give a voice to minorities and excluded groups in the community
- ☐ b) The Station informs people about what is happening in the community by providing useful information
- ☐ c) The Station offers diverse viewpoints, discussion programmes, and helps to inform people's decisions
- ☐ d) The Station improves employment prospects through radio training, volunteering opportunities or other means
- ☐ e) The Station helps voluntary and community-based organisations to achieve their goals
- ☐ f) The Station helps give the community as a whole a sense of identity and shared experience

Please explain your answer above

5. Can you think of an example of where **you yourself**, or others close to you, gained a benefit from your interaction with the station? If so, please describe it in a little detail.

6. Please indicate your gender

- ☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Other/prefer not to say

7. Into which of the following age groups do you fit?

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Under 18 | <input type="radio"/> 45-54 |
| <input type="radio"/> 18-24 | <input type="radio"/> 55-64 |
| <input type="radio"/> 25-34 | <input type="radio"/> 65-74 |
| <input type="radio"/> 35-44 | <input type="radio"/> 75+ |

8. Where do you live (town/village/townland))

9. Would you be willing to describe your interactions with and views about the station in more depth in a phone interview?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ If YES, please give your name and phone number.

Annex 5: Engaged Organisation Survey Instrument

This Survey is distributed to all community development and local voluntary organisation that have engaged in some way with the community station.

Community Radio survey of Local Organisations

This survey is to help us find out if [station] is really benefiting the community, and if so, how. We are seeking the views of as many organisations as possible, about all kinds of social benefits, and how you have interacted with the station. We would be most grateful if you could complete it by [date].

Important: Please complete this survey on behalf of the organisation. Ideally, the person(s) most familiar with the Station will complete it in consultation with colleagues. At the end, please indicate whether you might be willing to be interviewed in more depth, by phone or in person.

If you have questions contact me, [name], Station Manager, at [phone] or or [email]. For technical issues in completing it, please contact [researcher name] at [phone] or [email].

THANK YOU VERY MUCH!

* 1. Are you (or others in your organisation) aware of the community radio station [Station Name]:

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

* 2. Has the Station ever broadcast a promotional/information message about your organisation or activities?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Don't know/Not sure

If YES, please give some detail

* 3. Has a representative or member of your organisation ever participated in a radio programme there e.g. on a discussion panel or other talk show?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Don't know/Not sure

If YES, please give some detail

* 4. Has a representative or member of your organisation even been involved directly in the production/editorial of a radio programme with the Station (as producers, volunteers, programme editing, outside broadcast etc.)

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Don't know/Not sure

If YES, please give some detail

* 5. Has you ever cooperated with the Station on a joint activity, that was not just a radio programme?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Don't know/Not sure

If Yes, please give some detail

* 6. Have you had, or do you have, other interactions with the station as you go about your work

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Don't know/Not sure

If YES, please give some detail

* 7. In relation to achieving your organisational goals and/or delivering your service, please indicate whether the Station has, on one or more occasion, contributed:

- ☐ Very significantly
- ☐ Made a useful contribution
- ☐ Made a small contribution
- ☐ Has not contributed
- ☐ Does not apply/Do not know

Please explain your answer

8. How important do you think that the station is to the community as a whole?

- ☐ Extremely important
- ☐ Very important
- ☐ Somewhat important
- ☐ Not so important
- ☐ Not at all important
- ☐ Don't know/Not sure

9. Please indicate whether you agree with the following statements:

	Do not agree at all	Agree somewhat	Agree strongly	Don't know
a) The Station helps give a voice to minorities and excluded groups in the community	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b) The Station informs people about what is happening around their community, by providing useful information	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c) The Station offers diverse viewpoints, discussion programmes, and helps to inform people's decisions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d) The Station improves employment prospects through radio training, volunteering opportunities or other means	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
e) The Station helps voluntary and community-based organisations to achieve their goals	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
f) The Station helps give the community as a whole a sense of identity and shared experience	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

10. Of the above (repeated below), which **two** do you think are the **most important in terms of actual benefits to the community as a whole?** (select 2 only)

- ☐ a) The Station helps give a voice to minorities and excluded groups in the community
- ☐ b) The Station informs people about what is happening around their community, by providing useful information
- ☐ c) The Station offers diverse viewpoints, discussion programmes, and helps to inform people's decisions
- ☐ d) The Station improves employment prospects through radio training, volunteering opportunities or other means
- ☐ e) The Station helps voluntary and community-based organisations to achieve their goals
- ☐ f) The Station helps give the community as a whole a sense of identity and shared experience

Please give your reasons here:

Annex 6: Template for Story Development

This template has been followed by Stories collected during this research, sometimes with some minor variations. It is designed to ensure that all major Story elements are covered for readers who might be unfamiliar with community radio, and to enable a degree of uniformity and comparability between stories.

The Stories developed during this research were almost all completed by phone interview, using a semi-structured open interview schedule (based on the template) that both covered the requirements but also proceeded down interesting avenues to fill out the human dimension and to identify unexpected and unintended results. In some cases Station staff were also consulted to get a second view. With enough time, the views of other stakeholders, and especially in some cases final beneficiaries, would greatly enrich the final Story and add to its evidential value.

The draft stories were circulated back to those interviews, for correction, but also crucially, to ensure that they fully agree that the Story might be publicly available, and that they themselves (as appropriate) would be named and/or identifiable as the source.

Apart from this Benefit wider methodology, many Stations might find it useful to gather these Stories routinely, as they become aware of them, and make them available on the internet and to other interested parties as illustration of what they do.

Story Title: [Add the title, and the Station]

The table at the start of each Story summarises how this particular story relates to each of the six Social Benefits identified in the Framework. It can be completed by the author/researcher (that was the case in this research), but could also be completed by people involved in the station or one or more persons independent of it.

The column on the left 'scores' the Story from X (slightly relevant); XX (quite relevant); to XXX (highly relevant); and an explanatory sentence or two can be added below the text of each social benefit.

Relevance to SB	Types of Social Benefit generated by this story
XX	1. Individuals in the community, especially minorities and those marginalised, are growing in confidence and creativity, and/or reinforcing a sense of belonging. <i>[Add one sentence explaining relevance]</i>
	2. People's employment prospects are enhanced, through gaining skills and improved confidence
	3. Individuals are informed and aware of what is happening around their community
X	4. Individuals are responding more effectively to issues—local to global—because they have access to more and better information and to diverse viewpoints <i>[Add one sentence explaining relevance]</i>
	5. Collective actors are facilitated, and reinforced in their capacity, to achieve their goals
XXX	6. The community sense of identity and cohesiveness is enhanced <i>[Add one sentence explaining relevance]</i>

Summary

This contains a few sentence summary of the Story and how it benefits the community, in a box to set it apart from the main text.

1. Context and social issue addressed

The Station name, catchment area (rural, urban etc.), the main actors in this story (individuals, local organisation etc.), the specific issue that is addressed in the story before the Station became involved.

2. Station activity and outputs

This is usually the longest section: How the station addressed the key issue, what it did, the partners and actors, the timescale etc. Describe the *specific outputs (but not yet outcomes/benefits)* of the activity (e.g. people trained, programmes broadcast, volunteers projects products etc.). Also include also the costs involved, including volunteer time etc. and where any funding came from.

3. Benefit Generated

Most important, *state how the actions and outputs translated into the types of social benefits above*, who benefited, and be sure to include any evidence that you have (including personal testimony, comments from others involved, figures etc.). Be as specific and real as you can about the benefits.

4. The Future: Sustaining and replicating the benefits

Mention if benefits are likely to be sustained, for the specific beneficiaries or repeated in the future. This might be no more than that the Station is committed to providing these resources on a routine basis, and that it relies on volunteers; or for instance in the case of providing training, it might involve external resources.

5. Concluding comments

If you like, offer conclusions about what all this means for the role of the Station in the community.

Source: With the explicit permission of your respondents, reproduce their name, position etc. as well as any other sources such as Websites and documents.

Annex 7: Sample ‘Stories’ of Social Benefits

Two Community Radio Stories of Social Benefit, from about 20 completed during the research, are presented here as examples.

Moorehaven Centre. Tipp Mid-West FM Story Number 4.

Relevance to SBs	Types of Social Benefit generated by this story
X	1. Individuals in the community, especially minorities and those marginalised, are growing in confidence and creativity, and/or reinforcing a sense of belonging. <i>The Centre’s clients (adults with mild to moderate intellectual disability) are given placements in the Station, about 50 annual for 3 hours a week for six weeks; and these are highly valued by the job coaches and the clients gain significantly.</i>
	2. People’s employment prospects are enhanced, through gaining skills and improved confidence
X	3. Individuals are informed and aware of what is happening around their community <i>The station broadcasts their events at which the public participants and attends.</i>
	4. Individuals are responding more effectively to issues—local to global—because they have access to more and better information and to diverse viewpoints
XXX	5. Collective actors are facilitated, and reinforced in their capacity, to achieve their goals <i>Support is provided to four main aspects: it publicises services and encourages clients to contact them; it is key to fundraising events; it offers work placements for some clients; and it enabled them to recruit relief staff at no cost.</i>
X	6. The community sense of identity and cohesiveness is enhanced

Summary

Moorehaven Centre provides a range of supports to adults with mild to moderate intellectual disability. The Centre Manager rates Tipp Mid West’s contribution to its capacity to achieve its goals overall as “very significant”, across four main dimensions: It promotes the Centre with the public, publicising the services available and encouraging clients to come forward; it is critical to the success of their fundraising events in several ways; it provide highly valued placements for many clients; and it enables them to recruit relief personnel, especially, for the Centre at no cost.

1. Context and issue addressed

Moorehaven Centre in Tipperary offers a range of supports to adults with mild to moderate intellectual disability, including day, residential and respite services; and also offers services in Thurles one day a week. It currently serves about 115 clients and employs 50 full time equivalent staff. Most of their approximately €3 million annual income comes from a Section 39 HSE grant, but the 13% raised by the Centre is vital to service delivery and development.

Moorehaven's core values are about community inclusion and active citizenship within the community, in line with the HSE's New Direction model. Thus, sensitising the community about the Centre and its ethos, and enabling clients to integrate within the normal life of the community, are central goals. Despite over three decades of service, not everyone in Tipperary would be aware of the work and ethos of the Centre, and getting their message out is also critical to reaching out the families and clients in need. Fundraising is a constant challenge with regular and occasional events at the centre of the strategy.

2. The Station activity, outputs and costs

Tipp Mid West works with the Moorehaven Centre in several areas.

- The Centre runs an annual Christmas Fayre on a Saturday around the 8th December, for both fundraising purposes and as an Open Door day for schools and community to come in the Centre, which is close to Tipperary town centre. The Fayre sells arts and crafts, produced in the Centre and includes musical bands and choirs from the local schools in transition year musical productions. It raises about €15,500 annually, though its community promotional value is perhaps the most important outcome.

Tipp Mid West has long been an integral and indispensable part of the Fayre. Several weeks before the event, tailored Fayre promotional advertisements are recorded by Centre clients, and broadcast several times a day. A week before the event, the "Morning Call" presenter, Joe Price, produces a 20 minute feature with contributions from Centre clients, and runs a raffle. And a core feature of the event itself is an hour-long live Outside Broadcast, from 2:00pm to 3:00 pm, from the event itself, featuring a mix of items that might include the town Brass Band. The Station's promotion is also instrumental in recruiting volunteers to help organise the event.

Tipp Mid West promotes another major fundraiser, the annual Golf Classic and coffee morning in the Golf Clubhouse, that raises about €7,500, the raffle component of which is heavily advertised by the Station. Every five years or so the JP McManus Pro-Am pre-qualifier also raises up to €20,000, and is promoted by the Station.

Worth noting also is a documentary programme completed a few years ago for the Centre's 30th anniversary, looking at its history and growth over the decades, and the broadcast generated significant interest and response from the public.

- A second key service is the provision of client placements in the community. Annually a number of clients expressing an interest – in 2019 it was eight - are placed for a few hours a week for six weeks in the Station premises by the Centre's two Job Coaches. They may operate the phone or undertake other duties, and are welcomed and supported as part of the Station team. The Job Coaches highly value these placements, for the positive and motivating environment, the team spirit, and the social and other skills developed. About 50 of the 115 clients secure placements every year in different places, but the Coaches find they must spend little time at the Station supporting the clients as compared to many other placements. In future, it is hoped that roles can be found for some in programme production. The Manager reports that the clients themselves also gain a lot from their Station placement, and rates the overall experience as very positive, and fully in tune with the Centre's ethos.

- Moorehaven is establishing a panel of Relief Personnel, to fill in for staff in the short term and on short notice. They are vetted and require Garda clearance, but their initial recruitment is facilitated through Tipp Mid-West's *Community Diary* service. Many are older people with time on their hands. The Station has enabled them to build the Panel, and at no cost. For staff positions they use other means to recruit (Active-Link, the National local newspaper, or Limerick Leader) but most are quite costly. The Manager comments that Tipp FM, the local commercial station, would charge a fee for advertising and is anyhow based in Clonmel which is more distant from the Centre – but the Centre anyhow finds that the service from Tipp Mid West fulfils their needs.

The Manager also values the Station's *Community Diary* for enabling them to sell equipment and other items that they wish to dispose of from time to time.

3. Benefit Generated

The Manager rates the contribution that Tipp Mid West makes to enabling the Centre to achieve its goals as "very significant".

The general promotion of, and raising awareness about, Moorehaven among the local population, a horizontal feature across all the above actions, he rates very highly, noting that despite a long history in the town, their recently renewed community and person-centred ethos is not as widely understood and appreciated as he would wish. It also means that potential clients and their families become aware of the services and are more likely to avail of them.

The Station's support for the Fayre especially, but also other fund-raising activities, is an integral part of these efforts, and would be far less successful without it.

The client placement, which account for an appreciable proportion of all placement, are highly valued by the Job Coaches, and according to the Manager, greatly appreciated by and beneficial to the clients who readily integrate within the Station team and environment.

4. Sustaining and replicating benefits

Tipp Mid West invest significant time in supporting the Moorehaven Centre, through its normal programming, the Outside Broadcast, and accommodating the Centre's clients on placements. While the additional expense is not great, this level of support to the Centre must rely on the Station being able to continue to receive its existing level of support from public and other sources, to fundraise, and to attract and train volunteers.

5. Concluding Comment

This is an example of Tipp Mid West, as part of the community support infrastructure, working with another component of that infrastructure, the Moorehaven Centre, to reach outwards into that community and deepen in linkages: through raising awareness of Moorehaven's ethos and activity, encouraging responses from potential client, recruiting relief personnel, helping to raise funding, and enabling clients to spend time in a positive workplace experience. This last is indicative of the relationship: Because the community development approach is an integral part of the Station, including its workplace, Moorehaven Centre client placements fit in naturally and hence are highly valued.

Sources: Derry McMahon, Manager, Moorehaven Centre, Tipperary Town; Tipp Mid-West FM.

Title: “The Brazilian Coffee Time”. A Story of Dublin City FM

Relevance to SBs	Types of Social Benefit generated by this story
XXX	1. Individuals in the community, especially minorities and those marginalised, are growing in confidence and creativity, and/or reinforcing a sense of belonging
XX	2. Individuals are informed and aware of what is happening around their community
XX	3. Individuals are responding more effectively to issues—local to global—because they have access to more and better information and to diverse viewpoints
X	4. People’s employment prospects are enhanced, through gaining skills and improved confidence
	5. Collective actors are facilitated, and reinforced in their capacity, to achieve their goals
XXX	6. The community sense of identity and cohesiveness is enhanced, and community tensions and divisions are reduced

Summary

Julianne came from Brazil about four years ago to study a MA in Journalism in Dublin. Today she leads a team of five compatriots, broadcasts a half-hour weekly programme on Dublin City FM to Brazilian community in Dublin. It has become the sole voice of, and for, the community in the media, and the evidence suggests it is highly valued among members of that community, informing them of what is going on in the community and at home, addressing issues they confront major and minor, and ultimately building their sense of belonging, both as a community and as part of a multicultural Dublin.

1. Context and social issue addressed

Julianne arrived in Dublin about four years ago to study a Master’s Degree in *Journalism and Public Relations* in Griffith College. After successful completion, in 2016 she applied to numerous radio stations in Dublin for an internship, to gain media experience. The commercial stations did not respond [(with the exception of one, which however, judged her accent to be too strong!)] but Dublin City FM did, as part of their ongoing intern programme. She joined and initially became involved with the *Good Morning Dublin* Programme.

She had noticed from the time of her arrival that media coverage about, and for, the Brazilian community in Dublin (and Ireland) was virtually non-existent. with the help of Mike Glynn and Mick Hanley, she soon launched a five to ten minute regular news slot for the Brazilian community on *Good Morning Ireland*, and found no shortage of material. With positive feedback from those in the community, she pitched the idea of a regular programme to the Dublin City FM Board, called *The Brazilian Coffee Time*, dedicated to the Brazilian community in Dublin. The idea was accepted and the programme went on air. To produce the show, she asked for some help from some friends with certain influence and knowledge about the Brazilian community, in different aspects (cultural, news, exchange programmes and etc.) to be part of the team. After some changes during the year, we now have the final format of the team and programme.

2. Station activities and outputs

The Brazilian Coffee Time (<https://www.dublincityfm.ie/shows/the-brazilian-coffee-time/>) is broadcast every Monday at 1:30 to 2:00 pm, the time when Brazilians traditionally relax after lunch with a coffee. A team of six friends, all Brazilian, work on it, with Julianne as Director and Presenter; alongside Victor Hugo, Head of Production; Naara Mendes, News & Events; Mario Bortoletto, who has a bi-weekly slot covering study exchange programme; Gislene Oliveira Assistant Producer covering event in Brazil and links to Brazilian Embassy; and Hellton Nobrega who covers social media, and event photography that go out on their Facebook page. Naara, Gislene and Victor also present some of the time.

It describes itself as: “A mix of good taste, flavour, friendship, good chats, updates, elegance and the nice ending of a meal.” It broadcasts live and includes news both from Brazil and Dublin’s Brazilian community, a listing of upcoming events, and always at least one Interview with a Brazilian living in Dublin or visiting, including some well-known people. The language is generally English, though Portuguese is used if an interviewee is more comfortable with that. It covers stories of success for Brazilians here, alongside small and large problems that confront the community, from harassment and racism, to residency and finding a dentist! It tries to give an open voice to the community to speak as it likes, but when serious allegations against members of the community are brought to them, Julianne - as a journalist - and other team members, investigate further before deciding whether to broadcast the issue.

Overall the six-person team spends perhaps twenty hours a week on each programme, and they meet each Monday before and during the programme. It demands a major time commitment from each of them.

From the start they have found Dublin City FM to be extremely friendly, to the whole team, providing them with everything they need.

3. Benefit Generated

Julianne herself says she has met so many wonderful people through the programme, not only Irish and Brazilian, but people from all around the world, and she feels “embraced”. And the programme does that for the whole community. “When I came there was no one and no way to share within the Brazilian community. Now people are willing to trust us and to share. We get a lot of people telling us about the issue they face.”

She says: “We became the voice of the Brazilian community in the media. Some people have contacted the Irish Times or the Independent, but of course there are editorial and other approvals so maybe a little gets through. For us, we are their voice; we cover everything.”

Brazilians are now the sixth largest non-Ireland community, and the 2016 Census counted 13,640 living in Dublin. Their Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/brcoffeetime/>) has nearly 1,200 likes, and gets dozens of messages after some shows especially if someone well know is on or a very serious issue is raised. It is impossible to be precise about the number of listeners but all team members get informal feedback and believe they have a strong following. Many listen from Soundcloud, after they have finished work, and some programmes have several hundred hits.

4. The Future: Sustaining the benefits

The programme will continue as long as the team sees a need for it, probably for as long as there is a Brazilian community here. If individuals team members leave, others can be recruited to replace, and in that sense it is a robust group. Dublin City FM will continue to provide the resources for as long as they can.

5. Concluding Comments

This programme in some respects is an archetypal community radio programme. While addressing a particular group within the wider community, it does so in a manner that both builds solidarity within the group, and enhances their identification as part of the Dublin community.

Source: Julianne, Volunteer. Dublin City FM.