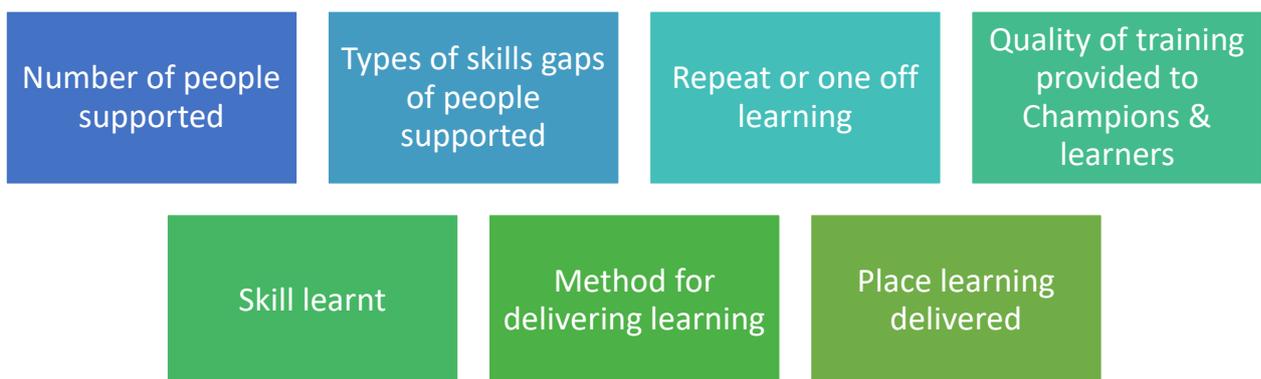# Measuring impact on learners in digital inclusion projects

One Digital and other digital inclusion projects collect a wide variety of information on what impact their activity is having on the beneficiaries (learners) within their projects.

As with all evaluation work it's important to understand

- What you and the people you are supporting want to achieve as a result of your project - a Logic Model or Theory of Change can be helpful (information on these is available on the One Digital website here)
- Why you want to collect the information
- How the information will help your project and how you will use the information you collect both routinely and as part of your evaluation
- What other stakeholders and the funder of your project would like to know
- The views of the people involved on how evaluation information can be collected
- How you could collect the information you need.

Types of Output (feedback) information collected routinely by digital inclusion projects

Number of people supported	Types of skills gaps of people supported	Repeat or one off learning	Quality of training provided to Champions & learners

Skill learnt	Method for delivering learning	Place learning delivered

Types of Outcomes measured

- Confidence (including increased confidence) and competency in using digital skills. Including learners becoming digital champions themselves.
- Motivation (including increased motivation) and commitment to use learned digital skills
- Change in skills levels (assessed with a designed tool)
- Better understanding of the benefits of increased or improved digital skills (for instance '*to what extent do you agree or disagree with the statement "The Internet makes my life easier.*
- Impact on health and well-being – for instance reduced social isolation
- Impact on employment – such as improved job searching skills
- Impact on learner engagement with other services provided by the organisation (or external organisations).

These areas can be either self-assessed or observed by a researcher. The meta-outcomes of impact on health would need evaluation to take place after a period of time to be able to review the impact, and will be affected by other factors too.

How can we measure impact? What are the options?

- Case studies on individual learner impact – in a variety of formats including short films, audio as well as written – good for demonstrating individual stories and specific impact
- Information on increased skills and digital participation collected by Digital Champions, self-assessed or observed.
- Use an outcome star to track learning journeys or a specialised platform such as the [Digital Champions Network](#)
- Collect data sets of evidence linked to skills developed and used such as number of tenants reporting maintenance issues online.
- Collection of research information and interviews with learners covering areas such as:
  - Motivations for learning
  - Self-reported improvements in skills and confidence
  - Risk factors for continuing to learn
  - On-going support needed to remain digitally included.
  - Demonstrated ability to use Foundation Digital Skills (self-assessed/observed)
  - Demonstrated ability to use a particular Essential Digital Skill (self-assessed/observed)
  - Surveys based on a random selection/all learners/profiled selections carried out during specific period or through routine collection

Potential limitations/risks in gathering information

- Consistency in measuring skills ability (for both self-assessed, or Digital Champion assessed)
- Learners may not want to take part in skills assessment
- Time taken to collect information
- Impact on learners of data being collected, for instance on their own confidence and motivation
- Collection of representative samples (to provide reliable information).
- Availability of secondary impact data/information needs reasonable period of time to have passed to collect information (for benefits to have been demonstrated). The number of responses/participants may reduce over time.

Tools, useful resources & examples evaluations

This page on the One Digital website contains information and practical examples [One Digital Measuring Impact resource page](#)

The Essential digital skills framework reviewed in 2018 'defines the digital skills adults need to safely benefit from, participate in and contribute to the digital world'. It is a useful way to look at the skills people develop using a UK wide framework agreed by partners and hosted by the Department for Education.

Essential Digital Skills Toolkit published in 2018 by Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations provides a useful guide' to help you make practical use of the framework. It contains simple checklists for measuring Foundation Skills and Essential Skills, and guidance on how to interpret the results.'

Useful Department for Digital Culture Media & Sport toolkit with lots of information on establishing an evaluation process and working with stakeholders. Digital inclusion evaluation toolkit

One Digital Phase 1 evaluation (2017)

LSE: Measuring Digital Skills (2014) report

BT SROI report (2011)