Impact Assessment Research Framework
Executive Report

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Glasspool
Charity Trust

CONTENTS

Note: This report is an abridged version of the research report that was presented in December 2013 to Glasspool's Board of Trustees.

R L Glasspool Charity Trust

R L Glasspool Charity Trust, hereafter referred to as Glasspool, or the Trust, is a national UK charity that provides one-off grants to people on low incomes and in difficult circumstances. The Trust's mission is, *"We provide timely, life-enhancing support to people in need: short-term involvement for long-term impact"*. Glasspool fulfils its charitable objectives through awarding individuals in need (also referred to as beneficiaries) grants mainly, for the provision of items to meet basic needs such as: essential domestic appliances or 'white goods' (cookers, fridges, washing machines), beds and bedding, clothing and baby equipment [1].

In 2012-13, Glasspool received 7,237 applications and made grants to 4,463 individuals, an approval rate of 62 percent, totalling £1,073,650, an increase of 4.4 percent compared to the previous year[2]. Glasspool is financially robust, thanks to an actively managed endowment. It has plans to expand its funding base and increase its grant spending to £1.5 million by 2016 and to £2 million by 2020. Where possible, white goods are processed and delivered through its wholesale arrangements with two retail providers. This method is preferred over giving cash directly to applicants, as it is generally believed the grant is put to better use, it reduces the risk of fraud, and is more practical to meeting the applicant's immediate needs.

The trust accepts applications from organisations known as "referral agencies" (also referred to as 'agencies') who can apply on an individual's behalf. These include statutory organisations that provide health care, social care or advice services such as Citizens Advice Bureaux, prison or probation services, and tenancy support workers.

Jacinta Belai

Jacinta Belai is a consultant and philanthropy advisor in the not-for-profit sector, specialising in impact measurement as a key to enhancing grantmaking effectiveness. In 2012-13, Jacinta carried out research for the Association of Charitable Organisations (ACO) and authored a report, "Change for Good" highlighting the challenges faced by benevolent funds and trusts and foundations providing grants to people in need. Jacinta is a professionally qualified coach and has worked with executives in the corporate and charity sector. In 2011 she successfully proposed a pitch to organise and manage a panel on "Leadership and Scaling Up" at the Harvard Social Enterprise Conference 2011. Jacinta is co-founder of a family foundation to support sustainable local efforts to raise orphaned children in rural Ethiopia. Her interests are in strategic philanthropy, grantmaking effectiveness, social entrepreneurship and private sector engagement with the charitable sector. Jacinta has a Master's degree in Grantmaking, Philanthropy and Social Investment from Cass Business School, City University London and a B.A. in Business and Economics from Trinity College Dublin, Ireland.

PART I: BACKGROUND

The purpose and scope of this report is to establish a framework for measuring impact, identify the issues relevant to Glasspool and provide recommendations on how it can capture evidence of the difference its grantmaking makes.

The report is divided into three sections: part 1 describes the background to undertaking impact assessment and its relevance to Glasspool, part 2 analyses the findings from the research carried out so far and the establishment of a baseline and finally, part 3 provides recommendations for addressing the gaps revealed in the findings, along with opportunities for strengthening Glasspool's efforts to capture and bolster impact.

The term 'impact' is widely used but definitions of the term vary. In its broadest sense, impact assessment is the process of identifying the anticipated or actual impacts of a development intervention, on those social, economic and environmental factors which the intervention is designed to affect or may inadvertently affect[3].

According to a recent report by New Philanthropy Capital (NPC), a consultancy and charity think tank, 75 percent of charities measure the impact of some or all of their work[4].

The impetus for Glasspool's impact assessment project came about in 2012 when its Board of Trustees discussed how it could identify the difference it makes in return for the resources employed. The Board further agreed that one of its strategic aims over the next three years would be to 'double' the impact of its grants from the baseline established in 2013 over a three-year period. However, in order to achieve this ambitious goal, it acknowledged that it must first assess what its current impact is and how it can create the necessary framework for ongoing measurement.

Impact assessment carries a number of challenges and benefits, many of which are shared throughout the sector. The successful navigation of impact assessment is determined by how well an organisation can identify the perceived benefits and challenges specific to them and, take the necessary steps to amplify the benefits and mitigate the challenges. For Glasspool the challenges and benefits are outlined as follows:

1.1 CHALLENGES

No restrictions

One of the key defining characteristics unique to Glasspool is that it is one of the few national charities that makes grants to individuals and has no restrictions on who may benefit other than a requirement to demonstrate financial need.

Arms-length support

Since Glasspool cannot assist each applicant who falls within this category, it has to rely on applications made by an eligible agency on behalf of an individual. However, in operating at arms-length from its beneficiaries there have been limitations to extracting evidence of impact. Apart from occasional thank-you messages, the feedback and knowledge of impact has thus far remained within the agencies themselves.

Cuts in public spending

Impact assessment cannot be undertaken in isolation without giving due consideration to the wider social and economic arena. Government policy, welfare reform and cuts in public spending bear significantly on not just the Trust's current and future *raison d'être*, but also the operations of its partner agencies and significantly, on the needs of its beneficiaries.

Figures released by the Citizens Advice Bureau in August 2013 showed that one quarter of parents are forced to borrow money to cover the cost of a new school uniform and that some food banks were distributing school uniforms to struggling parents[5].

Income inequality increased by more in the first three years of the economic crisis (2008-2010) than in the previous 12 years, before factoring in the effect of taxes and benefits[6].

Localisation of Social Fund

Whilst localisation of the Social Fund is a relatively small part of the overall welfare reform package, the initial effect on Glasspool was an almost immediate rise in the number of applications received[7]. With Glasspool's target beneficiary base being so broad and its resources limited, it has always been at pains to ensure it does not become a replacement for statutory funding.

Interpretation of need

The poverty spectrum is vast: is Glasspool in the business of 'helping people break out of the poverty cycle' or is it solely about helping people who have subsistence needs? The Trust speaks of helping those with subsistence needs but does not explicitly define the term. Determining what is adequate is subjective in the same way as determining what 'minimum requirements' are.

Internal operations

- Some of the concerns Trustees have expressed are related to cost and complexity: how much assessment is appropriate relative to the cost of gathering evidence?

- Operating at arms-length raises the challenge of how Glasspool can attribute change in the beneficiary's circumstances to its activities alone, since a grant from Glasspool is typically one part of a package of support the agency provides to its client.

- There is a risk of assuming causal links between Glasspool's activities and beneficiary outcomes, whether or not the intended benefits are congruent or are perceived to be of the same value as the recipient's. For instance, the savings made from no longer having to use a laundrette, due to Glasspool granting a washing machine, may not be used to pay off debt, but instead may be used to secure further credit.

- Trustees and staff may become overly focused on bureaucracy at the expense of addressing the needs of its beneficiaries.

- A further risk is that the system is implemented but the outcomes produced are not what the organisation anticipated and/or it steers the organisation away from fulfilment of its mission.

Suggestions for managing both the challenges and risks are covered in the final 'Recommendations' section of the report.

1.2 BENEFITS

Directs mission

Whilst Glasspool is making a laudable contribution to alleviating need, its efforts are complicated by an imperfect landscape characterised by geographic diversification, grant decisions dependent on quality of applications, and the efficacy of the referral agencies themselves. Impact assessment is intended to enable Glasspool to identify and focus on the activities that contribute most to achieving its mission.

Clear narrative

Impact assessment addresses the perennial question of *'why we are here?'*. The design of an impact assessment framework is intended to provide a clear narrative of the work of the Trust, provide evidence of effectiveness and enhance its grantmaking practice.

> **In 2012, a survey of 1,000 charities across the UK with an income over £10,000 found that 88 percent of those with an income over £1 million believe that measuring impact makes an organisation more effective and that 80 percent invest more effort into impact measurement than they did five years ago. As a result, three quarters of charities say they measure impact for some or all of their work[8].**

Meets public benefit test

An additional advantage to impact assessment is that it provides evidence of how Glasspool has considered and can meet the Public Benefit[9] requirement, which is mandatory for all charities.

Improves services

Whilst Glasspool may be unable to influence the tide of demand, impact assessment ought to provide a robust means of ensuring that those applications it does receive have a greater chance of being approved. According to NPC (2012), one of the most important benefits of impact assessment is the way in which it stimulates improvements to services.

Maximises resources

Unlike most organisations that adopt impact measurement in response to external pressures driven by demands from funders to prove their value for money, Glasspool is driven by a desire to allocate finite resources more effectively, improve its internal processes and inform strategy.

PART 2: FINDINGS

The methodology used in the research findings draws on the following sources: a survey of referral agencies, a review of theory and practice[10], and an audit of a sample of applications.

2.1 SURVEY

The Trust's first survey of its referral agencies was carried out in July 2013. It marked a significant first step of enquiry to test assumptions about perceived impact and the response to need.

The online survey had a healthy response rate[11], over 36 percent of Glasspool's referral agencies (790 of the 2200 referral agencies[12]) responded. Significantly, this represents 98 percent of Glasspool's top 100 agencies by number of applications received.

The following headings summarise the key findings under the question categories from the survey.

Organisation Type

The majority of Glasspool's referral agencies are composed of organisations that deliver *Charitable Support* indicated by 27 percent of respondents. The second largest organisation type at 24 percent is *Housing Association*. The majority of support provided by all organisation categories is in the area of Tenancy Support at 49 percent.

Relationship

An overwhelming majority of referral agencies (97 percent) provide "ongoing support", and 45 percent spend over 5 hours with each client, with 32 percent spending greater than 15 hours. These levels of support would indicate the quality of the relationship between the agency and the beneficiary, and present an opportunity for further data capturing.

Difference referral agencies make

From the referral agencies' perspective, 87 percent indicated that the difference its own support makes is, it "maintains the independence of their client". These findings provide a useful stepping-stone to identifying what it is that determines a given outcome and what are the indicators.

Application Process

According to the Trust's Annual Report 2012-13, 88 percent of Glasspool's applications are received electronically. In the survey, only 5 percent indicated that applying to the Trust was "hard", with just over half rating the process as "easy". The section on the application form rated 'most difficult' to complete is "financial Information" followed by "statutory assistance".

> "R L Glasspool has made a huge difference in the lives of the families. It has also helped me as a practitioner to gain further trust and better engagement with the families to work with me to turn around the issues in their lives and work steadily towards a positive outcome."
>
> Support worker, Social Services

> "Your grant made a huge difference to my client, he was not able to fund a fridge/freezer and unable to get out of the house due to his ill health so was not taking good care of himself. The fridge/freezer meant that he was able to budget his money better by shopping more efficiently and was able to store food for longer so that when he was not able to get out he had food in the house."
>
> Support worker, Advice Agency

> "Your charity has helped so many of our customers who would not have been able to buy essential items. The white goods have helped our customers to maximise their income instead of using laundrettes and buying ready meals, so that important things like there rent get paid."
>
> Support worker, Housing Association

Working together

Remarkably, 73 percent indicated that they would be prepared to assist Glasspool with impact assessment in one or more of the following ways: by "providing more information", "getting involved in pilot studies", and "sharing case studies".
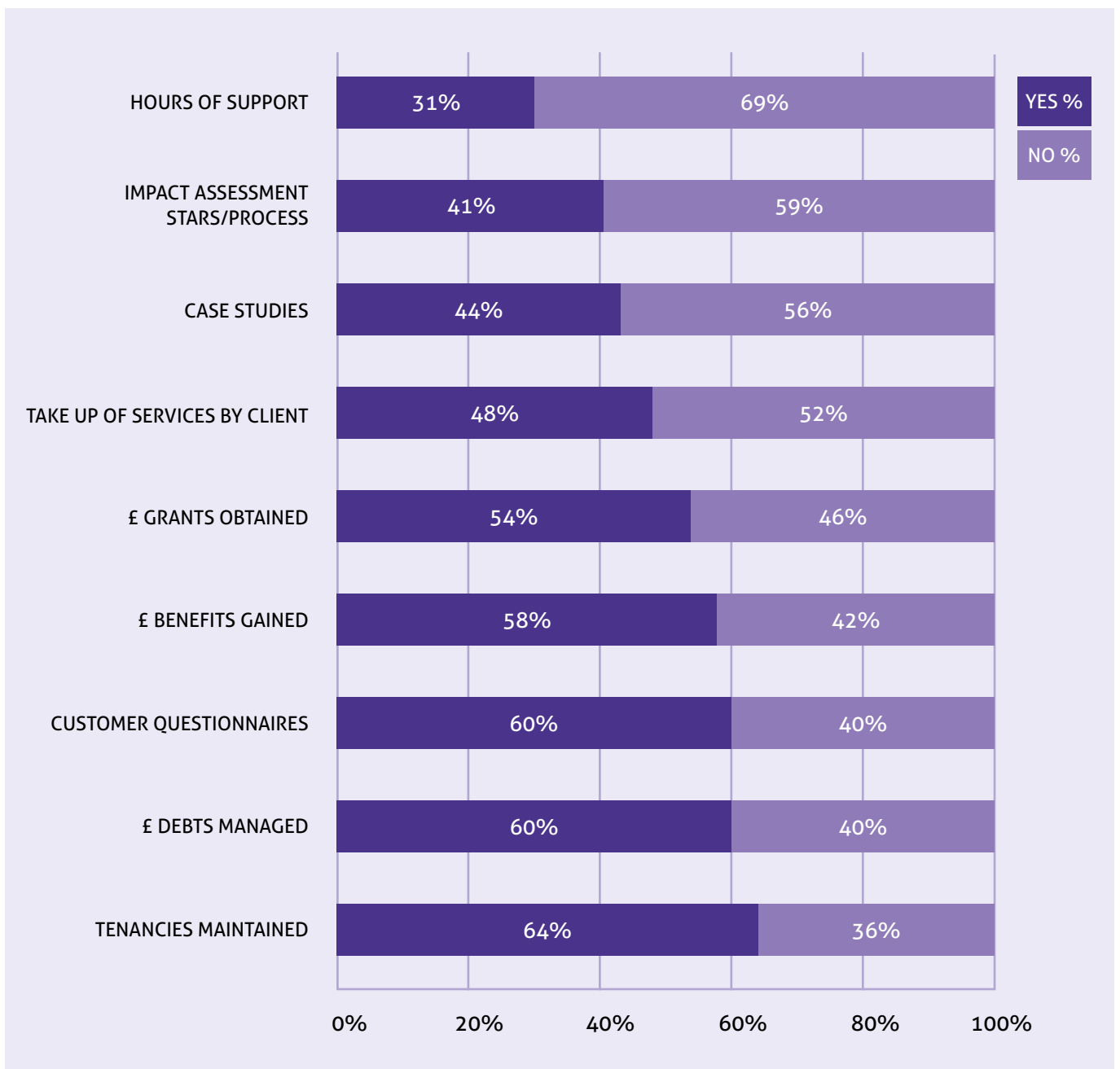
Measurement

According to the survey results, most agencies already review the impact of their work using a mix of quantitative and qualitative measures. However, what is unknown is the basis of their chosen measurement or indeed the efficacy of those measures. 64 percent of respondents measured their success by number of "tenancies maintained".

"A family being awarded a grant however small can make a massive difference to their lives. After receiving an award towards bedding, the look on the children's faces when they received new, clean bedding was amazing, something which so many people take for granted."

Support worker, Children/Family Support

SURVEY QUESTION: HOW DO YOU MEASURE YOUR SUCCESS IN ASSISTING CLIENTS?

| Measure	YES %	NO %
HOURS OF SUPPORT	31%	69%
IMPACT ASSESSMENT STARS/PROCESS	41%	59%
CASE STUDIES	44%	56%
TAKE UP OF SERVICES BY CLIENT	48%	52%
£ GRANTS OBTAINED	54%	46%
£ BENEFITS GAINED	58%	42%
CUSTOMER QUESTIONNAIRES	60%	40%
£ DEBTS MANAGED	60%	40%
TENANCIES MAINTAINED	64%	36%

Difference Glasspool grants make

The majority indicated that "maintaining a stable life / preventing hardship" made the 'most difference'. The responses to this question reveal much about what Glasspool grants mean to the agencies who apply for grants on behalf of their clients. It also marks the starting point in identifying what impact Glasspool makes in the eyes of the referral agency and serves as a useful basis for further exploration.

Analysis of the same responses but according to organisation category is revealing. The *Probation/Prisoner Support* category receives the most grants for training and of all the listed outcomes; Glasspool grants, for that category, make the 'most difference' to "better employment chances" for prisoners. Yet, there is a dearth of information to indicate how it achieves this and is therefore difficult for Glasspool to assess the validity of continuing support in this area.

SURVEY QUESTION: WHAT DIFFERENCE DO YOU THINK THAT R L GLASSPOOL GRANTS MAKE TO YOUR CLIENTS? (Scale 1 'Least difference' to 5 'Most difference')
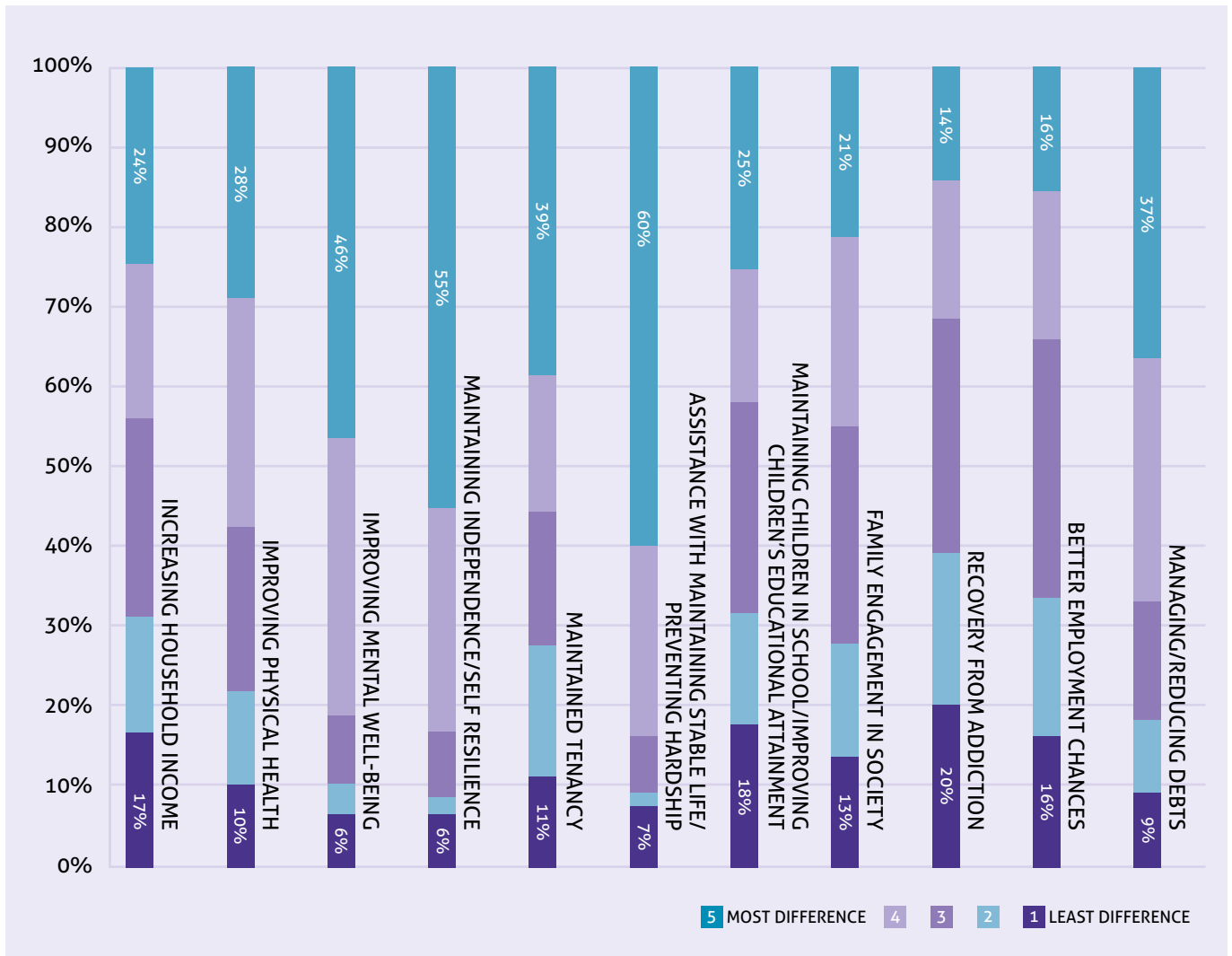
Communication

Almost three-quarters of respondents hear about Glasspool from within their organisation or their colleagues. Only 9 percent hear about Glasspool from other agencies. One could interpret this as a reason for the pool of applications tending to come from the same sources and same geographical areas. This raises questions for the Board on equality of access and whether it wants to extend the pool to more accurately reflect national poverty indices by less well-represented areas and those in most need. Equally there may be "better" agencies with better access to individuals in greater need that are already advanced in impact assessment.

2.2 AUDIT

The second part of the research entailed carrying out an audit of a small sample of applications over a 12-month period (March 2012 – April 2013), in order to identify what, if any, expected outcomes could be deduced from the applications.

Process

Glasspool's application process relies on applications made by the support worker from an approved referral agency. Typically the support worker creates a case plan with their client (individual in need) then submits an application to Glasspool, which is then reviewed. If positive, the grant is approved, an order is placed or a cheque is sent to the referral agency for the beneficiary.

Outcomes elicitation

The eliciting of outcomes from the reviewed sample of applications was a challenge, as the application does not request information on expected outcomes. Moreover, the framing of the questions in the existing application form tends to invoke an over-concentration on demonstrating the hardship circumstances of the client with little emphasis given to the intended impact, let alone expected outcomes.

> **Research shows that one in six low-income households lack a freezer or a washing machine. (Low income is defined as less than median income after housing costs.) Basic benefits only provide around 60 percent of the income that families with children need for a minimum acceptable standard of living[13].**

Applicants' circumstances

From the audit, it is clear that many of the applicants' circumstances are characterised not only by low income, but also other hardship such as mental health issues and domestic abuse. For example, agency support workers often made reference to the lack of a family support network, which in most cases enhanced the hardship experienced for the individual, both materially and socially. The link between ill health and poverty is well established, limiting life chances and the ability for individuals to take part in wider community life[14].

Value of time

For those with subsistence needs, not possessing basic domestic items results in certain tasks taking more time and costing more money. The provision of a washing machine saves time from having to hand-wash clothes if a launderette is too costly or is not available. The time saved opens up a series of choices to the individual as to how to spend the time gained by for example, helping children with their homework or searching for a job. The money saved can be put toward paying off a debt or put aside for household budgeting.

Debt

Debt also featured heavily with 66 percent of the total sample having average debts of £2,500.

Household beneficiaries

Of the 120 grant recipients, 114 (95 percent) are single parent or person households. The application form asks for information on the number of members of the household however, its reporting focuses on recording just the number of applicants. Yet, the provision of a washing machine, cooker or fridge freezer benefits not just the applicant but also the other members of the household, namely the partners and children.

Referrals

Information on referrals is evident from the question on the application form 'Other support sought'. Referrals and potential referrals to Occupational Benevolent Funds make up about 12 percent indicating the small numbers who are in or have been in employment or rather, have disclosed details of past employment longer than two years. Whilst the application form does provide details of Turn2us[15], Glasspool currently does not investigate whether they were followed up and what the outcome was.

Turnaround time

Glasspool's turnaround time for a grant decision would appear to be quicker than that of most of its peers; this is corroborated by comments made in the online survey. However, Glasspool's efforts may be in vain if delays are being incurred further down the delivery chain. There is no data available on the opportunity cost of support arriving too late, where the applicant's situation has deteriorated so considerably that it hits another level of deprivation and thereby incurs further (and more costly) State support.

2.3 BASELINE

One of the most important aspects to be considered when designing a measurement framework is to establish a baseline assessment[16]. Data drawn from the survey, the audit sample (including internal management reports) each contribute to formation of the baseline.

The baseline date for Glasspool has been set at 1 April 2013. Some of the key figures that form part of that baseline include the following:

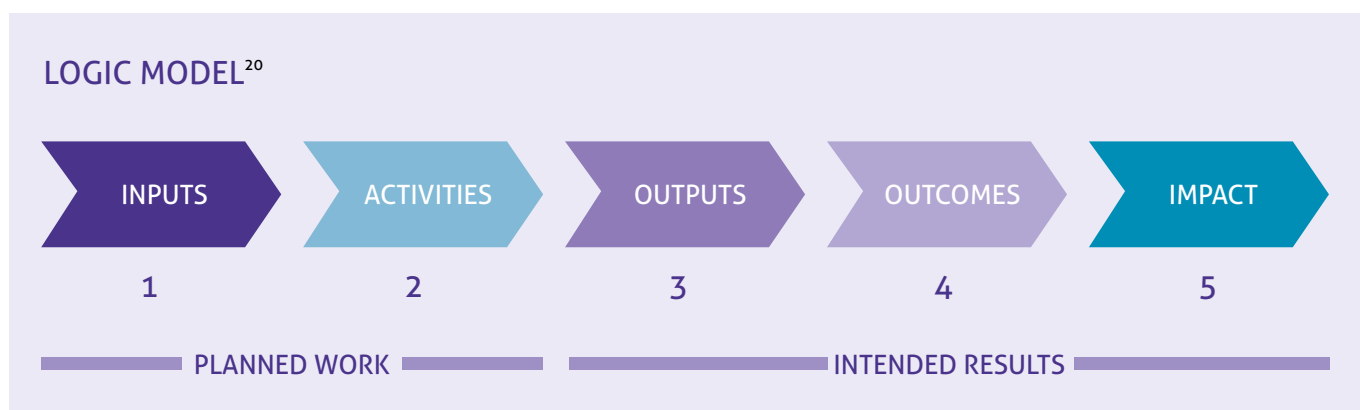| ANNUAL REPORT 2012-13	SAMPLE APPLICATIONS AUDIT	SURVEY RESULTS
Value of grants awarded £1,073,650	Approximately 18% of cases there were clear objective outcomes	60% say that Glasspool grants make the "most difference" to 'maintaining a stable life'
4,466 individual grant applicants were assisted representing 8,692 beneficiaries and 3,647 children, when other household members are included	Average amount of additional funding received from other sources £16	55% indicate that Glasspool grants make the "most difference" to 'maintaining independence'
15% of grant applicants suffer from mental health issues 14% require post-domestic violence support	22% showed support sought from other funders	37% indicate that Glasspool grants make the "most difference" to 'managing debts'
87% of grant applicants on subsistence benefits	Average amount of debt £2,537	24% say that Glasspool grants make the "most difference" to increasing household income'
Grant applications approval rate 62%	65% of clients in debt	51% rate applying to Glasspool as "easy"
Median time from application receipt to grant receipt 23 days	Average weekly debt repayment £18.90	28% rate the service and delivery of household goods as "excellent"

PART 3: RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are the author's suggestions on how Glasspool can address the issues raised in the body of this report and embed impact measurement within the organisation's fabric.

3.1 DEVELOP A MEASUREMENT FRAMEWORK

Having described the environment in which Glasspool operates within and the challenges it faces, efforts to measure impact must be tailored and adapted toward optimum management of these constraints. The principle underpinning the author's recommendation of the following three models is their ability to complement the scope of the Trust's work given the resources available:

(I) Logic Model[17] (II) Theory of Change[18] (III) Social Return on Investment (SROI)[19]

LOGIC MODEL[20]

INPUTS	ACTIVITIES	OUTPUTS	OUTCOMES	IMPACT
1	2	3	4	5

PLANNED WORK   INTENDED RESULTS

The Logic model, along with Theory of Change and SROI are proven to be highly effective in supporting clarity of purpose and in highlighting how change can occur. The three models build upon each other and require an incremental addition of time and resources with SROI being the most costly and complex. For now, Glasspool is focusing on Logic Model and Theory of Change.

Theory of Change involves challenging the underlying assumptions and the reason for selecting certain intervention (activities) as well as identifying outputs and outcomes. It is this allowance for critique and in depth analysis that distinguishes it from Logic Model.

The impact assessment methods mentioned above face three important challenges:[21]

- Deadweight: the outcome that would have happened anyway
- Alternative attribution: the outcomes that arose as a result of other interventions
- Displacement: the negative consequences of the outcomes

Whilst there is no one correct model, what matters most is that the organisation engages authentically with the selected model and at the end is in a position to convincingly tell a story of how resources are used to impact change[22].

3.2 CREATE A TAXONOMY OF OUTCOMES TO AID DEVELOPMENT OF LOGIC MODEL

A taxonomy of outcomes is a framework that provides guidance and context to measuring change[23].

- The development and refinement of the taxonomy (see Appendix 1) will continue to be a dynamic process as further information becomes apparent. Further work is required to unlock the apportionment of outcomes related to Glasspool grants and align these with existing reporting structures within Glasspool's grant assessment process.

- A successful grant application can do much to cement the relationship in the eye of the grant recipient and build trust. The success of the outcomes listed is greatly determined by the efficacy, motivation and competency of the individual grant recipient, the caseworker and the relationship between them. For example, an individual who receives a cooker has a choice on whether to use it to cook healthy meals for the family or not use it at all.

3.3 IMPROVE DATA CAPTURING

a) Mixed methodology

- Employ a mix of quantitative statistical methods, qualitative methods and participatory approaches i.e. where referral agencies and their beneficiaries are involved in the research, learning and decision-making processes.

The choice of these particular methodologies present a number of challenges:

- The need for and reliance on stakeholder involvement, that is both suitable and appropriate, in defining the scope of impact assessment and in articulating the right questions and ensuring 'fit for purpose'.

- A clear understanding by all those involved of the practicalities and limitations, and agreement on identifying realistic outcomes and suitable indicators.

- The importance of demonstrating transparency (a core Glasspool value).

- The ability to make reliable inference from Glasspool's contribution and the reliability of the information itself.

- A recognition of the budget limitations and the human capital skills required without imposing unnecessary work or pressure on already stretched referral agencies.

b) New application form

- Amend the grant application form to one that is outcomes-focused. For example, an outcomes-focused application form would ask; "Will this grant help with the client's debt?" A tick 'yes' will be followed by a question asking if there is a debt management plan in place. Positive confirmation of this will form the basis upon which Glasspool can attribute impact, but, only if it is evident that a debt management plan is in place.

- Ensure the formulation of questions is carefully constructed in order not to compromise the accuracy of the application and the indicators for measurement.

- The support worker as opposed to the grant officer should choose the 'need category' that most accurately represents the client's situation.

c) Pilot studies

- Run pilot studies to test each of the outcomes and to determine an output framework that underpins the assumptions made regarding the expected outcomes reported.

- Select organisations that are in receipt of the largest grants from Glasspool as they are more likely to want to engage with providing the necessary data for impact assessment and may well have their own impact assessment framework.

- The adoption by referral agencies of Outcomes Star[24] as a qualitative measure of change may serve as a useful determinant in deciding which agencies to work with.

d) Interviews of Referral Agencies

- Conduct interviews with a smaller sample of respondents to extract further information from the survey and test the framework for the pilot studies.

e) Co-funding opportunities

- Align grant support strategically and more effectively by seeking opportunities for co-funding with other organisations in instances where the support worker has identified on the application form other sources of support that is being sought.

- Ensure there are pre-agreed partner arrangements with clear parameters for claiming joint impact, so that outcomes and impact can be clearly attributed.

f) New grants management system

A new grants management system is necessary in order to:

- Capture and report on both quantitative and qualitative data that can reflect prioritised outcomes and relevant indicators.

- Incorporate monitoring and evaluation as a key learning tool.

- Capture a more detailed picture of the beneficiaries and the work of the support worker.

- Ease the burden on staff in making decisions and recording data.

3.4 DEVELOP A DETAILED ASSESSMENT OF NEED

- Understand where and why Glasspool intervenes on the poverty spectrum, and how the number of beneficiaries it has helped compare with the total number of people in poverty in the UK.

- One option would be to use the income and expenditure figures to calculate debt as a percentage of individual expenditure for use as an objective assessment tool to determine need. These calculations could then be used to conduct a time series analysis with the pilot studies monitoring changes over time.

- Further work needs to be done on understanding the features and focus of each of the agency organisation categories (as shown in the online survey), for example, *Housing Support* and the outcomes pertinent to each. Inevitably, impact assessment will begin to reveal themes around the types of people it supports and the prioritisation of subsistence needs relevant to each category, which Glasspool can then use to tailor its support.

3.5 UNDERSTAND AND STRENGTHEN THE RESPONSE TO NEED

- Develop further understanding on the make-up of each of the targeted beneficiary groups and their needs. For instance, consideration should be given to extending the pool of beneficiaries to more accurately reflect national poverty indices with less well-represented areas.

- Consider the possibility of monitoring grant levels with geographical areas based on Indices of Deprivation (ID)[25]. On this basis it would allow Glasspool to overlay poverty ratios against its grant levels per capita thereby increasing equity and fairness, one of the Trust's values.

3.6 CONSIDER THE TIMING OF INTERVENTION

- Identify ways Glasspool can improve support delivery lead times and overall service by for instance, obtaining detailed feedback on its suppliers of household goods.

According to ESRC research[26], **"While official statistics indicate that around 18 to 20 percent of people in the UK live in poverty, (that is they live in a household with an income below 60 percent of the national average), BHPS (British Household Panel Survey) data show, that over a four year period, about one third of people are touched by poverty". The term "subsistence poverty" (also known as absolute poverty) 'is an idea of poverty derived from the minimum requirements for subsistence: what a person must have to live and to make a living'**[27].

3.7 ENGAGE WITH STAKEHOLDERS

- Impact assessment impinges on the very culture of the organisation therefore it is important to include staff in its development and discuss priorities, concerns, benefits and challenges from the perspective of those that will be affected.

- Create a 'holding environment', a safe environment that encourages rapport and the exchange of ideas and feedback[28].

- Consideration needs to be given as to how best respond to referral agencies that do not provide outcomes data and how to encourage good practice more widely.

- Look beyond direct beneficiaries and consider all stakeholders who stand to benefit or indeed lose from the project and how it may shape their contribution.

- Avoid unnecessary duplication of efforts and resources by developing closer working ties with referral agencies to establish what data already exists and what is currently being collected/measured and then build upon this.

3.8 MANAGE MEASUREMENT

- The assessment of impact can vary in scale and complexity but it needs to be 'fit for purpose' and be proportionate to the organisation's size, budget and overall needs.

- Bolster the credibility of internal research findings by triangulating data with third party research. For example, in the past year, Glasspool provided 'white goods' to 3,301 individuals in need. The Trust could consider these figures relative to the number of houses provided by local authorities and the number of houses without a basic level of furnishing.

- With care and consistency, attach a weighting to each of the qualitative outcome indicators.

- Recognise and include the beneficial impact on the support worker whose application on behalf of its client has been successful. This can lead to better rapport and increase the perceived efficacy of the support worker in the eyes of the beneficiary and the overall support package.

3.9 EXPLORE EFFECTS ON SOCIAL POLICY

- Expand the Taxonomy of Outcomes to include policy work as part of its measurement framework to inform and influence the shaping of future social policy.

3.10 BUILD COMMUNICATION

- Adopt the Principles of Good Impact Reporting[29] in order to communicate impact in a way that helps Glasspool focus on what is most important.

- Build a case study bank as part of Glasspool's ongoing qualitative data gathering to form part of the communication narrative.

- Enhance Glasspool's website as a valuable communications platform.

- Forge strong relationships with key agencies to understand their working practices with a view to building a 'partnership' model, where data is shared and exchanged, and best practice is encouraged.

3.11 INCORPORATE LEARNING INTERNALLY AND EXTERNALLY

- Since one of the Trust's core values is transparency, it should be willing to share not only successes, but also lessons learned in order to enhance the learning of others.

- Provide reasons to the agency why a grant application has been unsuccessful.

3.12 MANAGE RISK

- Establishing a Board sub-committee to provide oversight and ensure the time and effort employed is producing results, which are congruent with Glasspool's overall mission, thereby avoiding 'mission drift'.

- Employing a mixed approach to measurement should address the inherent risk of relying on any one particular method of assessment.

- To avoid the risk of excessive bureaucracy, communicate a clear framework to all involved and facilitate opportunities for feedback.

- Allow the time to really understand the implications of the changes brought about by impact measurement and incorporate the learning from these efforts. In phasing the introduction of impact assessment over three years, Glasspool has already taken a step toward mitigating such risks.

CONCLUSION

Impact assessment is integral to Glasspool's growth as a charity, as it transitions on its Life Cycle from 'maturity' to 'renewal'[30] from being a reactive funder to a more strategic and responsive one, yet cognisant of the growing challenges facing those in poverty. The assessment of Glasspool's impact will ideally strike a balance between qualitative and quantitative evidence supported by external research to enhance its robustness.

Impact assessment is not a one-off exercise; rather, it represents a cycle of continuous improvement that informs every aspect of the organisation from strategy to service delivery. Having a focus on impact does not mean getting it right first time or all of the time. The information gathered will reveal both the positive and negative, what is and isn't working, thus providing a valuable learning opportunity to modify and improve services. It will show not only the successes but also the learning, where for instance, some desired outcomes may turn out to be unrealistic, indicators inaccurate or targets missed.

This is a three-year journey that will undoubtedly experience ups and downs. However, it allows Glasspool to draw closer to meeting the needs of those who need help the most. Importantly, it will enable Glasspool to realise its vision through exploring new and alternative ways to yield substantial and targeted results for its beneficiaries all the while staying true to what inspired the Trust's founder Robert Louveteau Glasspool.

APPENDIX 1: TAXONOMY OF OUTCOMES

SURVEY RANKING	OUTCOME	INDICATORS			DATA COLLECTION SOURCE
1	Maintain stable life/prevent hardship	Progress against case plan objectives	Avoidance of further risk of harm to person/family's well-being caused by for e.g. financial distress	Better financial management Reduction in external factors that may destabilize family e.g. debt Improved well-being	Application and case plan Outcomes Star Pilot studies, questionnaire, case studies Research publications
2	Maintain independence	Progress against case plan objectives	Engagement with other services	Ability to satisfactorily maintain self/family for e.g. use of adaptations/mobility aids to increase mobility, self-determination and independence Less reliance on support services and others	Application and case plan Outcomes Star Pilot studies, questionnaire, case studies Research publications
3	Improve mental well-being	Number of individuals indicating improved attitudes/confidence towards changing their behaviour	Engagement with other services	Engagement with wider society Less reliance on acute support services Improved feelings reported by client Reduced medication/clinical support	Application and case plan Outcomes Star Pilot studies, questionnaire, case studies Research publications
4	Maintain tenancy	Security of tenancy Number of evictions	Sustained tenancy: Number and percentage of clients who are in their tenancies after 6 months of support	Ability to create a 'home' and sense of security	Application and case plan Tenant records Pilot studies, questionnaire, case studies Research publications
5	Manage debts	Weekly and overall reduction in debt	Total sum of client debts being 'better managed'	Number of debt repayments made Additional debt repayments made Ability to manage priority debts and budget successfully	Application and case plan Debt management plan and programme Pilot studies, questionnaire, case studies
6	Improved physical health	Reduction in the negative effects of physical illness/disability	Number and percentage of clients reporting feelings of increased health before the grant and periodic intervals thereafter	Occupational Therapist' assessment score Ability of client to undertake additional activities	Application form and case plan Outcome Stars Pilot data from agencies Health professional's assessment
7	Maintain children in school / Improve children's educational achievement	School attendance records	Number and percent of those who receive a secondary school qualification Support at home / time for homework	Attendance record pre & post support Educational achievement pre & post Engagement and behaviour in other school activity	Application and case plan Program records Pilot studies, questionnaire, case studies Research publications
8	Increased household income	Attributable savings to income e.g. washing machine grant saves on laundrette costs Research on savings made by low-income households from using white goods	Work undertaken by support worker to maximize income e.g. benefit check Additional financial support e.g. budgeting	Increase in savings/disposable income Additional funded support.	Application form and Case Plan Research publications Discussion and agreements with other grant givers to identify shared clients. Pilot studies, questionnaire, case studies
9	Family engagement in society	Take-up of additional activity/services	Engagement with wider community life e.g. voluntary activity, after-school activity	Level of social activity Levels of well-being, improved family relationships	Application and case plan Outcomes Star Pilot studies, questionnaire, case studies
10	Better employment chances	Number and percentage who obtain a job within a certain period	Level of qualification obtained / skills levels Employment retention	Increased employment mobility Higher paid employment Less reliance on state funding	Application and case plan Follow-up survey Research publications
11	Recovery from addiction	Engagement with rehabilitation services	Length of time in recovery from substances abuse Levels of well-being, family/social relationships	Baseline of user engagement with recovery services Additional activity undertaken Engagement with other services e.g. employment services	Application and case plan Outcome Star Research publications

ENDNOTES

1. In certain circumstances Glasspool provides financial contributions towards equipment and adaptations for people with disabilities, vocational training course fees (mainly for prisoners) and travel expenses.

2. R L Glasspool Charity Trust *Annual Report 2012-13*

3. Kirkpatrick, C. and Hulme, D. (2001) *Impact Assessment: An Overview*. EDIAIS website, IDPM, University of Manchester, UK http://www.sed.manchester.ac.uk/research/iarc/ediais/FAQs/#whatis

4. Ní Ógáin, E., Lumley, T. and Pritchard, D. (2012) *Making an Impact: Impact Measurement Among Charities and Social Enterprises in the UK.* New Philanthropy Capital http://www.thinknpc.org/publications/making-an-impact/

5. Citizens Advice, Online Press Release (August 2013) *Citizens Advice reveals new figures on the school-cost-squeeze.* http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/index/pressoffice/press_index/press_office-newpage-2.htm

6. OECD (2013) *Crisis squeezes income and puts pressure on inequality and poverty - New Results from the OECD Income Distribution Database* http://www.oecd.org/els/soc/OECD2013-Inequality-and-Poverty-8p.pdf

7. By July 2013, applications had increased by almost 20 percent since the previous July.

8. Ní Ógáin, E., Lumley, T. and Pritchard, D. (2012) *Making an Impact: Impact Measurement Among Charities and Social Enterprises in the UK.* New Philanthropy Capital http://www.thinknpc.org/publications/making-an-impact/

9. Charity Commission (September 2013) *Public benefit: the public benefit requirement.* http://www.charitycommission.gov.uk/media/535059/pb1_the_public_benefit_requirement.pdf

10. The full report gives examples of approaches to impact measurement by other organisations but for space constraints has been omitted from this report.

11. Research suggests that average response rates to online surveys range from 10 percent to 30 percent. Wadia, A., Parkinson, D. (2010) *How to design and use free online surveys to collect feedback on your services,* M & E Consulting http://www.monitoringandevaluation.org.uk/How_to_design_and_use_free_online_surveys.pdf

12. As of 20th August 2013

13. Buttle UK, *Annual Review 2011/12* (2012:4) http://www.buttleuk.org/data/__resources/585/Buttle-AR.pdf

14. Salway, S., Platt, L., Chowbey, P., Harriss, K., and Bayliss, E. (April 2007) *Long-term ill health, poverty and ethnicity*, Joseph Rowntree Foundation http://www.jrf.org.uk/publications/long-term-ill-health-poverty-and-ethnicity

15. Turn2us is a UK-based non-profit service that helps people in financial need access the money available to them - through welfare benefits, grants and other financial help. www.turn2us.org.uk

16. The baseline is the starting point; it's a point of reference for measuring and comparing change.

17. W.K. Kellogg Foundation (2006) *Logic Model Development Guide Using Logic Models to Bring Together Planning, Evaluation, and Action* http://www.wkkf.org/resource-directory/resource/2006/02/wk-kellogg-foundation-logic-model-development-guide

18. Information on use and application of Theory of Change: Center for Theory of Change http://www.theoryofchange.org/library/publications/#4

19. SROI is a quantitative measurement of how effectively an organisation uses its capital and other resources to generate value. Outcomes are valued by using financial proxies for example, £3 of social value created for every £1 spent on its activities. A detailed step-by-step guide can be found in, *A Guide to Social Return on Investment*, The SROI Network (2012) http://www.thesroinetwork.org/publications/cat_view/29-the-sroi-guide/223-the-guide-in-english-2012-edition

20. Adapted from *W.K. Kellogg Foundation Evaluation Handbook*

21. Cass Business School City University London (2013), *Impact Assessment Tools for Success: doing the right things and doing them right* http://www.cass.city.ac.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0003/160518/11ImpactAssmt.pdf

22. Heady, L., Keen, S. (2010) *SROI for funders*, New Philanthropy Capital http://www.thinknpc.org/publications/sroi-for-funders/

23. Adapted from The Urban Institute and The Center for What Works (December 2006) *The Nonprofit Taxonomy of Outcomes: Creating a Common Language for the Sector* http://www.urban.org/center/met/projects/upload/taxonomy_of_outcomes.pdf

24. For further information and explanation of Outcomes Star see Triangle Consulting for the London Housing Foundation (2009) www.outcomesstar.org.uk

25. *English Indices of Deprivation* (2010) Department of Communities and Local Development http://data.gov.uk/dataset/index-of-multiple-deprivation

26. Economic & Social Research Council (ESRC), *7 Days of social science research* [*Wednesday's Child is full of woe]* (n.d.) http://www.esrc.ac.uk/_images/esrc_seven_days_tcm8-21806.pdf

27. Bruce, S., Yearley, S., (2006) *The SAGE Dictionary of Sociology*, SAGE Publications, http://www.sagepub.com/upm-data/21314_01_Bruce_A.pdf

28. Heifetz, R., Grashow, A., Linsky, M., (2003) *The Practice of Adaptive Leadership: Tools and Tactics for Changing Your Organization and the World*. Harvard Business Press, pp.155.

29. ACEVO et al. (2012), *Principles of Good Impact Reporting For Charities and Social Enterprises*' http://www.thinknpc.org/publications/the-principles-of-good-impact-reporting-2/

30. R L Glasspool Charity Trust (2013) *Development Strategy* Board of Trustees Presentation 19th July 2013