

## **Module 2: What is an impact narrative?**

*Transcript.*

*Language: English*

*Estimated reading time: 2:00*

A narrative is a proven method of conveying a message. Characteristically, a narrative explicitly addresses the connection between the various elements in a story. But what then is an impact narrative? An impact narrative paints a vivid and persistent picture of the process from the identification of a problem to the realization of lasting change through conscious action. It can be about a process that you think should take place in the future, is taking place now, or has already taken place in the past. To keep it simple, in this tool we talk about a process that is taking place now. However, you can also use the tool for processes that are yet to take place or have already taken place.

An impact narrative addresses a problem, the key people around the problem, the proposed solution to the problem, the change resulting from this solution, and evidence for this change. These are the key elements of the narrative. By sharing this narrative, you can show your efforts and their consequences. It also allows you to invite others to work with you on solving the problem. Moreover, you and others can learn from the narrative: how did it or did it not manage to solve the problem?

To share your efforts, and engage others, the narrative explores the connection between these elements. How does one contribute to the other, and under what circumstances can that happen? The emphasis here is on



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your role, without diminishing that of others, and the importance of continuing the effort you have already made. You show that you take responsibility and try to convince others that investing in solving the problem is important. For example, you can show a donor, grantmaker or client that you are spending their resources well.

You can use an impact-narrative at any stage of the process. From identifying a problem to realizing a change. It supports proposal development by painting a clear picture of the problem and the expected or previously observed results. It is also a tool for reflecting on the process when it is already underway but not yet completed. And after completion, the impact-narrative allows you to share the positive outcome of your efforts for society and draw lessons from the process to achieve that again, or better, in the future.

In conclusion, then, an impact narrative consists of five elements and the connection between them. Your role is central to the narrative, but you do not make the role of others smaller than it was. The goal is to continue the effort around solving a problem. You can use the narrative at the beginning of the effort, but also during or after.