2025



EVALUATION REPORT FOR 2023-24

routes to impact

Understanding the social value of employability and skills interventions in the Third Sector

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SOCIAL VALUE INTERNATIONAL

Statement of Report Assurance

Social Value International certifies that the report

Social Value Evaluation Report for 2023/2024
SROI Analysis of Routes To Work employability activities and interventions
Understanding the Social Value of employability and skills interventions in the third sector

satisfies the requirements of the assurance process with the below limitation:
Qualification: A limited number of stakeholders have been involved in defining outcomes. Consequently, there is a risk that material outcomes have been excluded. This should be considered when making anydecisions based on the report.
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Assurance here is against the Principles of SocialValue only and does not include verification of stakeholder engagement,reportdata and calculations.

Awarded 18/02/2025

Signed

Mr Ben Carpenter
Chief Executive Officer
Social Value International

ASSURED REPORT
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routestowork

INTRODUCTION



This Social Value evaluation report forms part of a wider Knowledge Transfer Partnership (KTP), between Routes to Work (RTW) and The University of the West of Scotland (UWS), in a 30-month project. A KTP is an Innovate UK (part of the UK Government Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy) funded project between an organisation and a University, utilising the skills of a recent graduate (KTP Associate) (UKRI, 2024).

In this project, which aimed to support RTW in management upskilling, a major focus was supporting RTW to measure the impact of employability activities in North Lanarkshire and beyond. Employability funding primarily focuses on hard outcomes e.g. client entering paid employment within a fixed timeframe, however, RTW was aware from their work with clients that there were also **intangible outcomes** that clients were achieving in their journey to work, which were not being recognised or measured in evaluations.

As such, RTW was keen to find a way **to capture client journeys in a more holistic way which puts what clients value at the centre and celebrates the soft outcomes achieved during their employability journey.**

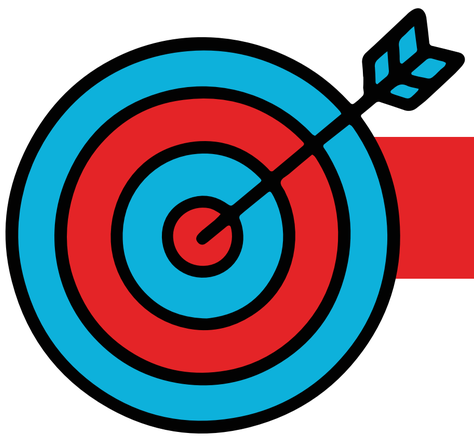
WHAT IS SOCIAL VALUE ANYWAY?

Social Value is about understanding the relative importance that people place on their wellbeing and using the insights we gain from this understanding to make decisions. To understand this value, we apply the Principles of Social Value (Social Value International, 2024).

1	INVOLVE STAKEHOLDERS
2	UNDERSTAND WHAT CHANGES
3	VALUE THE THINGS THAT MATTER
4	ONLY INCLUDE WHAT IS MATERIAL
5	DO NOT OVERCLAIM
6	BE TRANSPARENT
7	VERIFY THE RESULT
8	BE RESPONSIVE

SCOPE

The purpose of this evaluation report, is to demonstrate the impact RTW has on the individuals, the economy and wider society.



PURPOSE

- Improve the RTW service delivery model
- Understand and evidence the impact RTW has on the lives of its clients, staff, the public purse and local communities
- Express the value for money of RTW programmes
- Attract new clients to its services
- Attract further funding for new service delivery
- Communicate the benefits of Social Value evaluation to other employability and third sector organisations, as well as other Local Authorities and wider public sector service commissioners, with a view to further collaboration and consultancy
- Inform public policy within the employability landscape by evidencing the wide and ranging ‘tangible’ and ‘intangible’ impacts of employability and skills services



PROGRAMMES



SPF 31 (PLACE BASED)



SPF 35 (AGE 20+)



WORKING FOR FAMILIES



NO ONE LEFT BEHIND



TIMELINE

This evaluation is an analysis of activities undertaken between April 2023 and March 2024.

STAKEHOLDERS

These are the stakeholders that the evaluation decided were material and details are below on how they were consulted. As this was a full evaluation, building on a forecast evaluation, the quantitative and qualitative fieldwork undertaken for the forecast also informed this evaluation.

CLIENTS



The thought of being back out - earning money and paying taxes again. Yeah, for my mental health, it's absolutely positive. It really is positive.

Baseline survey with 89 clients

Follow up survey with 21 clients

5 semi-structured one to one interviews

STAFF



It's not about doing everything for them. I try to give them the tools and the skills in order to equip them because what happens when I'm not there... You do see that resilience build in clients.

6 semi-structured one to one interviews

PARTNERS



A significant minority of young people feel worse about themselves when they leave school than they did when they started, and we need to do something to help those young people. So that's a group of young people we get as well and often the things they need are the confidence building that RTW offers.

8 semi-structured one to one interviews

EMPLOYERS



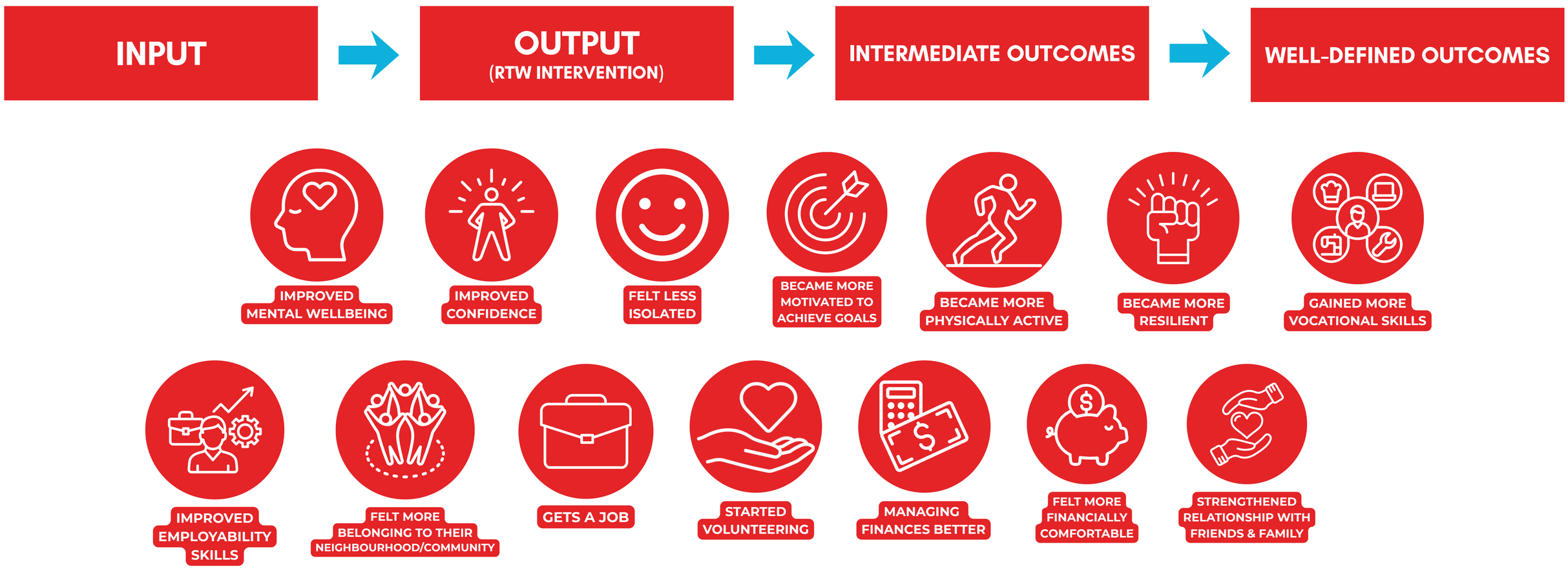
They are a bit more confident. I would definitely say a bit more kind of dedicated and they do want to work as well. Obviously, they're coming to RTW because they want to work. It's not like maybe a job centre that's just maybe tick a box off. So I'd definitely say they're a bit more reliable and that way as well, they're a bit better candidates. They'll show up for interviews as well. They make that more effort as well, which is amazing.

2 semi-structured one to one interviews

Provided with Fiscal Value

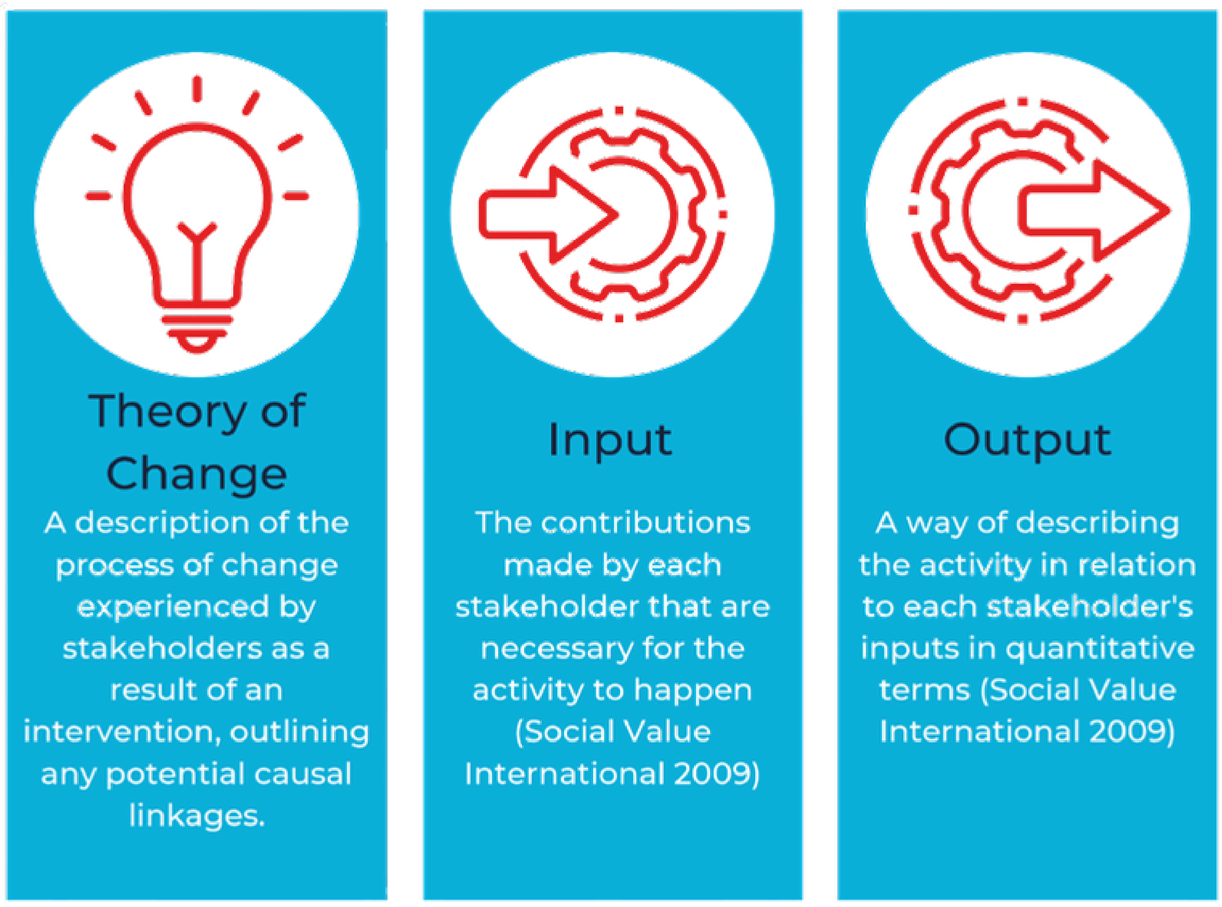
THEORY OF CHANGE

A Well-Defined outcome 'describes a specific change for someone (or groups of people) that provides the best opportunity to increase or decrease value' (Social Value International, 2024).



The Well-Defined outcomes for clients used in this evaluation were generated through the qualitative fieldwork undertaken for the forecast evaluation and then refined and tested through further qualitative fieldwork. There are 14 well defined outcomes, that RTW clients identified as the highest value to their employability journey which can be seen in the diagram above.

Developing a theory of change is an integral part of social value evaluation and SROI. This step maps outcomes to demonstrate causal relationships between inputs (e.g. financial investments, time, resources), outputs (e.g. quantification of activities/interventions), and outcomes (the change experienced by different stakeholder groups) (A Guide to Social Return on Investment 2009). Also referred to as chains of events or logic models, this section uses the conception of diagrams "that describe the wide range of changes that occur as a result of your activities by linking together outcomes that are probably causally related" (Standard for Applying Principle 2, Social Value International).



OUTCOMES

Below is the current tool that RTW use with clients to identify 6 areas, as you will see they are largely aligned with the well defined outcomes on the previous page.

SUPPORT NETWORK

Clients gain a trusted caseworker, are encouraged to meet new people and feel more connected to their family & friends

CONFIDENCE & MOTIVATION

Clients feel more confident in their abilities and motivated to achieve their goals

SKILLS

Clients improve their skills through training and work experience

WELLBEING

Clients get advice on improving their wellbeing and get funded opportunities to improve their wellbeing,



FINANCE

Service users feel more financially comfortable, with financial support & budgeting advice

HEALTH

Clients get out of the house more and get help accessing mental & physical health support services, helping them feel better mentally and physically

To identify the outcomes for clients, a range of engagement methods have been utilised. This includes qualitative interviews, focus groups, secondary qualitative analysis of open-ended client feedback and client management data on the barriers faced by these individuals (e.g. demographics).

As a result of qualitative analysis, the emergent outcomes match well with the current tool utilised to measure client progression and barriers (The Progression Tool). These outcomes fit under a taxonomy of the Progression Tool's five domains: health, wellbeing, support network, finance and skills. However, the importance of confidence and motivation have emerged in the results, therefore warranting their inclusion as an outcome domain. As a result, Routes To Work has now updated our Progression Tool to include this sixth domain due to its central significance in the experiences of clients during this evaluation, as well as renaming the Progression Tool to Routes To Change. The six domains and their associated outcomes are visualised above, reflecting the stories of clients. For a detailed qualitative analysis of client and staff feedback, please see the full Routes to Impact report.

This has also involved the creation of 'indicators' of change, or how to measure whether the outcome has occurred. This data comes from both pre-existing management data and baseline data from the Social Value survey sent to clients. The details of these indicators is also included in the full report.

VALUING OUTCOMES

As part of the SROI process, financial values are determined for each outcome to reflect the value to stakeholders. This is achieved through the application of financial proxies. For social value valuation, financial proxies do not represent a cash amount but rather a montary value to signify the relative importance for each group of stakeholders. Where stakeholders have been directly engaged, relative importance has been determined through conversations and questionnaires. These methods are detailed below.

1. WELLBEING VALUATION

Used for clients & RTW staff. This method utilises econometric analysis to determine the effect of non-market goods on wellbeing, and then the equivalent value in income (e.g. HACT Social Value Bank)

2. UNIT COSTS

Used for NHS, UK Government & employers. Based on secondary literature (e.g. NHS Unit Costs & the Manchester Units Cost Database)

3. ANCHORING

Used for some client outcomes not in the HACT Social Value Bank. Weights outcomes with others based on their relative importance to clients

IMPACT & CAUSALITY

To determine the impact of services, the value of all outcomes require discounting for causality, or reducing the overall value based on other factors that influence the outcomes of RTW services. This is a key step in social value evaluation, as it increases the credibility of reported impact and reduces the risk of over-claiming. As outlined by Social Value International (2009), causality refers to a number of variables that answer the following questions:

ATTRIBUTION

How much did other organisations or individuals contribute to the outcome

DEADWEIGHT

What would have happened anyway?

DISPLACEMENT

Did any outcomes displace any other outcomes or individuals

DURATION

How long will the outcomes last?

DROP OFF

Will the values of the outcomes lessen in future years?

I think it's it has to be a lifetime. That experience has to be a lifetime experience in terms of where they started and where potentially they could end up'

-RTW Partner

'I think that's immeasurable, isn't it really, the impact that has? Things like parents who then are becoming good role models for their children? So, it's not just about them, it's about the impact of generations to come. And I think you know that we talk a lot about generations that have never seen their parents work, so they sleep all day and they're up all night on the, you know, the Xbox or Netflix or music, whatever day turns into night, night turns into day. And even if that one person gets into work, that impacts the whole family'

-RTW Partner

The majority of clients reported that the changes to their lives from working with RTW would last around 6 months to 1 year. However, qualitative information collected, on the impact on a client's life, noted that some changes were lifetime changes such as qualifications. This long-term impact was supported by the views of RTW partners who felt that there was a lifetime impact from the interventions delivered by RTW.

As a result, the evaluation has remained conservative by applying discount percentages (see full report) to the social value of each outcome, assuming that there may still be some drop off (lessening of the value of outcomes over so many years) and some levels of deadweight (what would have happened anyway).

SROI CALCULATION



SROI ratios are expressed as a pound for pound return on investment. This means that for every pound (GBP) invested in RTW, some amount of pounds in social value are created. To determine the SROI ratio, the Total Present Value (PV) is divided by the financial investment, or input.

Based on the aforementioned information in this report, evaluation outcome achievements from baseline measurements and further details contained in the Value Map, the SROI for RTW services from April 2023 – March 2024 is be:

£1: £7.34

From calculations conducted during the sensitivity analysis, this can also be interpreted as a range: £1: £2.22 - £12.69.

As discussed in the Sensitivity Analysis section of the full report, this range demonstrates the variance possible due to the assumptions made during the evaluation process, contributing to the transparency of the reported social value of RTW services. This includes tests on the duration, financial proxies, quantities of outcomes and other variables.

CONCLUSION

Routes To Work provides an employability service in North Lanarkshire that **changes lives**; supporting people through individualised support to move into employment. As demonstrated in this report, this support has wider benefits to individuals, their families and communities, as well as to the wider economy.

RTW is a crucial employability support provider for North Lanarkshire residents. It is also, a visible and valued service for residents, communities, employers, other third sector and local government organisations as evidenced in the qualitative feedback collated for this evaluation.

RTW transforms the lives of many local residents facing inequalities, hardships and barriers to employment by providing holistic and targeted support. Not only does RTW help their clients into employment but also goes ‘above and beyond’, helping with softer skills such as health, wellbeing, support networks, finances, confidence and motivation. These softer skills have only recently been recognised by the Scottish Government (Employability Pipeline, 2024), demonstrating the innovative and pioneering service RTW provides.

WHAT MATTERS TO OUR CLIENTS

The **4 most important** outcomes for our clients are listed below. These demonstrate that while getting a job is important to them, there are other outcomes that are essential in their journey.



STRENGTHENING RELATIONSHIPS WITH FRIENDS & FAMILY



BECOMING MORE MOTIVATED TO ACHIEVE THEIR GOALS



FEELING LESS ISOLATED



GETTING A JOB

WHAT'S NEXT?



EMBEDDING SOCIAL VALUE AT ORGANISATIONAL LEVEL

RTW aspires to embed Social Value in their organisation and daily practice. Current plans include all-staff training on Social Value and the identification of Social Value Champions across the business. To undertake regular evaluations of Social Value, RTW should embed the regular collection of data from clients in programme delivery to improve engagement and to provide regular feedback data to help RTW understand the client journey and improve client support.

COLLECTING LONGTUDINAL DATA

For the purposes of this evaluation, RTW clients completed the Social Value survey twice, firstly post-registration and secondly after three months of engagement. Going forward, a longer period of engagement in RTW services should be considered for evaluation to fully capture the impact of services on the Well-Defined outcomes for clients and other stakeholders.

ENHANCING OUR SOCIAL VALUE PRACTICE

RTW delivers a range of employability programmes targeted at demographic sub-groups. Future evaluations should ensure that enough data is collected so that analysis can take place by sub-group so that RTW can consider the achievement of outcomes at sub-group level, helping them to gain a deeper understanding of the impact of different interventions with different groups.

In the forecast and this evaluation, HACT financial proxies have been used to value the impact of RTW interventions. The limitations of this are recognised in this report and RTW should consider whether more context specific proxies could be generated through working with clients, e.g., Values Game or whether there are better proxies for Scotland and/or employability interventions.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank all of the people and organisations who have made this social value evaluation and RTW services possible, including:

Our KTP team at UWS and RTW

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