CSnet

Know the difference you make

CSnet Impact Report

Our impact management, measurement and performance

2020



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Authors:
Mandy Doon, Executive Director
Tim Gleeson, Managing Director

Designer:
Kate Weir, kateweir.com

Who we are

A knowledge-based IT company working with human services for resilient communities

Community Services.net Pty Ltd was formed out of a desire to assist human services to use data to show they were making a difference, and to do better. We provide a cloud solution and practice support for client information services (CSnet®) to human service organisations. Our offices are currently in Brisbane and Melbourne in Australia and we support services in urban, regional, rural and remote locations across Australia and in the Asia Pacific.

Our impact and success is aligned with the organisations using CSnet®, the people and communities using human services, and funders that support the work done. We measure outcomes, report on contract requirements, and move data between partners and funding programs. We are part of an emerging human services information and technology ecosystem, supporting evidence-based practice, governance and cooperation.

The exponential growth in impact investing in Australia[1] presents an important opportunity for human services committed to demonstrating what they achieve. We are committed to assisting organisations explore this opportunity, so they become credible, investment-ready providers. There are numerous practice and technical issues to be considered in this process, and bridging the gap between intent and evidence-based achievement is challenging.

> **"Overwhelmingly, the top challenge to impact measurement relates to the need for standardised and comparable tools and frameworks. Other notable challenges include a lack of resources and integrating impact into standard business processes and financial decision-making."[2]**

Our role in this ecosystem is a new kind of 'intermediary'[3] – supporting capacity of human services to measure and manage their own impact using CSnet® – and to embed learning in the design and improvement of social programs.

For CSnet®, this is our first Impact Report, and the formative process has involved considerable learning. Our data is drawn from three key sources, namely –

- independent research findings by QUT to measure 'before and after' efficiency and effectiveness impacts from implementation of CSnet® in participating organisations
- de-identified aggregated CSnet® usage data – this includes client aggregations derived from queries run across all databases, with no identification of individual organisations[4]
- the B Impact Assessment report, undertaken as part of the re-certification of CSnet® as a B Corp in 2020.

> **The interests of organisations and investors, as well as those of the community, are aligned to accurate and transparent reporting on results**

The value and meaning of our Impact Reporting will deepen in future years. We look forward to contributing to the impact conversation and the emerging practice of measurement, analysis and understanding of social outcomes arising from human services.



The CSnet® team 2020 – Standing (L-R): Suzanne Kraschneski, Philippa Edgley, Grant Trevor, Anne Cunningham, Keerthan Kumar, Greg Brady, Dean Langton and Reece Williams. Seated (L-R): Bjorn Lyngwa, Tracey Acton, Tim Gleeson and Mandy Doon.

Our Values **Learning • Responsiveness • Sustainability • Collaboration • Integrity • Family • Dignity of Service**

Our Impact at a Glance

Everything we do has impacts on people and the planet – to understand our impact we use these five dimensions of performance based on the global Impact Management Project framework[5]

WHAT

What outcome has occurred, and how important was it to the people or the planet?

NEGATIVE EFFECT — POSITIVE EFFECT

In 2020, CSnet® contributed to the measurement of outcomes for people and communities, arising from the case management, group activities and community projects recorded by our human services partners. This work is vital to the strength and resilience of our communities.

WHO

Who experienced the outcome, and how under-served are they?

WELL-SERVED — UNDER-SERVED

People and communities with records of support in CSnet® are overwhelmingly under-served. Their needs arise from circumstances such as poverty, family violence & breakdown, harm to children, homelessness, discrimination, physical & mental health issues, disability, legal issues, natural disasters, and so on.
There were 801,000 instances of people records in CSnet® at end of 2020, an increase of 12% since the end of 2019.[6]

HOW MUCH

How much of the outcome occurred, across scale, depth and duration?

MARGINAL — DEEP EFFECT

Volume of work supported in 2020 (compared with 2019)[7] –

- 89,082 (+26%) new cases, groups, community support
- 1,171, 537 (+15%) sessions of support recorded
- 86,775 (+97%) measurement and surveys completed
- 302,764 (+45%) outcomes measured
- 162,590 (+26%) reports generated to analyse the data

CONTRIBUTION

What was the enterprise's contribution, accounting for what would have happened anyway?

LIKELY WORSE — LIKELY BETTER

QUT research measured 'before and after' impact of the implementation of CSnet®. "The findings show that the adoption of CSnet led to … increased efficiency, consistency in the client work and improved decision-making for effectiveness. This has implications for funding, accountability, and organisational learning."[8]
We don't have a data-driven approach to assessing what would have happened if an organisation had not implemented.

RISK

What is the risk to people and the planet that the impact doesn't occur as expected?

HIGH IMPACT RISK — LOW IMPACT RISK

Execution and participation risks identified by QUT – "… the specific skillset of the CSnet administrator, the organisation's technical infrastructure, stability of the organisation's environment, and internal policies of how an organisation collectively uses CSnet all have an effect on the efficacy of CSnet."[9]
To mitigate these risks, CSnet® engages in regular updates with key people, and supports iterative re-design to reflect organisational learning.

Evidence of our Impact

Queensland University of Technology (QUT) conducted independent research to measure the 'before and after' impact of the implementation of CSnet®[10]

The research method compared the time between initial implementation of CSnet® with a time when the system was more established within the organisation... "as a form of natural experiment ... by interviewing the same people at two different times ... the shift in thinking about CSnet implementation by stakeholders can be assessed."[11]

> **"I think it is a game changer because [CSnet] is a genuinely good system ..."[12]**

"The findings show that the adoption of CSnet led to new ostensive (thinking) and performative (doing) routines around data collection and service delivery, which increased efficiency, consistency in the client work and improved decision-making for effectiveness. This has implications for funding, accountability, and organisational learning."[13]

> **"CSnet has ... shifted the way in which an organisation collectively understands the client journey ... [a] cultural change shift about thinking and talking about data within one's team"**

The research was conducted by QUT through interviews with people from new CSnet® organisations. The QUT method was verified as part of the formal ethics approvals process at the University.

Figure 1 shows the themes of transformational change that occurred through the use of CSnet® 'before and after' "... Information and automation were relatively stable themes, participants noted organisational change more frequently. This supports the finding that implementation of CSnet resulted in organisational change."[14]

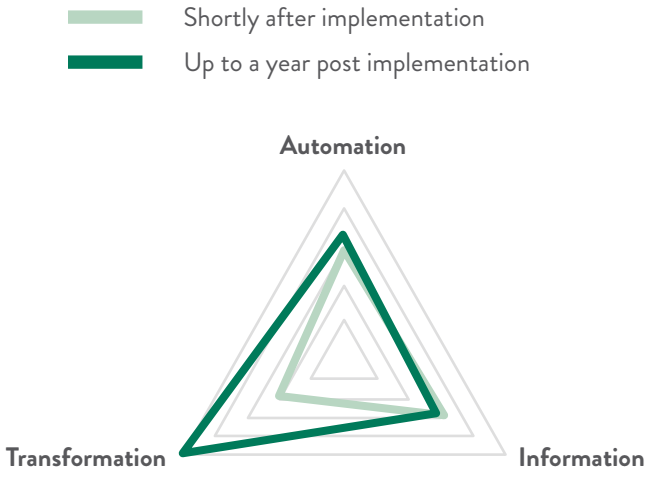
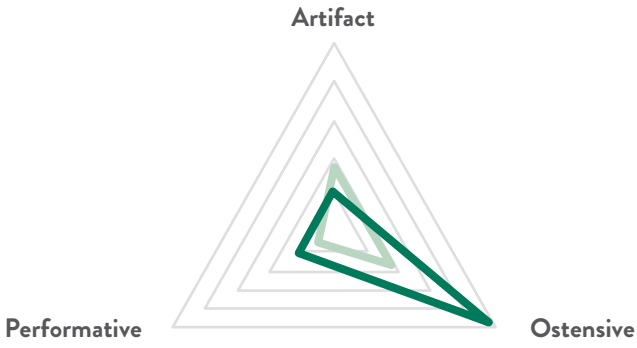


Figure 2 shows the changing themes relating to the CSnet® software (artifact) the procedures (performative) and thinking (ostensive) over time "the most significant change ... is around the thinking that has occurred in the organisation ..."[15]



CSnet® is continuing to partner with QUT in ongoing research about the impact arising from the use of the CSnet® for human service organisations.

Theory of Change

A prediction that empowers people in a learning organisation to use evidence of achievement to drive improvement

The purpose of CSnet® is to assist organisations to 'know the difference they make'.

Our organisational partners are doing the real work – they are working with people who are in need arising from circumstances such as poverty, family violence and breakdown, harm to children, homelessness, discrimination, physical and mental health issues, disability, legal issues and natural disasters. Our role is to support that work, with a flexible and well configured client information system, used to manage and record the work done and measure what is achieved.

Our theory of change, our prediction, is that design knowledge combined with a flexible client information platform, will assist organisations to identify what is working and what is not working.

Presented in a way that supports analysis, this will empower organisations to embed the learning in practice and procedure, and to move to a mature system of evidence-based practice.

Organisational learning at this level requires honesty about what the evidence shows, the constructive management of failure, and a capacity to drive improvement accordingly. The integration of quantified results (the numbers) with stories and other qualitative records of what was done is vital for the learning process.

Organisations are not alone when they join the CSnet® community. Measurement and practice strategies may be shared by interested organisations within the online CSnet® Collaboration Platform.

Organisational learning requires honesty, the constructive management of failure, and a capacity to drive improvement



If we (inputs)	**By** (activities)	**It will drive** (outputs)	**And lead to** (outcomes)	**And ultimately** (impacts)
Partner with human services committed to practice and measuring the difference they make	**Assisting organisations to implement and manage client information systems**	**Evidence of benefits delivered for clients and communities**	**Understanding of outcomes arising for clients and communities**	**Contributing to individual wellbeing and community resilience**
How do we do that? • Deliver an innovative, reliable and secure client information platform • Be responsive to emerging needs with an agile development process • Provide domain expertise to support transparent and accurate outcome measurement **Example Measures** • Organisations engaged in implementations • Organisations using outcome measures • Hours of support by CSnet® practitioners to organisations	**How do we do that?** Support organisations to – • Deliver multi-program, multi-funded services in a single database • Collect data from ground up (who, where, what and how much) • Monitor workloads and time used to deliver services • Implement multiple measures and outcome frameworks as needed **Example Measures** • Client and participant profiles created • Measurement instruments designed and outcomes frameworks implemented • Funding programs supported • Reports run	**How do we do that?** Support organisations to – • Measure and compare 'before' and 'after', as well as long-term benefits, to identify levels of change • Create and send surveys to clients and external services for input on benefits • Analyse and aggregate benefits and report to multiple stakeholders **Example Measures** • Client and participant profiles created • Support and service time recorded • Reports showing 'before and after' change • Measurement instruments completed	**How do we do that?** • Generate and report on outcomes in multiple outcome frameworks • Optimise transparency of methods for how outcomes are calculated • Establish line-of-sight between work done and outcomes achieved **Example Measures** • Outcomes generated and displayed on screen and in reports • Downstream and post-closure measurement • Reports showing long-term change • Reports supporting analysis of work done against outcomes achieved	**How do we do that?** • Present individual, group and community outcomes over time by key variables • Build knowledge, improve services, and make data-driven decisions • Present outcomes in the context of relevant population measures **Example Measures** • Updates to the CSnet® Impact Report • Support for program and outcome evaluations

Sustainable Development Goals

The United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are the blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all.

In Australia, the Sustainable Development Goals is the most widely used framework for measuring, managing and communicating impact, followed by Principles for Responsible Investment and Impact Management Project.[16] The goals address the global challenges we face, including poverty, inequality, climate change, environmental degradation, peace and justice.

The goals recognize that ending poverty must go hand-in-hand with strategies that build economic growth and address a range of social needs including education, health, social protection, and job opportunities, while tackling climate change and environmental protection.

Our performance highlights



GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

CSnet® contributions to improved health and well-being in 2020 (with a level of increase on 2019)[17] –

- 23,403 (+20%) instances of people for whom outcomes were measured
- 86,775 (+97%) measurement instruments / surveys completed
- 302,764 (+45%) outcomes measured related to health and wellbeing
- 1,171, 537 (+15%) support sessions
- 2,585 support hours to human services

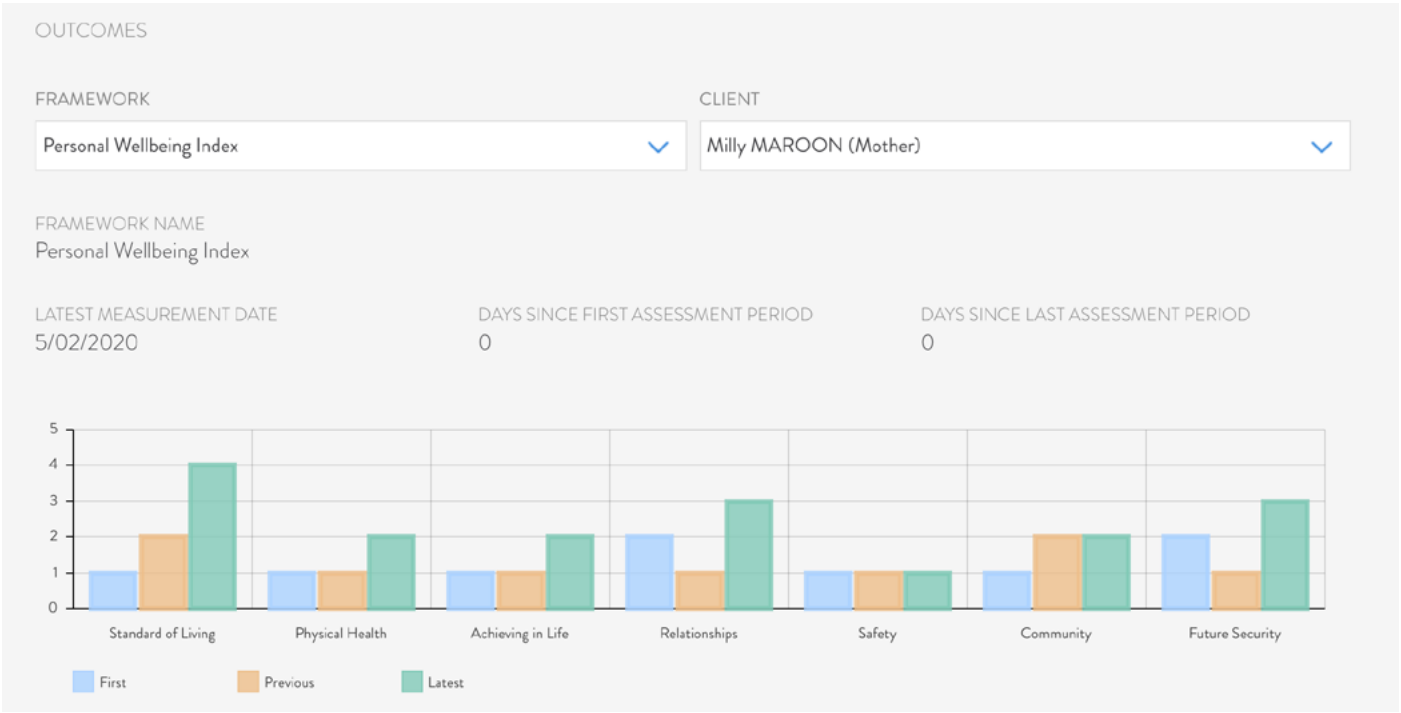


Figure 3 – An example of CSnet® presentation of fictional client outcomes, using the Personal Wellbeing Index survey and domains as the outcome framework

INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Build resilient infrastructure, promote sustainable industrialization and foster innovation

CSnet® contributions to human services industry, innovation and infrastructure[18] –

- Almost all organisations using CSnet® are multi-program or multi-source funded – 97%
- Highly diverse service base – a total of 470 funding programs from Commonwealth, State, local, philanthropic, internal sources and other investors were in use
- Highly diverse measurement practice – estimated 225 different types of survey / measurement instrument configured and used
- Innovative thinking and learning – a total of 34 different outcome frameworks were in use
- Automated transfers of over 50,100 cases to external government systems during 2020 reflecting reporting and accountability requirements

> **"IT could have a transformative effect because of its unique powers to both automate and informate"**[19]

PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

Revitalise the global partnership for sustainable development

Contributions to partnerships for the goals –

- Certified B Corp Australia & New Zealand
- Member of B Corp Climate Collective
- Founding member of Social Impact Measurement Network of Australia (SIMNA). Promoting outcomes measurement in 'Get Going Get Better' presentation[20]
- Signatory to Science Based Targets Initiative to limit our global warming to 1.5-degrees by 2030 and a Commitment by CSnet® to be Net Zero by 2030

> **"When management views CSnet as part of a broader organisational transformation, this helps change the way system users think about CSnet as a necessary change"**[21]

Contributions in sponsorships / support –

- Not-for-Profit Technology Awards 2020 (Connecting Up)
- Outcomes Practice Evidence Network 2020 (Centre for Excellence in Child & Family Welfare)
- Connection, Creativity, Community: Finding Hope in a Climate of Crisis 2020 (OurCommunity)
- Reimagine Festival: Connect, create and celebrate our rich cultures and stories (Multicultural Australia)

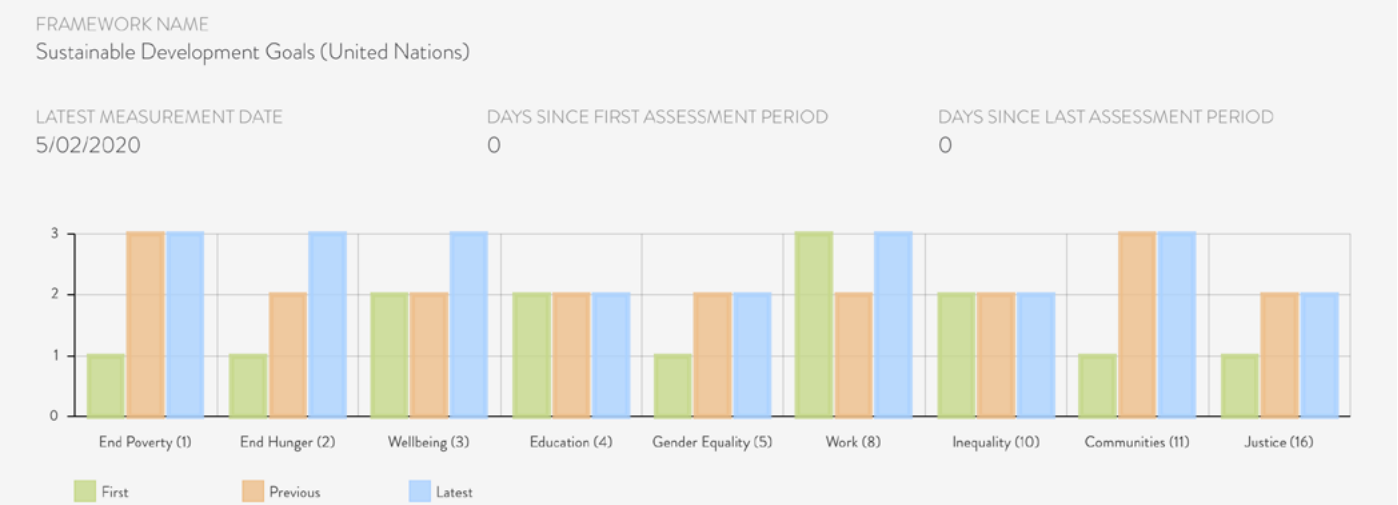


Figure 4 – An example of presentation by CSnet® of achievement of fictional community outcomes, using the SDGs as the outcome framework

B Impact Assessment

Certified B Corporation

This company meets the highest standards of social and environmental impact

Business as a force for good

Certified B Corporations are businesses that meet the highest standards of verified social and environmental performance, public transparency, and legal accountability to balance profit and purpose.

Best for the World Honoree

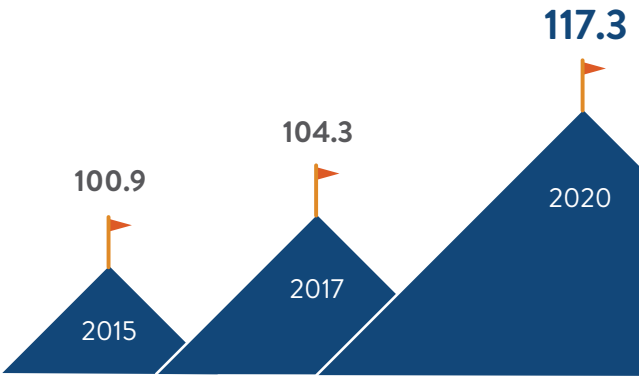
Each year, B Lab releases lists honoring the top-performing Certified B Corps in each Impact Area and overall, broken down by size, on the annual Best for the World lists. CSnet® has been honoured twice in this way.

Best for Changemakers 2018

Best for Customers 2017

Previous B Impact Scores

We have improved our BIA score ... this means we also increased our impact!



Overall Score for 2020

117.3

CSnet® impact area scores[22]



GOVERNANCE

Visibility of mission, ethics, accountability in what we do

13.3



WORKERS

Contribution to employees' financial, physical, professional, and social well-being

30.0



COMMUNITY

Contribution to the economic and social well-being of the communities we serve

22.8



ENVIRONMENT

Contribution to overall environmental stewardship

8.2



CUSTOMERS

Contribution of value for direct customers and the beneficiaries of services

43.0



Endnotes

(1) This source states that the Australian impact investing market has grown to $19.9 billion in 2020 – Responsible Investing Association of Australia Benchmarking Impact: Australian Impact Investor Insights, Activity and Performance Report 2020 https://responsibleinvestment.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Benchmarking-Impact-2020-full-report.pdf p9 (RIAA Benchmarking Impact 2020)

(2) Michael Traill AM Chair, Expert Panel, Commonwealth Government's Social Impact Investing Taskforce, RIAA Benchmarking Impact 2020 p5

(3) RIAA Benchmarking Impact 2020 p5

(4) Quantified system usage data for the purposes of compiling the CSnet Impact Report is sourced and verified internally from queries across all CSnet® databases. The totals are aggregated, de-identified statistics of CSnet® system usage only. The information cannot be used to identify an individual, client, group, project, demographic attribute or any organisation in any state or territory. (Quantified System Usage Data)

(5) Impact Management Project Norms https://impactmanagementproject.com/impact-management/impact-management-norms/. The relevant Impact Performance Goals of CSnet are to Benefit Stakeholders (B) and Contribute to Solutions (A). This is covered in further detail in the CSnet Theory of Change. The Framework graphs are a conceptual representation of the assessment.

(6) Quantified System Usage Data

(7) Quantified System Usage Data

(8) Final Report: Evaluating the Impact of Case Management Systems on Community Organisations: An Analysis of CSnet, May 2020. Dr Craig Furneaux, Dr Ogan Yigitbasioglu, Sari Rossi, Queensland University of Technology (QUT) (QUT Research)

(9) QUT Research p13

(10) QUT Research

(11) QUT Research Executive Summary

(12) Sally McCutchan OAM, Predictions for 2021: Impact Investing https://probonoaustralia.com.au/news/2021/02/predictions-for-2021-impact-investing/

(13) QUT Research p23

(14) QUT Research p23

(15) QUT Research p24

(16) RIAA Benchmarking Impact 2020 Executive Summary p10

(17) Quantified System Usage Data

(18) Quantified System Usage Data

(19) QUT Research p24

(20) Get Going Get Better, August 2020. https://simna.com.au/csnet-ltf/

(21) QUT Research p12

(22) B Impact Report. https://bcorporation.net/directory/community-servicesnet-pty-ltd

CSnet

Know the difference you make

Contact Us

The Hub, Level 5, 200 Adelaide St Brisbane,
QLD, 4000

T: 0414 344 628

E: mandy.doon@csnet.net.au

W csnet.com.au

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