

Activity 0.12 Social Enterprise Scales

Module: Introduction Module

Duration: 20 Minutes

Social Development Themes: Social Enterprise

Summary:

Participants move from side to side of a room exploring where they believe social enterprise fits on three dimensions of a spectrum. This is a useful exercise that prompts participants to make choices and explore the concept of social enterprise together.

Learning Outcomes:

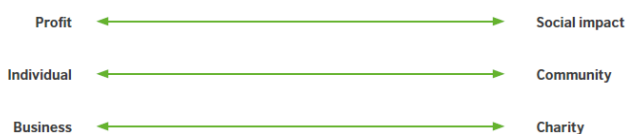
Understand the key principles of social enterprise

Approach:

1. Explain that social enterprise has many possible definitions. There is not one organisational structure or legal definition. We can explore the concept of social enterprise by thinking about what we feel is the focus of social enterprise. Give an example: 'Do we feel that profit or social impact is more important when it comes to a social enterprise?' if necessary, clarify that 'social impact' is simply defined as the social changes that an organisation makes through its actions.

2. Use a long clear space, and ask the group to stand somewhere in that space depending on whether they feel 'profit' or 'social impact' is more important to a social enterprise. For example, point to one wall and ask the group to stand closer to that wall depending on how important 'profit' is to a social enterprise and closer to the opposite wall if 'social impact' is more important.

Figure 53: Social enterprise scales



NB Check whether any participants have disabilities or trouble standing for too long. This activity can be done with a line of chairs allowing people to move and then sit for the discussion.

3. While participants are standing (or, if necessary, sitting) ask three or four participants why they chose that place to stand. Share that there is no right place for participants to stand and different types of social enterprise are possible. Facilitators should clarify that social enterprise varies in structure, from 'social businesses' run by an individual or small team, to 'social firms' employing a significant number of people with disabilities, to 'development trusts' or cooperatives' that are owned and governed by and for the community.

4. Repeat this process for each of the above examples.

Debrief:

Useful debrief questions can be:

What have we learned about social enterprise?

What role do values have in deciding where social enterprise sits on the different scales we have reviewed here?

Are these really opposites? Can a social enterprise be driven by the community and still be run like a business? To operate like a business, does a social enterprise have to be run by one individual?

What types of social enterprise do you feel would be most appropriate to tackle the social issues you would like to change? What is influencing your decision in your situation?