



COMMUNITY-DRIVEN

Common Approach guiding principles

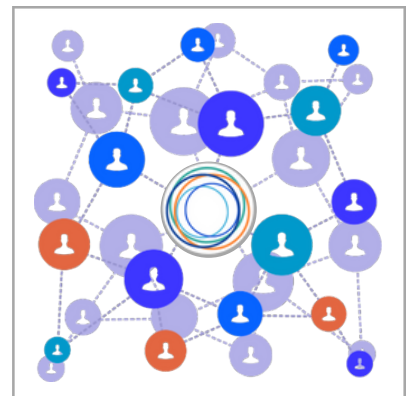
Standards are communities, not documents.

To create a standard, a community must create documents, but it is the community, not the documents, that will sustain over time. A standard becomes strong and effective by focusing on building community, not by focusing on building documents.

To create a community we are committed to creating multi-stakeholder participation that is **inclusive, diverse, equitable, and accessible**.

The following guiding principles inform the Common Approaches decisions and actions.

1. **Common Approach is shaped by all its users.**
The social purpose organizations that adopt the Standards have input and decision-making roles in their ongoing evolution.



- a. We believe that a standard is a community more than a document. To create a standard, a community must create documents, but it is the community, not the documents that will sustain over time. A standard is made more effective by focusing on the qualities of the community more than on the qualities of the document.
- b. We are committed to being accountable to all stakeholders through transparent and reliable communications allowing for broad input to ensure relevance and feasibility of adoption.
- c. We are committed to scaling in an inclusive way, so people and organizations know they are making a difference.
- d. We create processes that are designed to be inclusive, diverse, equitable, and accessible.
- e. We recognize that processes must be proportional to the capacity and resources that the Common Approach has; we will work to secure the resources for a resilient, inclusive, initiative.
- f. Allowing for complexity and moving at the pace of trust and adoption, we will seek to have a balance between centralized and distributed decision-making that achieves our goals while holding strategies for longer-term impact.

2. We recognize that both impact measurement and standard-setting are practices associated with power, permitting action at distance. We are committed to building impact measurement standards that place the power with operating charities and social-purpose businesses and those they serve rather than focusing primarily on the impact measurement needs of foundations, grantmakers and impact investors.

- a. We commit to multi-stakeholder participation that is inclusive, diverse, equitable, and accessible, as outlined in principle one.
- b. We commit to developing and promoting impact measurement standards that maintain a plurality of voices in impact accounts.
- c. We commit to developing and promoting impact measurement standards that have the flexibility to be malleable to the needs of social purpose organizations rather than imposing burdensome constraints.
- d. We regularly pause to reflect on ways that the Common Approach to Impact Measurement's four standards and governance systems distribute power.
- e. In all the above, we specifically recognize the colonial histories present within impact measurement and many contemporary data practices and that they can promote universalist/colonialist worldviews and clientelism rather than self-determination. Common Approach recognizes the diversity of jurisdictions, legal regimes, and cultural views on information as a collectively held resource and respects Indigenous Data Sovereignty. We recognize the First Nations principles of ownership, control, access, and possession of First Nations information and data in Canada. We also recognize that Indigenous practices of measurement existed pre-contact. We recognize that First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples have developed or are developing distinct principles for the governance of their own data.

We do this through our governance structure, Action Tables, and our engagements with social purpose organizations (such as webinars, surveys and research).

Common Approach is building on work that's been happening for decades. Our work is research-based and evidenced-informed. However, it's by ensuring our work is a community-driven effort that will make it possible to develop a standard that works for social purpose organizations and their funders and investors.



Stay up to date on our efforts to make impact measurement better, and learn about opportunities to get involved by subscribing to our newsletter!

