



Better Together

Social Sustainability Strategy 2040

a results based monitoring and evaluation Framework

Rationale

Traditional implementation-focused Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) systems are designed to address compliance – focusing on individual outputs rather than collective progress towards larger outcomes. They in general answer the question “did we do it”.

Better Together goes a step further and adopts a results-based M&E systems framework that seeks to additionally answer “did we make a difference”. This framework will track overall progress towards deliverable objectives as a way of maintaining accountability, as well as providing feedback on how these outputs have contributed to the strategy’s overall outcomes and targets.

Better Together evaluation process

Figure 1 demonstrates the iterative evaluation process adopted by Better Together to ensure a cycle of continuous improvement is incorporated. This approach allows the Strategy to adapt to contemporary context and unforeseen change by moving continually through 3 unique stages: plan, manage and track. The cycle will be completed in 5 yearly periods to ensure the strategy remains relevant.



Figure 1 - Evaluation Process

Our theory of change (TOC) – Better Together

Defining cause-effect linkages is a central component for a results framework. Figure 2 outlines the Theory of Change developed for Better Together.

A TOC is a specific type of methodology for planning, participation and evaluation that is used to promote social change. When developing Better Together, a TOC process was adopted to define long-term aspirations for the community and then mapped backward to identify the necessary preconditions to achieve a socially sustainable and inclusive Northern Beaches.

Indicators and data sources

Results frameworks often adopt indicators for different levels of results. For Better Together indicators have been created for the target, output, outcome and impact level.

The incorporation of these indicators allows the framework to focus on the overall effects of actions on short and long-term outcomes and impact. These indicators were developed and agreed on by key stakeholders involved in delivering the actions identified, creating a shared understanding of how the strategic objectives will be assessed.



Performance monitoring plan

To operationalise the results framework and monitor progress a Better Together Performance Monitoring Plan was created. It will be used as the primary tracking tool and contains the following elements:

- Baseline and target values for identified measures that provide the ability to verify change and progress towards indicators.
- Data sources or methods for the data collection
- Business unit owner responsible for collecting and providing the data at reporting intervals
- Designated intervals for when each measure will be collected and reported on.

Communication and reporting plan

The results will be used to communicate progress and results to key stakeholders, including the Northern Beaches Community.

This will be done through a high-level report highlighting the identified key high-level outcomes contained in the Strategy. A comprehensive report will be provided 5 yearly in preparation for the next planning period.

Detailed results will be disseminated annually to key stakeholders through the Social Sustainability Community of Practice and the Better Together Advisory & Leadership group, which will be supported by the release of the high-level report to the wider community.

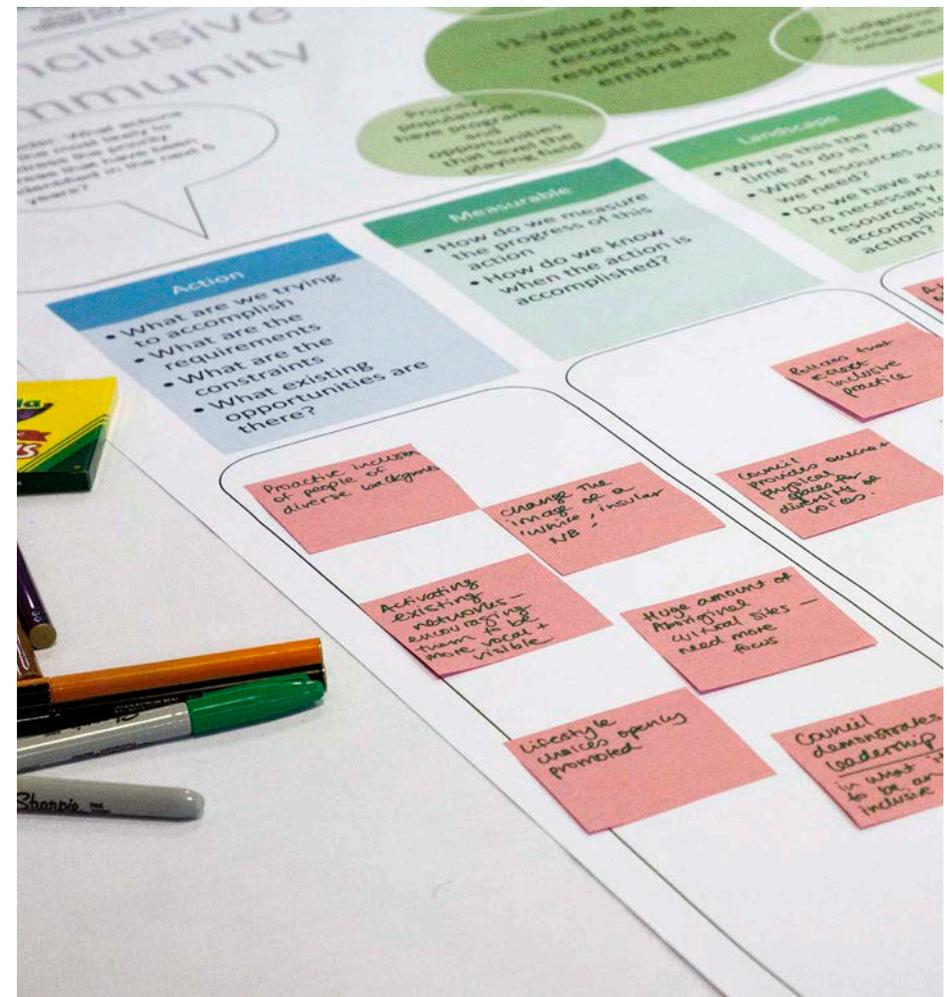


Figure 2 - Better Together Theory of Change

