Measuring the impact of eInclusion intermediaries

Experts Workshop

Seville, 3-4 May 2012

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Acknowledgments

We would like to thank all those who have contributed to the activities of the MIREIA Project. In particular we would like to thank:

- The authors of the preliminary studies of MIREIA project\(^4\), who have also prepared the summaries of the presentations carried out during the workshop and presented in chapter 1 and 2 of this report.
- The participants (see Annex I for the full list) that attended the “Experts' Workshop on Measuring the impact of e-Inclusion actors” held in Seville, 3-4 May 2012, for their active participation and for their reviews and feedback to preliminary studies and MIREIA project.
- The IPTS staff who have participated in the workshop and have contributed to the MIREIA project.

1.2. Background

The Information Society Unit of Institute for Prospective Technological Studies (IPTS) carries out prospective analyses to support the Commission services and Community institutions in the process of policy formulation by interpreting and alerting its clients to the socio-economic implications of emerging Information and Communications Technologies (http://is.jrc.ec.europa.eu).

In order to support the European Commission’s e-Inclusion policies, IPTS is carrying out a two-years research project entitled "Measuring the impact of e-Inclusion Actors on Digital Literacy, Skills and Inclusion goals of the Digital Agenda for Europe" (thereinafter MIREIA) on behalf of the Directorate General for Communications Networks, Content and Technology (DG CONNECT).

The MIREIA project aims to address:

- the need to understand and characterize the diverse set of actors (from the public, private and third sectors) involved in implementing e-Inclusion policies;
- the lack of methodologies and practice in measuring the impact of ICT for socio-economic inclusion, repeatedly reported in several studies since the e-Inclusion policy was established in 2006.

As initial or preliminary building blocks for MIREIA, the JRC-IPTS contracted two research teams to develop two parallel studies. The first one with the aim of providing input on research methods viable in practice (Exploratory Study on Methods used to measure the ICT-mediated Social Impact of grassroots organisations -also known as MMTSO), and the second one consisting on a review of the literature on the explanations of how telecentres, libraries and other eInclusion actors actually help individuals and communities (Exploratory Study on explanations and theories of how Telecentres and other community based eInclusion actors operate and have an impact on digital and social inclusion policy goals -also known as ETelInc). IPTS, with the study contractors, Arcola Research and The Technology & Social Change Group at the University of Washington Information School, convened on 3-4 May a two days workshop in Seville to consider the results of both studies, and provide input into the design of the future tasks of the MIREIA research programme.

\(^4\) - Exploratory Study on Methods used to measure the ICT-mediated Social Impact of grassroots organisations by Arcola Research
- Exploratory Study on explanations and theories of how Telecentres and other community based eInclusion actors operate and have an impact on digital and social inclusion policy goals by The Technology & Social Change Group at the University of Washington Information School
Project information and related deliverables can be found on the website of the MIREIA project http://is.jrc.ec.europa.eu/pages/EAP/eInclusion/MIREIA.html

1.3. Workshop Aims

This workshop was run in the framework of MIREIA, whose aim is to support organisations working in the area of social inclusion through digital skills, access and support, in demonstrating their impact to stakeholders, and to improve their own practice.

The workshop was held in the form of a working meeting, in which participants worked together through breakout and plenary sessions with the twofold objective of:

> Discuss and give feedback to the preparatory studies’ authors on their drafts: strengths, weaknesses, value, what is missing, etc. regarding the draft report of:

  - Exploratory Study on explanations and theories of how Telecentres and other community based eInclusion actors operate and have an impact on digital and social inclusion policy goals (The Technology & Social Change Group at the University of Washington Information School);
  - Exploratory Study on Methods used to measure the ICT-mediated Social Impact of grassroots organisation (Arcola Research);

> Build consensus on scope, goals and means of MIREIA, providing advice on specific issues:

  - scientific and practical choices in establishing and supporting an impact assessment practice for eInclusion intermediaries in Europe that is valuable, feasible and acceptable.
  - the methodological challenges of producing valid evidence for impact;
  - the selection of a set of theoretically sound, policy relevant and practical indicators to measure outcomes.
  - the scope and terms of reference of the testing and trialling of the Impact Assessment Framework.

The workshop gathered more than 30 participants including policy-makers, researchers, and practitioners with responsibilities or expertise in running evaluations of programmes, projects, inclusion initiatives which make use of ICT for social inclusion.

The contributions and recommendations have been incorporated into the final reports of the studies above and have informed the design of the MIREIA study programme.
1.4. Workshop Agenda

Table 1. Workshop Agenda

3rd May, 2012
09h00 - 09h15 Arrival and Registration at IPTS Reception Desk (1st Floor)

Session I: Workshop’s Introduction – Chair: Clara Centeno, Information Society Unit, JRC-IPTS
09h15 - 09h45 Introduction, policy perspectives, objectives of the workshop and expected outcome:
Clara Centeno, Information Society Unit, JRC-IPTS
09h45 - 10h20 Roundtable presentation by each participant (including their expectations from the workshop):
All participants
10h20 – 10h40 Introduction to MIREIA project: Gabriel Rissola, Information Society Unit, JRC-IPTS
10h40 - 11h00 Demonstrating our Impact: a Telecentres perspective:
Ian Clifford and Mara Jakobsone, Telecentre-Europe
11h00 - 11h30 Coffee break

Session II: Explanations and Theories – Chair: James Stewart, Information Society Unit, JRC-IPTS
11h30 - 13h00 Presentation of the study on Explanations and Theories of eInclusion actors: How and Why?: Araba Sey and Maria Garrido, TASCHA, University of Washington
13h00 – 14h00 Lunch: Patio of the Edificio EXPO
14h00 - 14h20 Conceptualizing ICT for inclusion: How can we assess the value and impact of intermediaries:
Ellen Helmsper, London School of Economics
14h20 – 15h30 Breakout discussion groups: Defining eInclusion intermediaries and their outcomes
Moderator: James Stewart, Information Society Unit, JRC-IPTS
15h30 - 16h00 Coffee break
16h00 - 17h00 Defining eInclusion intermediaries and their outcomes: Reporting and consensus building
Plenary discussion, Moderated by James Stewart and Maria Garrido
17h00 - 18h00 Future opportunities and challenges for eInclusion intermediaries in a complex socio-economic policy landscape: Ismael Peña (UOC/IN3) and Alfonso Molina ( Fondazione Mondo Digitale)

4th May, 2012

Session III: Methods Used, Chair: Gabriel Rissola, Information Society Unit, JRC-IPTS
09h00 - 09h15 Introduction to Day 2: Gabriel Rissola, Information Society Unit, JRC-IPTS
09h15 - 09h30 Overview of the state of play of EU indicators relevant to socio-economic inclusion: Gianluca Misuraca and Cristina Torrecillas, Information Society Unit, JRC-IPTS
09h30 – 11h00 Presentation of the study on impact evaluation methods: Which are the more promising methods and why?: Joe Cullen, Arcola research
11h00 - 11h30 Coffee break
11h30 - 12h15 Examples of Impact Assessment
1. Libraries Impact Assessment: Maciej Kochanowicz, FRSI and Renata Sadunišvili, NLL
2. Spanish Telecentre Impact Assessment study: Paco Prieto, CICT and Juan Francisco Delgado, CFR
3. UK Social Demonstrators: Victoria Stirling, Online Centres Foundation
12h15 - 13h00 From theory to practice
1. Challenges to move from Theory to Practice: Nicky Stevenson, The Guild
2. Evaluation of 'Realising Ambition' programme: Kath Edgar, Substance Coop.
3. Matching projects' outcomes with national UK indicators: Paul Foley, Tech4i2
13h00 - 14h00 Lunch: Patio of the Edificio EXPO
14:00 – 15:00 Breakout discussion groups: Designing an impact assessment framework for eInclusion
Moderated by Gabriel Rissola and Joe Cullen
15:00 – 15:30 Designing an impact assessment framework for eInclusion: Reporting and consensus building
Moderated by Gabriel Rissola and Joe Cullen
15h30 - 16h00 Coffee break

Session IV - Implementing MIREIA – Chair: Gianluca Misuraca, Information Society Unit, JRC-IPTS
16h00 to 16h20 Methodological framework and implementation plan: Gianluca Misuraca and Cristina Torrecillas, Information Society Unit, JRC-IPTS
16h20 - 17h00 Plenary discussion on the MIREIA implementation: Moderated by Gianluca Misuraca, Information Society Unit, JRC-IPTS
17h00 to 17h30 Wrap up of the Workshop and Closing: Clara Centeno, Information Society Unit, JRC-IPTS
17h30 End of the workshop
1.5. Overall methodology

The overall approach to the workshop drew on the methodology and practices used in Action Learning Sets (Pedler, 1997). This approach has three main objectives: to provide an ‘open and safe’ space to enable critical reflection; to reflect the different ‘voices’ and perspectives of key stakeholders; to promote ‘sensemaking’ and develop a common approach to developing the MIREIA framework. Although the workshop methodology did not specifically include ‘role-playing’, the selection of participants was designed to represent and reflect three stakeholder constituencies:

- the impacts assessment ‘developer’ constituency – mainly reflecting academics in the field of evaluation and e-inclusion
- practitioners – representatives from grass roots organisations involved in implementing and evaluating e-inclusion initiatives
- the policy-making constituency – primarily IPTS with its links to key EU institutions

The methods used to implement the approach covered the following:

- presentations – of the main results of MMTSO, of relevant case studies of impacts assessment approaches and practices and of related conceptual and policy-focused material
- ‘large-group’ discussions – involving all workshop participants
- small-group discussions – aimed at developing the ‘building blocks’ for MIREIA
- ‘mind-mapping’ – aimed at mapping the interconnections between the building blocks developed in the small group discussions.

The workshop was carried out over two days at the IPTS offices in Seville, Spain, between 3rd and 4th of May 2012. The workshop was a joint exercise shared between the two exploratory projects – ETelInc (Day 1) and MMTSO (Day 2).

1.6. Structure of this Report

After this Introduction (chapter 1), where the aims and methodology of the workshop are outlined, the present report follows the structure of the Agenda as set out in Table 1:

- Chapter 2 includes summaries of the presentations and discussions held during the workshop. Session I is introductory, while session II is mainly focus on the findings of the ETelInc. In Session III results from MMTSO study were discussed and, in Session IV, the MIREIA implementation plan was presented.

- Finally, in chapter 3, the implications of these findings are presented in relation to what can be learned from the workshop to improve the final version of both preliminary studies and to support the broader objectives of MIREIA.

- Annex I provides a list of the workshop participants.

Regarding of the elaboration of the present report, for each one of the presentations a summary and learning points have being elaborated by The Technology & Social Change Group at the University of Washington Information School (chapters 2.1 and 2.2) and Arcola research (chapters 2.2 and 2.4).

The JRC-IPTS staff have carried out the edition of the report and completed and finalised the chapters 1. INTRODUCTION and 3. CONCLUSIONS basing on the work done by The Technology

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5 Please note that in chapter 2.1 Session I, Clara Centeno and Gabriel Rissola’s presentation are very briefly summarised as they were only introductory for the workshop
& Social Change Group at the University of Washington Information School and Arcola research and the notes taken and feedback collected during and after the workshop.

2. REVIEW OF WORKSHOP PRESENTATIONS AND DISCUSSIONS

2.1. Session I: Workshop Introduction

2.1.1. Introduction, policy perspectives, objectives of the workshop and expected outcome - Clara Centeno, Information Society Unit, JRC-IPTS

Brief Summary of the Session
Clara Centeno welcomed all participants and introduced the objectives of the workshop as are stated in chapter 0.2. *Workshop Aims* of present report. It was also presented the policy context and background and rationale of the MIREIA project.

Figure 1. Rationale of MIREIA

**MIREIA - Measuring the Impact of eInclusion Intermediaries in Europe**

**A Policy need**

- a) to understand and characterize the diverse set of actors (from public, private and third sectors) involved in implementing eInclusion policies;
- b) to address the lack of both available methodologies and practice in measuring the impact of ICT for socio-economic inclusion

**A Practitioner need of**

- a) Support to gain visibility and policy attention re. the contribution to policy goals, with a focus on obtaining financial support
- b) Support to further innovation and best practice identification

2.1.2. Introduction to MIREIA project – Gabriel Rissola, Information Society Unit, JRC-IPTS

Brief Summary of the Session
Gabriel Rissola gave further explanation on the MIREIA building blocks, and future steps. He also drafted the element of a possible taxonomy of intermediaries.
### Figure 2. Building blocks for MIREIA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Building blocks</th>
<th>eIncl.Interm.Mapping</th>
<th>IA methodology framework</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Economic Participation</td>
<td>Locality census</td>
<td>Improved Common Method</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Capital &amp; Inclusion</td>
<td>EU Survey</td>
<td>Management of implementation risks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theories</td>
<td>Validated IA approach</td>
<td>Guidelines and Tools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selection of Indicators</td>
<td></td>
<td>Recommendations for deployment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Available Statistics</td>
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<td>Suggestions for Software devpl.</td>
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<td><strong>Telescentre role in community</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Typology</strong></td>
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<td>IA methods used by stakeholders</td>
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<tr>
<td>Selected Common Method</td>
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### Figure 3. Draft Taxonomy of eInclusion Intermediaries

**DRAFT ELEMENTS FOR BUILDING THE TAXONOMY**

- **Dimensions of the e-Inclusion definition**
  - Economic performance, growth, and employment opportunities
  - Socio-Cultural e-Inclusion
- **Flagship Initiatives**
  - e-Accessibility
  - e-Competences
- **MACRO LEVEL**
  - Social participation and cohesion
  - Mobility of migration
- **INTERMEDIARIES**
  - Services provided
  - Internal organisation
  - Sources of funding
- **MICRO LEVEL**
  - Ageing
  - Area of influence
  - Partnerships
2.1.3. Demonstrating our Impact: A Telecenters Perspective

Summary of the Session
This session was divided into two presentations: Ian Clifford with Telecenter-Europe, provided a brief overview of the history of the network including how it started, the state of current membership in terms of geographical coverage and types of organizations that are part of it, and showcased some of the recent activities and resources available for its members and the general public through Telecenter Europe’s website such as the “Innovative assessment tool to measure ICT contribution to employability.” In the second presentation, Mara Jakobsone with LIKTA (Latvia) presented the results of a survey among Telecentre Europe members to understand if, how, and why organization include impact assessment activities as part of their programs. In addition, the survey captured information about the different target groups these organizations serve, the types of eSkills training programs they provide, and the additional services that are available for the groups they serve.

2.1.3.1. Presentation of Telecentre-Europe: The digital inclusion network for Europe - Ian Clifford, Telecentre-Europe

Summary of the Presentation
Ian Clifford described Telecentre Europe as an “inclusive and vibrant network that increases the impact and effectiveness of telecentres throughout Europe by providing advocacy, knowledge sharing and capacity building amongst its members.” Currently, the network has 36 formal members representing over 25,000 telecentres in 26 European countries. In addition, there are over 450 informal members from 100 organizations from fifty nations around the world. Telecentre-Europe’s overall objective is creating relevant and scalable approaches towards achieving eInclusion for the 290 million offline Europeans. To this aim, the network focuses on four major policy areas: 1) Digital economy needs supported citizens (employability and citizenship); 2) Access to eGovernment services; 3) New skillset: social, collaborative web; and 4) Building trust: privacy and security.

The network provides different resources for its members and the telecentre community in general ranging from newsletters, training material, an impact assessment tool to measure ICT skills for employability, and a forum to share additional resources through its Ning space. In the presentation, Ian Clifford showcased Skillage – an impact assessment tool for ICT and employability programs (See Figure 4 below). The tool is based on the principles of social innovation to support the employability of young people. It is a multi-language platform that records data on ICT skill level and employability readiness of its users.

Learning points for MIREIA (based on presentation)
- Telecentre-Europe is at the forefront in the discussions about the need to develop impact assessment tools that the network deems vital for resource mobilization and stakeholder engagement. In the network’s view, the tool developed by the MIREIA project must be standardized, consistent, robust, and the same time simple and not too taxing to eInclusion actors’ already scarce resources – human and financial.
- It is imperative for the MIREIA project to engage all the telecentre networks currently operating in the European Union and make very clear the value proposition and contributions than the planned tool could bring – at the network level, as well as, the individual organization level. The buy-in from the networks is critical to make the planned tool successful and its implementation smooth. In addition, the impact assessment framework and tool developed as part of MIREIA must be recognized by policy-makers and funders as a legitimate assessment of eInclusion actors’ work and impact.
2.1.3.2. Presentation of Telecentre-Europe Impact Assessment Survey, - Mara Jakobsone, Telecentre-Europe and Maria Garrido, TASCHA

Summary of the Presentation
This presentation highlighted the main findings of a recent survey among Telecentre-Europe members implemented at the end of 2011. Telecentre-Europe, in collaboration with the Technology & Social Change Group (TASCHA) from the University of Washington, designed an online survey to capture the different ways in which eInclusion organizations collect data from their beneficiaries and measure and report the impact of their programs among the communities they serve. In addition, the survey gathered general information about the organizations in terms of the target groups covered, the range of eSkills training programs offered, network membership, and the characteristics of these organizations in relation to staff capacity, funding channels, and additional services available. Below is a summary of the main findings of the study:

In total, 53 organizations representing 30 countries participated in the study. Fifty eight per cent of the organizations are formal members of Telecentre-Europe and 22% are informal members of the network. The top five target groups these organizations serve are: Unemployed people (44%); Senior citizens (42%); Young adults (40%); Women (37%); and Low income people and people followed closely by people with physical disabilities (32% and 30% respectively).

In terms of the services available at the organizations, 92% provide eSkills training either at their own organization or in partnership with another one; 60% provide e-government services; 60% provide employment-related services; 54% incorporate in their training online learning; and 50% have access to different types of vocational training. Computer fundamentals, office tools, email, and Internet search are among the most popular eSkills training available at the organizations. Most of the organizations have an established experience providing eSkills training with over 60% with 5 years of experience and, of these, 34% have 10 years or more working with this type of training.
Related to impact assessment activities within the organizations, 91% collect different user data – demographics and number of users attending courses among the most common. Over 70% of the organizations have staff dedicated to user data collection. Among the most cited purposes for data collection: To improve programs, to demonstrate funders the impact of their programs; and to assess program performance.

**Learning points for MIREIA (based on presentation)**

- The results from the study represent a very important baseline for MIREIA. Even though the sample is not representative of the universe of eInclusion actors currently active in the EU27 it provides a solid foundation for the design of the MIREIA project particularly around aspects of type of data currently being collected, methods for data collection, main barriers the organizations face in terms of type of data collected and the kind of impact information the data provides, and the most important incentives the organizations have to collect user data (improve programs, open doors for funding streams, and assess program performance).

- At the methodological level, the experience with survey design and implementation provides with useful information for MIREIA specially if a similar effort is undertaken as part of the project. Length and response time, survey format, types of questions, questions that worked and did not work, are among the most important methodological considerations for MIREIA.

**2.2. Session II: Explanations and Theories**

**2.2.1 Presentation of the Study on Explanations and Theories of how eInclusion actors work and have an impact on digital and social inclusion policy goals (ETelnc) - Araba Sey and Maria Garrido, TASHA, University of Washington**

**Summary of the Session**

This presentation showcased the results of a JRC-IPTS funded project aimed at building a landscape of the theories and analytical frameworks that explain how, why, and under which conditions eInclusion actors contribute to advance social and economic goals. The study encompassed a comprehensive review of academic and grey literature from the most well-known journals and other type of sources and provided an analysis of the value of these theories outlining the most promising ones that can serve as the theoretical underpinnings for the MIREIA project. Araba Sey and Maria Garrido, Research Assistant Professors with the Technology & Social Change Group at the University of Washington’s Information School conducted the study. The main points highlighted by these researchers during the presentation:

The results of the landscape were compartmentalized in two major theoretical and analytical areas:

- Theories, analytical frameworks, and conceptual explanations that explain how eInclusion actors work. This area brings together research and assessments that explore or prescribe how operations are organized to achieve eInclusion goals. Most of this work is grounded in organizational change, business management, public policy, sociology and information science.

- Theories, analytical frameworks, and conceptual explanations that explain how eInclusion actors impact people’s lives. This research encompasses a rich variety of theoretical and analytical lenses. It also represents many disciplines, including development communication, social psychology, social development, business, anthropology, and public policy. The theories and frameworks in this category assess the role of eInclusion actors in advancing social goals at a broad community and macro level. Even though these approaches include elements from the two previous sections, they are distinct in that they emphasize the links
between ICT adoption, use, and the role of ICTs in building human and social capital towards large level social and economic objectives. The unit of analysis for this group is the community, which is represented in different ways depending on the context and the research questions.

- The selection of theories and analytical frameworks deemed more relevant for the MIREIA project were analysed based on four criteria: 1) The type of theory or analytical framework used; 2) The type of impact (the researchers identified several types of impact); 3) The strengths of the theory or analytical framework; and 4) The weaknesses.

- The researchers presented a conceptual framework that includes different elements that come into play when assessing the relationship between how eInclusion actors work and the different kinds of impact their programs and services have on the communities they serve. For this purpose, the framework is divided into the elements outlined in the figure below:

Figure 5. Elements of the Conceptual Framework

The researchers noted that although a lot of the research on public access ICTs sets out to measure impacts, in reality studies often end up with some measures of usage (which could be considered impacts depending on the research goal) and analysis of why expected impacts were not achieved. Thus we continue to know more about the factors that seem to inhibit impact attainment, but not necessarily whether impacts would happen if all those factors were addressed (assuming that were even possible). The ideal scenario would distinguish between those impacts for which there appears to be some measure of reliable evidence (although we do not expressly judge the quality of individual studies) from those for which the conversation is still in the realm of potential.
Learning points for ETLnc and MIREIA (based on experts’ discussion)

- It is very important to define the meaning of eInclusion actors because many of the initiatives are networked and multi-sectorial and should not be limited only to the intermediary since there is interest at the policy-level not only in individual organizations but also in networks.

- Particular attention should be taken to focus on defining impact and use this definition to identify and focus on the aspects of eInclusion projects we can actually measure. It is possible to identify additional variables and factors that cannot be measured. For example, measuring financial/economic impact is very difficult because organizations are unwilling or unable to share that type of user information. The impact we need to focus on must be concentrated on the end-user impact. However, focusing exclusively on end-user impact underrepresents the contribution of eInclusion projects in the community and this must be considered in the design of MIRIEA; if measuring impact should remain at the individual level or if should be extrapolated to assess impact at the community level.

- Another important consideration for MIREIA discussed during the plenary is the fact that many organizations do not have the institutional capacity to collect end-user information and this can affect the implementation of some of the project’s objectives. Careful attention should be taken to develop, as part of MIREIA, an impact assessment tool that is easily accessible, that doesn’t tax the staff and resources of the organizations/networks; and realistic in terms of the kind of data it collects.

2.2.2. Conceptualizing ICT for inclusion: How can we assess the value and impact of intermediaries? - Ellen Helsper, London School of Economics

Summary of the Presentation

In her presentation, Ellen Helsper outlined the elements of a conceptual framework to assess the value and impact of eInclusion intermediaries. The framework is designed to address three important questions regarding digital inclusion initiatives: 1) Who are we aiming to reach; 2) What are we trying to achieve?; and 3) How can we assess the impact of these initiatives?. Helsper exhorted workshop participants, organizations, and policy makers to shift the emphasis of the conversation away from digital exclusion since, in her view, the digitally excluded are not necessarily socially excluded. Under this view, digital exclusion is just one of many factors that cause marginalization and solving one doesn’t necessarily solve the rest. In few words, digital exclusion doesn’t necessarily reflect exclusion from other realms of human life. It is necessary, then, to talk about digital inclusion in the context of social inclusion. The figure below outlines the main analytical element of the framework.
Learning points for MIREIA (based on presentation)

The framework provides with relevant analytical elements that can serve as a base for the design of the MIREIA project. Even though the elements identified within the socio-economic spheres and digital engagement spheres are not particularly new, the framework is unique in the way it conceptually links these two different set of spheres and how they interact and influence each other. One the one hand, the framework outlines access, skills, and attitudes as important elements that are nourished by the different socio-economic spheres. On the other hand, the relevance, value, and sustainability of the digital engagement spheres determine the influence and effect of ICT in the socio-economic spheres.

2.2.3. Discussion Groups: Defining eInclusion intermediaries and their outcomes - Moderator: James Stewart, Information Society Unit, JRC-IPTS

This session divided the workshop attendants into different groups to discuss two central questions:
1. What is an eInclusion actor or intermediary?
2. What do eInclusion actors/intermediaries do?

After the group discussion everybody came together in a plenary to deliberate and reach some form of consensus around a definition of eInclusion actors. The bullet points below present the different answers that experts in the group provided to the questions previously outlined and outlines the learning points for MIREIA as discussed during the plenary.

Summary of the Session

What is an eInclusion actor? Five broad groups with different types of eInclusion actors

1. Social Organizations/ Non-for profit
   - Community advocacy and support groups
   - Community networks/stars/core nodes
   - Telecenters | eCentres
   - National Youth Agencies
   - Organizations/individual/network that targets isolation and disadvantage and works to reduce dependency on the State
   - Foundations
   - Organization with a focus on advancing primarily digital inclusion
   - Organization with roots in the community and social recognition

2. Commercial | For-profit
   - Corner PC and phone retail shop
• Cybercafe
• Big IT retailers
• Software and Hardware providers/retailers

3. **Educational Institutions**
• Universities, schools, colleges
• Adult education colleges
• Life-long learning institutions

4. **Government**
• Public employment offices, job centers
• Government SME support agency
• Other public institutions with auxiliary facilities to help people use their services
• Libraries

5. **Individuals**
• Community development workers
• Local experts
• Online mothers network – it doesn’t have to be a physical location to be considered an eInclusion actor
• Social workers
• Volunteer IT champions
• People with specific roles of intermediation
• E-petition site
• Technology donation intermediaries

Some examples showcasing the richness of discussions during the breakout sessions are provided below. The groups used cards to brainstorm the range of definitions encompassing the category of eInclusion actors.

**Figure 7. What is an eInclusion actor? Discussion Group 3**
What do eInclusion actors do? The different points discussed can be grouped into three categories:

1. **Access to ICT and ICT training**
   - Provide direct access to ICT
   - Provide access to ICT training and digital literacy
   - Provide access to information
   - Change culture of technology appropriation

2. **Provision of employability skills and employment-related services**
   - Provide employability skills
   - Promote entrepreneurship (through skill development and access/location of resources)
   - Provide communication skills
   - Provide e-government services
   - Function as catalysts to other services (e-health, e-government, e-Learning, others non e-related)
   - Expands people’s social networks
   - Provide community access to capital equipment
   - Provide 21st century social inclusion skills

3. **Create spaces for social interaction**
   - Create different and diverse social interaction spaces (not just using technology but actually creating social interaction at the venue/facility)
   - Engage, captivates, and motivates people to use ICT
   - Serves as intermediary on ICT capacity building (train the trainers, the library staff, etc.)
   - Connect ICT abilities with society in order to improve their performance in their field of action
   - Generates the context that enables people to get close to eInclusion processes
   - Organization/individual/network that promotes social goals through ICT independency and empowerment
Learning points for MIREIA (based on experts’ discussion)

- Establish a clear definition of what constitutes an eInclusion actors is critical for the success of MIREIA’s objectives. There are many different lenses through which an actor can be categorized in the eInclusion rubric: 1) From the institutional arrangement; 2) From the mission of the organization/network; and 3) From the services it provides. As it was discussed and agreed on during the plenary, an eInclusion actor is considered as such for what they do not for who they are (for the services they provide not for the institutional structure they have).

- Another point of contention during the plenary is the inclusion of commercial organizations. For some workshop participants, promoting social goals is a sine qua non to be considered an eInclusion actor. Since commercial actors lack social purposes in their mission and emphasize a for profit orientation, these workshop participants argued, should not be considered eInclusion actors. Other participants disagreed and argued that the business orientation or the commercial purpose of an actor should not be used as a parameter. This triggered a broader theoretical discussion about social entrepreneurship and social innovation that is very relevant in the context of MIREIA: Social innovation focuses more on the organizational processes that can lead to eInclusion. Social innovation can come from anywhere. The question is what is the motive – commercial or social?

- Consider using traditional categories that are bounded by institutional arrangement (e.g. public or private; non-for-profit or commercial, etc.). Another important consideration for MIREIA is if the emphasis should be placed on organizations that focus on individuals or on those that support other organizations or in both.
2.2.4. Future opportunities and challenges for eInclusion intermediaries in a complex socio-economic policy landscape

Summary of the Session
The first day of the workshop concluded with a discussion on the opportunities and challenges for eInclusion actors in the context of the changing social, economic, and technological landscape. In this session, Ismael Peña with the Open University of Catalunya/IN3 and Alfonso Molia with the Fondazione Mondo Digitale discussed in detail current trends in technological and learning innovations and how the emphasize on physical access to infrastructure is rapidly shifting towards increasing the supply of content and services. Against this backdrop, eInclusion intermediaries must rise to the new challenges, particularly those that resulted from the financial crisis and take advantages to new technologies in order to make their role even more relevant for the communities.

2.2.4.1. eInclusion Intermediaries in Europe Horizon 2020 - Ismael Peña, UOC/IN3

Summary of the Presentation
Ismael Peña discussed the different areas where eInclusion intermediaries can contribute to fill the gaps that are currently not fully addressed by either government or the private sector. In his view, eInclusion intermediaries can play a critical role in four of five of the pillars highlighted in red in Figure 10 (The squares in blue represent the government’s role and in green citizens’ expectations). Additional points discussed during this presentation highly relevant for the MIREIA project:

Figure 10. eInclusion Intermediaries filling the gaps: Europe Horizon 2020

Learning points for MIREIA (based on experts’ discussion)
- There are three important gaps in the current socio-economic and technological context that can guide the ways in which eInclusion intermediaries re-envision themselves and maintain and increase their relevance as vehicles for social transformation: 1) Gaps in access to infrastructure; 2) Gaps in digital literacy; and 3) Gaps in the technology cycle. Gaps 2 and 3 are elaborated in the next bullet points.
- Gaps in digital literacy encompass four different types of literacy: 1) Technology literacy; 2) Informational literacy; 3) Digital Presence; 4) Media literacy; and 5) e-Awareness. Figure 11 outlines the main elements in each of the literacies. eInclusion intermediaries need to develop
programs that recognize the different kinds of digital literacy that citizens need in the current techno social landscape.

- The technology cycle refers to the process that leads to the adoption, appropriation, transformation, and improvement of a given technological tool by its users (See Figure 12 for details). In Peña’s view, there are still important gaps that need attention in the adoption and appropriation steps of the cycle and eInclusion intermediaries must transform themselves from telecentres to ICT centres by insourcing telecentres into organizations. Also, this transformation must lead telecentres to telecentre networks in order to outsource part of the administrative activities and contribute to the sustainability of the organizations.

![Figure 11. Different types of Digital Literacy](image)

![Figure 12. Technology Adoption Cycle](image)
2.2.4.2. The Future of e-Inclusion - Alfonso Molina, Fondazione Mondo Digitale

Summary of the Presentation
Alfonso Molina gave the last presentation of the first day of the workshop exorting eInclusion intermediaries to rise to the new social and economic challenges created by the current financial crisis and to make sure of the wide range of technological innovations in their pursuit of digital inclusion goals. In addition, he Molina also outlined the Fondazione Mondo Digitale’s model for multi-sectorial social innovation (See Figure 13 below) and presented Phyrtual.org, a platform for enriching people's lives through knowledge, art, solidarity and community building for social innovation.

Figure 13. Current trends in technological, organizational, and social innovation

2.3. Session III: Methods Used

2.3.1. Overview of the state of play of EU indicators relevant to socio-economic inclusion - Gianluca Misuraca and Cristina Torrecillas, Information Society Unit, JRC-IPTS

Summary of the session
This was a presentation by Gianluca Misuraca and Cristina Torrecillas, Information Society Unit, JRC-IPTS. The presentation focused on three main topics:
- policy frameworks for e-inclusion
- relevant IPTS studies
- statistical data sources

The presentation introduced two frameworks. The first framework, shown in Figure 14, was an ‘Exploratory Interpretive Framework’ that links grass-roots interventions on the ground to over-arching inclusion objectives and then to key EU policies.
Figure 14. Exploratory Interpretative Framework

The second framework, shown in Figure 15, illustrated in more detail the linkages between ‘e-inclusion’ as a conceptual space which reflects a set of policy agendas and objectives, and EU policies that have evolved to deliver these agendas and objectives, as well as the kinds of assessment measures and indicators that have developed to measure progress on delivery. The Riga Declaration put into place the building blocks for mainstreaming policy on e-inclusion, and set a number of targets – the Riga ‘Dashboard’ – against which progress could be measured. This in turn shaped the development of the i2020 ‘benchmarking framework’. Three other key policy instruments are now shaping e-inclusion policy and practice, each of which reflect a set of impact assessment measures: EU2020 – and in particular the ‘flagship’ Digital Agenda for Europe, which includes a measurement ‘scoreboard’ on progress towards DAE objectives; the European Strategy for Social Protection and Inclusion, which reflects a set of ‘common’ and ‘contextual’ indicators that have been agreed with member states, and the European Strategy on Employment, which reflects measures to assess progress on labour market participation, skills and the quality of education and training systems.

Figure 15. Policy Framework for e-inclusion

1. Policy Framework for e-Inclusion
The presentation provided further elaboration in detail on the kinds of indicators adopted within these key policy instruments, and provided an analysis of EU performance on some of them – for example performance on Digital Agenda targets.

The presentation moved on to look at two relevant studies: the ‘Vienna Study’ \(^6\) and the European Index for Digital Inclusion. \(^7\) The Vienna Study identifies two key ‘categories of measurement’ for e-inclusion: ‘Enabling’ and ‘Accelerating’, which are associated with specific ‘supply and demand’ domains, and in turn with particular output and potential outcomes measures. The European Index for Digital Inclusion specifies two over-arching categories of e-inclusion output and outcomes measures, based on ‘access’ and ‘usage’ and a third broad group of impact measures.

**Learning Points for MMTSO and MIREIA**

- The MIREIA framework needs to integrate two kinds of interventions: digital inclusion interventions and socio-economic interventions
- Specific indicators need to be developed that will reflect impacts associated with ICT in four main areas: economic performance; employment; social participation and cohesion; quality of life
- These in turn need to be linked to the objectives – and impacts assessment indicators – of three key policy instruments: the DAE objectives; the European Strategy for Social Protection and Inclusion, and the European Strategy on Employment.
- This suggests that, at its core, MIREIA needs to embody two key elements: a ‘logic model’ that links high level policy objectives, targets and indicators to ‘grass roots’ objectives, targets and indicators, and a method of measuring the ‘distance travelled’ to both ‘local’ and ‘high level’ expected impacts

### 2.3.2. Presentation of the MMTSO study results - Joe Cullen, Arcola research

**Summary of the session**

This presentation, delivered by Dr Joe Cullen of Arcola Research, was the main platform in the Workshop to provide the opportunity for participants to consider and review the MMTSO findings. The presentation covered the work carried out in the study, supporting a ‘Briefing Paper’ that had been circulated to participants. \(^8\) The work presented ranged from the initial ‘Scoping Exercise’, which identified and profiled an initial ‘long list’ of 80 examples of impacts assessment approaches; ‘Identification and documentation of assessment methods’ (Task 1), which involved reducing the ‘long list’ to a short-list of 11 ‘most relevant’ approaches, using a set of ‘inclusion-exclusion criteria’ (measuring the relevance of the approach; the robustness of the data; the accessibility of the data) to select the most relevant examples; ‘Methods Analysis’ (Task 2), which took the results of Task 1 further by comparing the characteristics of the 11 approaches and assessing their strengths and weaknesses, using: relevance analysis; SWOT analysis; consistency with the aims and objectives of the Digital Agenda for Europe; transferability to similar domains and to EU-wide impacts assessment; Selection of the three ‘most relevant’ Methods (Task 3) - on the basis of the scores on the above criteria, three approaches were selected for further analysis: VET4e-I; Social Impact Demonstrator Projects; International Computer Driving License. \(^9\) The presentation concluded with a summary of the current status of the MMTSO study: ‘Initial detailed documentation and analysis of the three selected methods’ (Task 4). This activity covered a more detailed analysis of the three selected methods chosen in Task 3, with particular reference to their feasibility as inputs to


\(^8\) [http://is.jrc.ec.europa.eu/pages/EAP/eInclusion/MIREIA.html](http://is.jrc.ec.europa.eu/pages/EAP/eInclusion/MIREIA.html)

developing the MIREIA framework, and with reference to illustrative case studies of their use by grass roots organisations. In particular, the presentation highlighted the shift in focus that the study had made as it developed from discrete ‘methods’ to ‘scenarios’. In this context, three key messages from the work done so far that were highlighted in the presentation were:

- there is little evidence form the study results that grass-roots organisations involved in e-inclusion initiatives are developing and applying impacts assessment methods that can be neatly mapped on to typologies of actors and interventions
- impacts assessment in this environment reflects the adoption and adaptation of different configurations of evaluation paradigm, methodology, methods, tools and practices
- the theories, methods and practices applied reflect what can be termed ‘scenarios of praxis’ – defined as ‘the application and evolution of a theory through practice and use.’ Three scenarios were presented: Scenario 1: Impacts Assessment that has evolved through the activities and interactions of ‘communities of practice’ that are based in the ICT ‘grass roots’ world of telecentres, public internet access points and other similar organisational forms; Scenario 2: Impacts Assessment that aims to reduce impacts measurement to a single metric, often based on social return on investment (SROI); Scenario 3: Impacts Assessment that focuses on ‘outcomes identification’. This typically emphasises evidence-based practice, using participatory and collective ‘sense-making’ to define and apply outcomes and impacts measurement.

Figure 16 shows how these scenarios have evolved.

Figure 16. The evolution of ‘Scenarios of Praxis’ in impacts assessment by grass roots organisations

In conclusion, the presentation proposed a set of eight ‘impacts assessment principles’ that could be used to help shape the design of the MIREIA framework, and the development of indicators. These are:

- Principle 1: Robustness.
- Principle 2: ‘Good-enoughness’.
- Principle 3: Balancing standardisation with contextualisation.
- Principle 4: ‘Working with the Grain’
Principle 5: Supporting Quality.
Principle 6: Bridging Evaluation Levels.
Principle 7: Reflecting the Assessment Life-cycle.
Principle 8: Practicality and Usability

To implement these principles, the MMTSO study proposed a Structural Model aimed at identifying the ‘building blocks’ that need to be incorporated in the framework, and based on an ‘Action Learning’ approach (Figure 17).

Figure 17. MMTSO ‘Structural Model’

Finally, the presentation proposed a set of content modules and ‘operational scenarios’ (combining traditional text-based communication methods with Web 2.0; peer-reviewing and benchmarking and networking) to deliver the framework and modules.

On the whole, the presentation and the MMTSO proposals for MIREIA were met with a positive response from the Workshop participants, as indicated by the group discussion following the presentation, and subsequent feedback from participants. Some examples of comments were:

“I found this an engaging report with a structure that flowed really well. The MMTSO report had significantly greater relevance to the work of UK Online Centres …. All 3 scenarios were relevant and appropriate to be included in the study ….I think that the conclusions and recommendations from the report provide a good foundation for the framework that MIREIA wishes to develop”
“Overall I think it is a good and helpful paper”
“This is a useful study, which is of much wider relevance than for this specific project”.

The main questions and issues raised in the discussion following the presentation and in subsequent feedback were as follows:
There is a need to define more tightly the definition of grass roots organisations. It was observed by several participants that ‘grass roots’ organisations cover a wide and diverse profile of stakeholders and organisational forms. Although the ETeInc study had made some progress in identifying types of grass-roots organisations, some participants felt that this analysis was at a theoretical level and needed to be defined more clearly in terms of the practices carried out by stakeholders at grass roots level.

An additional observation was that ‘telecentres’ are significantly different from the majority of grass-roots organisations – which suggests small, community based organisations. One suggestion was to use the term ‘frontline organisation.’

It was observed that the use of Randomised Control Trials in grass-roots contexts, though desireable in terms of increasing the robustness of impacts data, can create problems in terms of imposing responsibilities and tasks on interventions that have their roots in very different philosophical traditions – for example ‘participatory’ and ‘community development’ approaches.

It was observed that to some extent the ‘Scenarios of Praxis’ 1 and 2 showed some degree of similarity and convergence.

Another question raised concerned whether practitioners use baseline data and if so, what sources are used and how are such data used. The response was that the MMTSO study suggests that only a few examples were identified where baseline data had been collected. Therefore, most impacts assessment is done in this field ‘ex-post’, typically using retrospective analysis of outputs data collected, for example, from participants in projects, and from surveys.

There was a question raised on to what extent impacts assessment in grass roots organisations adopts a ‘distance travelled’ approach – for example assessing how far a programme beneficiary has travelled down the road to an expected outcome, such as finding employment. A related question was how is it possible to track the effects of a programme on the lives of beneficiaries after they have completed the programme. In response, it was observed that the MMTSO study found that, whilst the use of ‘log frames’ – which model the ‘change journey’ of beneficiaries and of programmes – is relatively common, assessing ‘distance travelled’ is not.

The issues around ‘quality of data’ were also picked up in the discussion. One question was whether it was possible to clarify in more detail what kind of IA data were of high quality, and what kind were not. However, in the MMTSO study, it was reported, data on quality had been difficult to collect and this was an issue that required further work.

Finally, it was observed that useful lessons could be learned for MIREIA by looking at how impacts assessment is being implemented in public institutions.

Learning Points for MMTSO and MIREIA

A recurrent theme in the discussions that followed this presentation, and in subsequent participant feedback, was the need to balance ‘rigour’ with ‘usability’ and ‘acceptability’. It was argued that grass roots practitioners need to see the benefit of the data that they are gathering; that impacts assessment has to be flexible enough to adapt to the changing environment that they work in; and has to reflect the fact that small-scale organisations in this field frequently fulfil many roles, and are not specialists in evaluation. Nonetheless, it is essential to engage front-line staff in the design and implementation of impact assessment approaches.

Therefore, the MIREIA framework, and its indicators, needs to be ‘well-planned, easy-to-use and patently useful’. A big issue highlighted was the tendency for grass roots organisations to use impacts data to support funding bids – which risks turning evaluation into a ‘self-interested exercise in marketing’ – and to use impacts data selectively to emphasise ‘success’, rather than learn from the results.
The MIREIA framework needs to incorporate a methodology, and tools, to enable grass roots organisations to distinguish between the different types of data and indicators that can be collected and analysed along the ‘impacts journey’ – i.e. to enable them to distinguish between outputs, outcomes and impacts. This would then enable them to map and quantify the ‘distance travelled’ towards expected ‘end impacts’. This in turn suggests some form of ‘logic model’ is needed.

The framework and indicators need to incorporate formative (process) and summative assessment.

The framework needs to be able to handle problems around ‘attribution’ and the contribution grass roots actors and their interventions make to changes in the lives of beneficiaries, set against the part played by other factors.

‘Quality’ is a key issue in this field and the MIREIA framework needs to include guidance and tools to support the collection and analysis of high quality data.

### 2.3.3. Libraries Impact Assessment

- Maciej Kochanowicz, FRSI and Renata Sadunišvili, NLL

**Summary of the session**

This was a joint presentation by Maciej Kochanowicz from FRSI (Poland) and Renata Sadunišvili from the National Lithuanian Library (Lithuania) who led the impact evaluation exercise of the Global Libraries programme (an international development programme funded by Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation) in their respective countries. This global programme supports public libraries in communities throughout the world. The presentation focused on the approach and methods used to assess the effects of the programme. The ‘vision’ of the programme – and a key element of its ‘theory of change’ – is that libraries can better serve the needs of citizens in the knowledge society than other forms of knowledge dissemination. This includes access to and use of information derived from ICTs. The impacts assessment design, and the main assessment measures adopted, combined analysis of the effects of the programme on internet access; social and economic benefits to individuals and communities; IT skills among public library users; social capital; quality-of-life.

Data are being collected over a five year period (2008-2013) using a multi-methodological approach (librarians survey; user survey; statistical analysis of use; case studies; interviews).

The results of the impacts assessment so far indicate that the programme is associated with improved access to learning; improved access to the labour market; improved access to health information; improved social communication; improved cost-effectiveness of information delivery (Figure 18).

**Figure 18. Impacts of the Global Library Programme**

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<tr>
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<th>Lithuania</th>
<th>Poland</th>
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<tr>
<td>Better access to labour market</td>
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<tr>
<td>Better participation in collective governance</td>
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<td>Better access to learning</td>
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<td>Better access to health information</td>
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<td>Better social communication</td>
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<tr>
<td>Saving of time and costs</td>
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<td>Building local identity</td>
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Learning Points for MMTSO and MIREIA

The Libraries Impacts Assessment is an example of an IA approach that attempts to bridge individual effects to calculation of social capital. However, it is not clear how the effects of ‘intervening variables’ – other than the effect of the library within the community – are separated from the calculation of social capital. Similarly, the impacts assessment suggests that using the community libraries had a direct effect on user’s employment – the evaluation concluded that 30,000 people in Poland and Lithuania had found a job as a result of their access to information – for example on-line job-sites – provided by the libraries. The data used to support this conclusion was derived from two sources: a tracking survey of users, and analysis of web-pages being visited. However, the assessment did not allow for the influence of other intervening variables in contributing to employment. Another issue was that impacts assessment did not consider either quality of the job found or ‘permanence’ of the job. These points suggest that MIREIA needs to provide guidelines and tools to enable grass roots organisations to develop ways of bridging individual to community impacts; calculating ‘attribution’, and assessing quality and longevity of outcomes.

2.3.4. Spanish Telecentre Impact Assessment study - Paco Prieto, CTIC and Juan Francisco Delgado, CFR

Summary of the session
This presentation by Paco Prieto, of CICT, outlined the impacts assessment approach taken to evaluate the global socio-economic impact of Regional Telecentre Networks that belong to the Community Telecentre Network Association, in Spain. This was a case study analysed in MMTSO. The Spanish Telecentre Impact Assessment Study is an example of an IA approach that uses an ‘input-output’ method, combined with measuring the territorial ICT capital generated by the operation of regional telecentre networks, to assess the impacts of telecentres. The approach focuses on three impact dimensions, and three sets of measurements: access to ICT; territorial growth and employment. The evaluation was carried out between 2008-2010 with a sample of 2,529 centres in eleven regional networks (63% of the total). The input-output model calculates cost-benefit analysis and social and economic return on ICT investment. Input-output tables provide a snapshot of the 11 regional networks at two cross-sectional points in time. They model the inter-relationships between economic entities in a region to provide an estimation of the increase in production associated with the ICT infrastructure provided through the telecentre networks. This is done by aggregating the estimated impacts for each network. The statistical analysis was supported by qualitative analysis of digital competence and social inclusion impacts.

The results of the impacts assessment suggest that ICT infrastructure investment creates an average leverage of 1.8 per euro invested in terms of Gross Value Added for the region. The 172 M € invested in the 11 networks has made an estimated contribution to GDP of 0.014% a year. The impact on employment is estimated at 2,800 jobs.

Learning Points for MMTSO and MIREIA
- The Spanish Telecentres example is an informative illustration of how ‘input-output’ modelling works when explicitly applied to grass-roots organisations using ICTs to promote social inclusion. In principle, the approach provides a transferable methodology for scaling up outcomes and impacts data collected at the organisational and territorial level to macro-level indicators of e-inclusion impact at national and EU levels.
- However, the presentation reinforced some of the issues that were identified in the MMTSO analysis of this case. One key issue is standardisation of data. The case shows that it is difficult to obtain coherent and comparative between from different regions and to analyse these data relative to the investment in each network of telecentres. A related issue is the conceptual and methodological foundations of the input-output tables used to make the
statistical calculations on inputs and outputs. These used methods, tools and data drawn from a range of sources - OECD, EU and scientific journal studies – which creates problems around comparability and standardisation. To address these issues, the IA approach used weightings to ‘smooth’ the statistical variations in the data – but it is not clear how these weightings were calculated.

- Another related issue is the complexity and sophistication of the approach – which requires a high level of technical skill that is not likely to be available in many grassroots organisations.

2.3.5. UK Online Centres: Measuring impact across a diverse network - Victoria Stirling, Online Centres Foundation

Summary of the session

In this presentation, Victoria Stirling, of UK Online Centres, outlined their approach to impacts assessment (this was another case study example analysed in the MMTSO study). UK Online Centres supports a national network of around 4,000 local centres, providing: a learning website for people new to the internet; national campaigns and support local events; training and grants to train volunteers and centre staff; funding grants to centres; outreach activity; national partnerships. The impacts assessment approach used by UK Online Centres reflects an evolutionary strategy that has built on the results of successive evaluation. The initial strategy focused on collecting in-depth qualitative data from a small sample of centres - the social impact demonstrator pilots. This led to a second stage in impacts assessment – the digital inclusion social impacts programme – which involved 12,234 people engaged through 20 projects at UK online centres. The focus of this strategy was to calculate the social return on investment of UK Online Centres. Though this approach proved successful in terms of establishing the costs of service provision per individual, and the socio-economic benefits produced, it highlighted a number of issues: that provision of support was costly, and needed to be done more cost-effectively, and in a more sustainable way; that assessing impacts was also costly, and that funders wanted more quantitative data.

As a result, the next stage in IA development has combined a number of methods: using the web platform and on-line course to measure participation; an on-line learner survey; a ‘progression survey’ on 10% of completed on-line surveys; other ad hoc research on impacts. UK Online centres are about to launch a new element in their IA approach - the 'Social Impact Tool' which has been piloted in 20 (out of 3,800) centres. It is based on 'Community Hubs' (local 'digital centres' which will undertake local community development using digital technology). This tool will measure the impact of the Hubs on community social capital, and social impact of return. The impacts assessment approach includes an element that calculates the cost effectiveness of UK Online Centres programmes by aggregating the total contribution to UK profitability associated with the increased employability – and thus contribution to the economy – of participants who have received training from a programme set against how much it costs to train participants on programmes. The results of the impacts assessments data have been used model calculations on the social and economic return on investment associated with the provision of UK Online centre services. These include a number of financial measures, for example £156 million saved a year as a result of supporting ‘digitally-engaged citizens’ - derived from calculations on reduced contacts with public services. Additional impacts include: one third of the new digitally engaged people served by UK online centres are employed or go on to find a job; 60% of participants take up further education, Information, Advice and Guidance opportunities, volunteering placements or employment.

Learning Points for MMTSO and MIREIA

- As with the Spanish telecentres example, UK Online Centres serves as an instructive illustration of how SROI methods can be applied specifically within the context of grass-roots organisations using ICTs to promote social inclusion. In principle, the approach provides a transferable methodology for scaling up outcomes and impacts data collected at the
organisational and territorial level to macro-level indicators of e-inclusion impact at national and EU levels.

- However, as with the Spanish Telecentres case, there are issues raised around standardisation and comparability of data drawn from different centres and regions, and the ‘objectivity’ of the statistical methods used to extrapolate economic returns – for example the calculation of how much money is saved as a result of an individual subsequently not contacting a public service office following participation in a UK centre training programme.

- UK Online Centres shows that successful ICT networks emphasise ‘learning’ from impacts assessment. Their IA approach has evolved over the years, building on the learning from previous strategies, and incorporating learning from results into organisational development. This is an important lesson for MIREIA.

- The example underlines the utility of adopting a multi-methodological approach that supports triangulation of data, and the importance of clearly separating and assessing outputs and outcomes and impacts. This is reinforced by the early evaluation experience of UK Online Centres, who found that measuring registration onto a course didn't tell them much about impacts, so they shifted the focus of the assessment to look at 'completion'.

- These early experiences also strongly underlined the conclusion that impacts assessment is not about ‘a once-size fits all solution’; that having a single platform to collect data is well received by stakeholders; that cutting centre involvement from gathering the data doesn’t work, and that funders want larger scale quantitative data as much as qualitative data.

2.3.6. Challenges to move from Theory to Practice - Nicky Stevenson, The Guild

Summary of the session
This presentation by Nicky Stevenson from ‘the Guild’ – a consultancy providing evaluation support for grass roots and community organisations and social enterprises focused on how to measure ‘distance travelled’. The presentation centres on the Guild’s production of a ‘toolkit’ for measuring social impact: a ‘Consultant in a Box’– developed through the Knowledge Transfer Partnership scheme run by the UK ESRC and involving collaboration with an academic partner - the ‘Third Sector Research Centre’.

The presentation stressed the importance of a two-way relationship between theory and practice. Although production of the toolkit entailed developing a robust conceptual base with the academic partner, the presentation argued that it was necessary to apply a ‘translation job’ to convert the academic model into impacts assessment practice. A key feature of the toolkit is that it provides ‘different types of tools to do different things for different reasons’ – underlying the presenter’s observation that there is ‘no one size fits all’ solution in this field. Five broad kinds of tools are provided in the toolkit: tools to measure individual outcomes; tools to measure aggregated effects at the organisational level; quality assurance and systems analysis tools; tools to guide data collection; tools; tools to transfer results to the wider community.

The development of the toolkit involved: initial conceptual modelling with the academic partner; literature review and audit; action research involving training courses on impacts assessment and face to face work with 20 organisations.
Learning Points for MMTSO and MIREIA

- The presentation again stressed the conclusion that there should be ‘no one size fits all’ solution in impacts assessment in this environment. This was reinforced by the multi-methodological approach used to develop the toolkit, which consists of five different types of tool.
- Building a strong conceptual basis – developed through collaboration with an academic partner - in the IA approach to supplement and reinforce the practical tools and guidelines provided by the Guild’s toolkit.
- Using an “action learning” approach as a methodology for developing the toolkit, and involving practitioners in the design and development process. This is in line with the model developed in MMTSO.
- Engaging practitioners in the design and development of the toolkit – particularly in ‘translating’ theory into practice.
- Incorporating a ‘distance travelled’ approach and tools, and emphasising the distinction between outputs, outcomes and impacts.

2.3.7. Evaluation of 'Realising Ambition' programme - Kath Edgar, Substance Coop

Summary of the session
Realising Ambition is a major new programme funded by the UK Big Lottery Fund (BIG). Its aim is to support 25 projects that are working with young people (8-14 years) to reduce risk of offending and to support young people in realising their potential. The explicit objective of the programme is to provide financial and technical support to enable the projects to ‘replicate’, i.e. spread their methods and practice into new geographical areas or to new/different audiences of children and young people. The presentation, by Kath Edgar, of ‘Substance’ – one of the partners in the consortium co-ordinating the programme – focused on the impacts assessment approach. A key feature of this approach is the blend of ‘experimental’ methods – including the use of randomised control trials – with participatory methods. One of the criteria used to select projects for funding was an assessment of their ‘evaluation quality’ – including their capacity to run RCTs.
An innovative feature of the approach is the use of ‘Views’ - a web-based data collection, analysis and reporting tool and is being made available to all 25 of the selected Realising Ambition supported projects. Views is used to collect data to measure results on 5 key programme outcomes: Improved engagement with school; Improved behaviour; Improved emotional well-being; Improved relationships; Stronger Communities. Under each outcome are a framework of 5 intermediate indicators such as improved academic performance; reduced substance misuse and improved peer relationships.

Learning Points for MMTSO and MIREIA

- Realising Ambition provides an innovative example of an IA approach that combines RCTs with participatory methods. In principle, this is highly consistent with the strategy suggested by the results of the MIREIA study. It also provides a good opportunity to assess some of the issues that are likely to militate against the introduction of experimental methods in a framework aimed at grass roots organisations.
- The ‘Views’ system shows the potential for using on-line tools to gather impacts data from individual programme beneficiaries, as well as a strategies for scaling up the data to aggregate levels.
- The approach also provides an opportunity to assess how costs of IA can be measured.

2.3.8. Typographies: Intermediaries, benefits and beneficiaries - Paul Foley, Tech4i2

Summary of the session

This was a presentation by Paul Foley of Tech4i2 on evaluating ICT-based interventions to promote social inclusion. The starting point of the approach was a classification model to categorise the wide range of interventions in this field. This was done in terms of two categorical indicators: type of group and inclusion problem addressed. This provides the basis for developing an evaluation framework that maps beneficiaries, their needs, and the potential outcomes that result in addressing their needs, against types of intervention. The framework works broadly on a four-way categorisation typology of intermediaries: those with a ‘professional’ mandate (split into operational and policy and strategy roles) and those with a ‘non-professional’ mandate (split into the same roles). Actors concerned with operational delivery will focus on outputs, whilst actors concerned with policy and strategy will focus on outcomes. In turn, the choice of IA approach needs to consider the life cycle and purposes of IA – whether it is used ‘ex-ante’ to prove a business case, or whether it is used ex-post to provide an evidence base for policy, for example. Using the framework, Tech4eI have developed an on-line ‘benefits evaluation tool’ (Figure 21). This has similarities with SROI.
approaches and tools like ‘High Impact Philanthropy’ (assessed in the MMTSO study) and evaluates possible intervention options against other options.

Learning Points for MMTSO and MIREIA
This example represents an on-line version of the SROI approaches analysed by MMTSO. Its main focus is on assessing the relative potential return on investment of different kinds of interventions – similar to the ‘Robin Hood’ approach and ‘High Impact Philanthropy’ approach. It is likely to have limited value in relation to the broader objectives of MIREIA, although it could usefully be used to help grass roots organisations ‘map’ themselves in terms of the type of intermediary they are and what are their impacts data needs.

2.3.8. Breakout discussion groups: Designing an impact assessment framework for eInclusion - Moderated by Gabriel Rissola and Joe Cullen

Summary of the session
This was a ‘small groups’ session whose objective was to identify the priorities needed in designing an impacts assessment framework, in relation to three key aspects: the types of outcomes and indicators to be addressed in the MIREIA Framework; the data collection methods need to be designed; the most valuable and practicable Impact assessment demonstration tools.

Three groups were formed, each of which was given the following sub-tasks and questions to address:

- **Group 1:** Identify the Most appropriate approaches to demonstrating Impact (What are the most appropriate forms of demonstrating impact *in this field, now* and why? What is needed to produce these demonstrations of outcomes, (data, expertise etc), including who should be doing this?)
- **Group 2:** Find a consensus on outcomes that need to be measured (What are the most relevant types of outcomes (with examples of indicators of these outcomes) ? For which stakeholders, both internal and external, are these meaningful)
- **Group 3:** Specify the data collection limitations and challenges (What appropriate means can be used to collect quality primary data and who should collect and support? What secondary sources can we exploit to reduce need for primary data, or make sense of primary data?)
Results from Group 1
What are the most appropriate forms of demonstrating impact in this field now, and why?
The group adopted a ‘contingency approach’ to this question that can be summarised by the phrase "It depends". The most appropriate IA approaches depend on the purpose and the audience of the evaluation. They also depend on the level at which the impact assessment is addressed: individual, community, societal. The IA approach will also be shaped by the ‘life cycle’ of the intervention being assessed – whether it is throughout the life time of the intervention; embedded ‘ex ante’ into the design intervention or carried out ‘ex-post’ at the end of the intervention. The group were also in agreement that there is no ‘one size fits all solution’ that should be pursued by MIREIA – echoing the observations of many of the previous presentations, and the conclusions of the MMTSO study. Instead, a workable strategy would be to construct a set of core ‘building blocks’ that could provide the basis for a common framework, supported by tools and practices that could enable users to adapt the framework to their own circumstances and profile. It was also argued that the framework needed to demonstrate that a robust methodology lay behind the results of the impacts assessment, in order to support transparency and accountability for grass roots organisations.
On this basis, the most appropriate forms of demonstrating impact would need to cover:
- A mix of generic and contextual methods and indicators
- An element to assess cost effectiveness; output per unit of cost; cost efficiency / outcomes per unit of cost
- An element that enables measurement of user and intermediary ‘happiness’; level of participation and fulfilment of expectations

What is needed to produce these demonstrations of outcome, and who should be doing this?
The consensus on this question was that the following aspects needed to be reflected in the MIREIA framework (Figure 22):
- Tools for supporting multi-stakeholder collaboration in IA design and implementation
- End users involvement
- Service providers involvement
- The use of external evaluators; evaluation specialists or academic partners as part of the IA ‘team’
- Incorporation of robust assessment methods and indicators to reflect transparency
- Leadership - the involvement of an ‘IA champion’ – an instigator who is confident in impact analysis and who can live with failure
- Methods and tools to enable standardisation and comparability of data, and supporting (interoperability of formats
- A focus on measuring change – including the use of longitudinal data collection
- The framework should start with mapping a ‘process’ for the intervention – like a ‘theory of change’. This needs to shape the subsequent selection of methods and indicators. Implementation of the process needs to focus on ‘use’ - usability, presentation of results, how to apply the results to organisational learning
- The impacts assessment approach and process needs to planned in advance and not ‘imposed’ on the intervention
- The impacts assessment approach and process needs to combine two perspectives: the internal perspective of the intervention and how it operates, and the external perspective of what are its effects – particularly on the lives of beneficiaries.
Results from Group 2
What are the most relevant types of outcomes and examples of indicators of these outcomes?

The group identified four main categories of outcomes and associated indicators:

- Digital-social inclusion outcomes
- Employability outcomes
- Civic engagement (participation) outcomes
- Engagement with community and society

The indicators identified for each category as shown in the Table below and in Figure 23.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcomes Category</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Examples of measures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Digital-social inclusion</td>
<td>Upgrading digital skills</td>
<td>ICT skills level before and after participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Digital Behaviour Change</td>
<td>Application of e-skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Decrease rural/urban digital divide</td>
<td>Diversification of e-skills use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IT literacy skills</td>
<td>Use of higher level e-skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Increased access to services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Increased social protection expenditure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Basic functional skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employability</td>
<td>Improved employability</td>
<td>Change of employment status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Employability improvement</td>
<td>Aspiration to employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Wage increase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Participation in additional training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Employment rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Movement into job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sustainable employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civic participation</td>
<td>Active citizenship</td>
<td>Frequency of participation online/in communities etc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Participation/eVote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Participation/eCommerce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>eGovernment engagement (communication with local/regional/national governments-)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community-society</td>
<td>Social interaction</td>
<td>Involvement in community groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>engagement</td>
<td></td>
<td>eParticipation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For which stakeholders, both internal & external, are these meaningful?
The group identified five key groups of stakeholders:

**Group 1. Users/beneficiaries**
- Beneficiary communities
- Unemployed/non-employed
- Employees
- Those in employment

**Group 2. eInclusion intermediaries**
- Service providers
- eCentres
- Civil & social organisations
- Public employment services
- Health system assistance
- Telecentres
- Community/voluntary sector
- LLL institutions (formal-schools …informal-adult learning, libraries)
- Educational services

**Group 3. Government**
- Multilevel government institutions (political guidance)
- National & local governments
- Local economical developers
- Public funders

**Group 4. Donors**
- Private Donors
- Funders
Results from Group 3
What appropriate means can be used to collect quality primary data?

The elements needed to support good quality data collection were identified as follows:

- Ensure that the data collection process includes data collection internally within the organisation
- Data analysis ideally should be done externally, because of the high level of skills required and the need to support transparency and independence of findings. However, this brings into play questions around the resources available to grass roots organisations to contract external consultants
- Ideally, data on outputs – collected for example through statistical analysis of beneficiary participation – should be supported by longitudinal user surveys, to establish initial outcomes baseline data and then follow-up on progression at intervals following programme completion. These longitudinal surveys should combine a set of standardized ‘common’ questions and indicators with contextual questions/modules adapted to the particular programme/intervention
- Financial and cost data needs to be collected internally within the organization/programme, using an ‘input-output’ method.
Data on intervention outcomes is essential and should be collected using a mix of methods – statistical analysis of baseline data set against post-participation data; progression surveys – and ideally compared against ‘counterfactual’ data, for example through a ‘control-comparison’ design.

Quantitative data collection should be supported with qualitative data to add ‘granularity’ to results and capture the local context.

Online data collection methods should be explored, using a common set of indicators. On-line data collection should also be extended to collecting qualitative data – for example capturing individual ‘life stories’ as case studies. This could increase the motivation of users in getting involved in data collection.

There is a need to provide training for front-line staff in data collection methods.

‘Exemplary studies’ would add value to impacts assessment – for example using a ‘control group’ within the intervention.

Quality control is under-developed in this field and more effort needs to be put in to developing effective quality control tools and practices. Quality control methods could include: case studies; randomized sub-samples of survey populations; independent audits; stakeholder interviews

The mix of data collection methods and tools needs to be appropriate for the profile and needs of the grass roots organization.

A ‘central data collection hub’ would provide coherence and integration for data collection. This could be based on an on-line platform which could in turn serve as a training platform for staff/users (for example using ‘webinars’ to deliver training).

Data collection and analysis needs to be timely, with rapid feedback of results to staff and users, in order to maintain ownership of the evaluation and support learning from the results.

What secondary sources (e.g. available statistics, hidden statistics,) can we exploit to reduce the need for primary data or to make sense of primary data?

The group acknowledged the usefulness and attractiveness of secondary data sources in impacts assessment but also highlighted some potential problems, including:

- the variable quality of secondary data – particularly data not derived from ‘official’ sources – for example data collected by networks themselves rather than national, regional and local government agencies
- the lack of standardisation of secondary data indicators – event data collected by official channels
- the ‘superficiality’ of secondary data. Much of these data are shallow and do not reflect the ‘granularity’ of local context

However, some types of secondary data were identified as being potentially useful for MIREIA (Figure 11):

- studies and evaluations – including academic research (for example the ‘Guild’ toolbox; Spanish telecentres evaluation
- Official statistics. The Spanish Telecentres Impacts valuation is a good example of how regional and national statistics (e.g. on employment, territorial investment and output) can be used to model the effects of ICTs on digital and social inclusion.
- Area level statistics used in ‘natural experiments’. In many EU countries, statistical data on social inclusion is collected at the local level within small areas (for example in the UK local output areas of around 1,000 inhabitants). This small area data could be used to carry out control-comparison experiments on the local effects of an intervention, compared with a similar local community not involved in the intervention.
- Similarly, local areas could be used to run ‘trend analysis’ on outcomes of interventions over time, for example by comparing employment levels in a local area where a grass roots programme is running, compared with a similar local area without the programme. However,
although this analysis could show whether there is an effect, it would not say much about ‘why’ or ‘how’.

- **Webmetrics** – analysis of web-based data (for example Google analytics) can be used to provide data on outputs and outcomes. An example is the Global Libraries evaluation in Poland and Lithuania, which used data on web page behaviours of library users to assess the effects of the programme on employability.

- **Web traffic** – similarly data on patterns of access and use can provide input data to model digital and social inclusion effects, for example comparing use of on-line government services in areas served by interventions compared with areas not served.

- ‘**Voluntary data magpies**’. There is increasing interest in engaging end users as collectors of secondary data to provide inputs to impacts assessment. The ‘Views’ system adopted in ‘Realising Ambition’ is an indication of how this might work. The development of ‘crowd sourcing’ techniques could provide some insights for the future.

**Figure 24. Group 3 Discussion – data collection methods**

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**Designing an impact assessment framework for eInclusion: Reporting and consensus building**

This plenary session brought together the Workshop participants to reflect on the results of the work done in the small group sessions. A Rapporteur from each of the three working groups summarised the results of this work. These results were then reviewed in plenary by the Workshop participants. At the same time, ‘MindMap’ software was used to map the interconnections between the results of the three working groups.
Based on these activities, Figure 25 provides in schematic form a synthesis of the results of the work on ‘Designing an impact assessment framework for eInclusion’. The key points illustrated by Figure 25 are:

- The framework is conceptualised as a ‘process’ through which an e-inclusion intervention, and the institutional structure supporting it (i.e. the ‘grass roots organisation’) goes through a cycle of action learning. The process covers: Scoping, IA Design, IA Implementation, Analysis, Results, Learning.
- At each stage in the process, a particular configuration of stakeholders needs to be involved.
- The operationalization of the process centres on the selection and utilisation of a mixed set of methods, techniques, practices and tools for assessment. These need to combine two elements: a Generic element (log frames; a ‘distance travelled’ method; longitudinal methods and progression surveys; cost methods (SROI); secondary data methods) and a ‘contextual’ element (user surveys; case studies; ethnographies; interviews; natural experiments).
- The application of these methods will enable indicators to be constructed that measure, first, outputs (e.g. participants completing a training programme); outcomes (e.g. average increase in participants digital literacy) and impacts (e.g. effects on regional GDP) – although impacts analysis is likely to be beyond the scope of some interventions.
Figure 25. Synthesis of discussion on designing an impacts assessment framework

**PROCESS**

**LEARNING**
- Dissemination
- Organisational-change
- Intervention - development
- Transferability
- Replication

Staff, Users, Partners, Funders, other intermediaries, researchers, policy

**METHODS**

**GENERIC**
- Log Frame
- Distance Travelled
- Longitudinal Progression Survey
- SROI
- Secondary data

**CONTEXTUAL**
- User Surveys
- Case Studies
- Interviews
- Natural Experiments
- Ethnographies

**RESULTS**
- Data Reduction
- Statistical tests
- Verification
- Triangulation
- Review
- Synthesis

**OUTPUTS**
- Training courses delivered
- Participants completing ICT access points open
- Citizens engaged

**IMPACTS**
- Increase in digital literacy
- Increase in employability
- Increase in social interaction
- Increased use of e-gov
- Increased participation

**OUTCOMES**
- Increase in GDP
- Reduction in unemployment
- Reduction in social exclusion
- Increased social capital

Staff, External Experts

**TRAINING**
- Facilitator
- Webinars
- Toolkit
- Action Learning

Facilitator, Staff, Users

Instigator, Staff, Funders

**CONTEXTUAL**
- User Surveys
- Case Studies
- Interviews
- Natural Experiments
- Ethnographies

**ANALYSIS**
- Coding
- Quality Control
- Statistical modelling
- Cost analysis
- Qualitative analysis

**APPLICATION**

**IMPLEMENTATION**

**SCOPING**
- Organisational Analysis
- Intervention Profiling
- Evaluation Needs Assessment
- Capacity Audit
- Leader

Staff, Users, Partners, Funders, other intermediaries, researchers, policy

Facilitator, Staff, Users

Staff, Users, External expert

Staff, External Experts
2.4. Session IV: Implementing MIREIA.

2.4.1. Methodological framework and implementation plan and discussion on the MIREIA implementation

Summary of the session
The final part of the workshop consisted of a presentation of the planned framework for MIREIA, and its proposed implementation, presented by Gianluca Misuraca of IPTS, followed by a plenary discussion. The presentation outlined the main aim of MIREIA:

- To better understand the role of e-Inclusion intermediary actors and to create adequate instruments to facilitate the demonstration of their outcomes and their contribution to the achievement of European e-Inclusion policy goals and its specific objectives:
- to characterise and map e-Inclusion intermediary actors in Europe in order to know better what eInclusion intermediary actors are, which services they provide, to which targets groups, how they operate and innovate, and how they can be classified
- to build and test an impact assessment framework that will allow to systematically collect end-users micro-data through grassroots organisations and aggregate it at various levels, in order to facilitate the measurement of outcomes and the estimation of the impact of those actors on employment, education and social inclusion

The implementation plan for MIREIA consists of six activities:
2. Selected Locality Mapping - to provide a detailed picture of eInclusion local landscapes in selected localities
3. Conceptualization and design of the Impact Assessment Framework for eInclusion intermediaries
4. Stakeholder’s Mapping and testing of the Impact Assessment Framework for eInclusion intermediaries
5. Development of an implementation methodology for applying the Impact Assessment Framework for eInclusion intermediaries
6. Stakeholders’ Engagement, communication and dissemination

The timeframe is expected to run from May 2012 to December 2013. The issues that remain to be addressed, and which formed the basis for the following plenary discussion, were:

- The scope of the framework and the unit of analysis to be considered: whether the focus should be on contextualised interventions or ‘social experiments’
- Locality mapping: what is the rationale for locality mapping and how should it be undertaken
- Survey / stakeholders’ mapping: what is the rationale for stakeholder mapping and how should it be undertaken
- Conceptual and Methodological framework for Impact Assessment: what form and structure should the framework take and how should it be developed
- ‘Pilot’ Testing of the Framework: what does this entail and how should it be done
- Stakeholders’ engagement: which stakeholders need to be involved and at which point in the programme

The discussion on the framework methodology and implementation plan is summarised as follows:
- There was common agreement, re-iterating the previous workshop discussions, that the framework should not adopt a ‘one size fits all’ approach. Though some generic elements are desirable, these need to be at a very basic level of ‘building blocks’, to allow enough scope
for contextualisation to the specific features of particular grass roots organisations. The
generic element should therefore focus on a limited number of shared principles and a small
number of core questions/indicators. Emphasis should be placed on using robust methods and
on supporting transparency.

- It was suggested that the framework needed ‘ownership’ by grass roots organisations. One
  way of doing this would be for it to be ‘championed’ by an existing network – for example
  Telecentres Europe.
- Some participants offered to make their projects available for piloting - Andalucia
  Compromiso Digital and Guadalinfo
- It was suggested that work on developing the framework could include a combination of
  further exploratory studies, to put meat on the bones, and then rapid prototyping. It was
  suggested that any preliminary work needs to build on the results of the two current
  exploratory studies. There was a suggestion that piloting should be done in more than two
  programmes, in order to test the framework across a broader spectrum of use scenarios.
- It was observed that the MIREIA programme offered a good opportunity to establish some
  baseline data in a field in which such data was not well developed. This could be done using a
  longitudinal or two snap-shot surveys.
- There was a suggestion that the framework should be initially built, and tested, with a very
  specific scope – employability was suggested – and then on the basis of the results, further
  buy-in could be looked for, for example from EC DG’s.
- It was observed that the audience for the framework, and the results of this phase of MIREIA,
  should be clarified at the outset – should the focus be on practitioners or policy-makers.
3. CONCLUSIONS

3.1. Overview of the Workshop Results

The main results of Day 1 and 2 of the Validation Workshop can be summarised as follows:

The Workshop provided a good opportunity for a representative selection of stakeholders to increase their knowledge of the MMTSO and ETeInc studies, and of MIREIA in general; to critically review the studies results and outputs so far; to suggest recommendations for improving the study results, and to support further design and implementation of MIREIA.

On the whole, design, objectives, approach and the future tasks of the MIREIA project, as well as the results and outputs of MMTSO and ETeInc studies, were well-received.

The Workshop also provided an effective opportunity for key stakeholders in the field to exchange knowledge. Several participants observed that the presentation of the studies findings, together with the presentations of the invited experts, had significantly added to their knowledge of the field. This was illustrated by the representative from UK Online Centres, who subsequently reported that she had passed on the MMTSO Briefing Paper to the organisation’s Business Improvement Manager to help them when planning future initiatives to measure and report on the impact we across the network and how they ask the network to collect similar data.

Another important outcome of the Workshop was to support buy-in from key stakeholders for the MIREIA initiative. Particularly from the plenary discussions in the last session of Day 2, it was clear that the Workshop has generated considerable interest in the initiative. This was illustrated by offers from some participants to act as hosts for piloting the framework.

3.2. Learning points for ETeInc and MMTSO studies

Regarding ETeInc it was discussed the fact that the report lacks of a clear definition or idea of what constituted a theory or explanatory framework. In addition to this, it was also highlighted that while the selection of sources was systematic, it did not start from a clear theoretical framework but from a practical focus. So it was proposed to reorganise the theories in different level of analyses to avoid confusion since in the report all the theories and explanation had been put in an equal playing field. In order to improve the ETeInc study, it was agreed that, using the social ecology approach, categorizing the work into the groups of micro, meso, exo, and macro (representing the spheres of influence that e-Inclusion actors might seek or have, depending on their goals). The theories in and of themselves are not limited to these levels. Rather, this categorization reflects the trends observed in the literature as to how the theories have been applied to explain and operationalize impact and impact factors at these levels of analysis.

The main criticism of MMTSO was that the methodological process, and rationale, for selection of the three scenarios was not sufficiently well-explained. This is in part a reflection of the fact that MMTSO Deliverable 1 – which reported on the key Tasks leading up to the workshop – was not circulated to participants beforehand and the fact that participants were sent an abridged version of Deliverable 3 – covering Task 4 of the study (documentation and analysis of the scenarios), which intentionally avoided giving too much detail on methodology. The Workshop provided useful feedback on improving the current MMTSO draft Deliverable 3 - documentation and analysis of the scenarios. In particular:
It was highlighted the need to document and explain in more detail the methodological process, and rationale, for selection of the three scenarios of praxis and to further differentiate between ‘Scenarios of Praxis’ 1 and 2 and to define more tightly the definition of grass roots organisations.

It is clear that MMTSO final report and the MIREIA framework need to clarify the distinction between outputs, outcomes and impacts and how these can be measured. These need to be linked to assessing ‘distance travelled’. The workshop provided some useful examples of how this could be done.

The ‘Synthesis Framework’ set out above in Figure 25. This could be used for further adaptation of the frameworks currently in MMTSO draft report.

The ‘Consultant in a Box’ toolkit developed by ‘he Guild’. This provides some key learning on how to engage stakeholders in Impact Assessment design an how to support usability.

The additional data and practices presented in the workshop could add further clarification to the existing analysis in MMTSO draft report and would be included in the final version of the report.

2.3. Learning points for MIREIA project

Regarding the design of the MIREIA project in general the main conclusions are as follow:

- The workshop confirmed the conclusion of the MMTSO study that the MIREIA framework should not adopt a ‘one size fits all’ solution, and that it needs at its core to provide a mix of a limited number of ‘common’ generic methods and tools, combined with contextual methods and tools.

- It was a consensus in the fact the MIREIA framework should be designed though modular blocks based on the different types of impacts since there is a wide range of impacts. This way, the framework would be flexible and be able to adapt to the different contexts of specific eInclusion intermediaries.

- The results of the workshop suggest that these generic methods and tools should include some form of logic model; methods to map and assess ‘distance travelled’; methods to analyse cost data and cost effectiveness and methods to capture ‘evolution’ – such as longitudinal studies and progression surveys. These tools needed to be blended with qualitative methods that could capture context.

- Although the workshop discussions emphasised the need to pursue ‘robustness’ in data collection and analysis, the consensus was that RCTs would be difficult to carry out and could meet with resistance from grass roots organisations.

- The framework needs to be able to handle problems around ‘attribution’ and the contribution grass roots actors and their interventions make to changes in the lives of beneficiaries, set against the part played by other factors.

- It was also clear that the MIREIA framework need to focus attention on quality control issues in data collection and analysis. Again, the workshop provided some useful examples of how this could be done.

- Finally it was agreed to focus MIREIA project in a particular set of impacts related to employability.
ANNEX I: List of Workshop participants in alphabetical order

Invited experts

- **Ian Clifford**, Telecentre Europe, UK
- **Cristiano Codagnone**, Tech4i2/University of Milan, Spain
- **Peter Day**, University of Brighton/Community Informatics Research Network (CIRN), UK
- **Juan Francisco Delgado**, Consorcio F. de los Ríos, Spain
- **Kath Edgar**, Substance Coop., UK
- **Paul Foley**, Tech4i2, UK
- **Anne Green**, Warwick Institute for Employment Research, Warwick University, UK
- **Ellen Helsper**, Dept. of Media and Communications, London School of Economics, UK
- **Mara Jakobsone**, LIKTA/Telecentres Europe, Latvia
- **Maciej Kochanowicz**, Information Society Development Foundation, (FRSI), Poland
- **Lee Komito**, University College Dublin, Ireland
- **Sonia Liff**, Appleby Ltd, Copenhagen, Denmark
- **Alfonso Molina**, Fondazione Mondo Digitale, University of Edinburgh, Rome, Italy
- **Jeremy Paley**, Gates Foundation, USA
- **Ismael Peña**, Universitat Internacional de Catalunya UIC-IN3, Barcelona, Spain
- **Eva Piñar**, Junta de Andalucía, Spain
- **Paco Prieto**, CTIC, Gijón, Spain
- **Renata Sadunisvili**, National Lithuanian Library, Lithuania
- **Nicky Stevenson**, The Guild, UK
- **Victoria Stirling**, Online Centres Foundation, London, UK
- **Ronald Van Bekkum**, UWV (Dutch PES), The Netherlands
- **Dinesh Venkateswaran**, TechSoup, London, UK

Study Contractors

- **Joe Cullen**, Arcola Research, UK
- **Veronique Maes**, Arcola Research, UK
- **Maria Garrido**, TASCHA, Univ. of Washington, USA
- **Araba Sey**, TASCHA, Univ. of Washington, USA

European Commission, JRC-IPTS

- **Clara Centeno**, JRC, IPTS, Information Society Unit, Spain
- **Alexandra Haché**, JRC, IPTS, Information Society Unit, Spain
- **Francisco Lupianez**, JRC, IPTS, Information Society Unit, Spain
- **Gianluca Misuraca**, JRC, IPTS, Information Society Unit, Spain
- **Yves Punie**, JRC, IPTS, Information Society Unit, Spain
- **Gabriel Rissola**, JRC, IPTS, Information Society Unit, Spain
- **James Stewart**, JRC, IPTS, Information Society Unit, Spain
- **Cristina Torrecillas**, JRC, IPTS, Information Society Unit, Spain