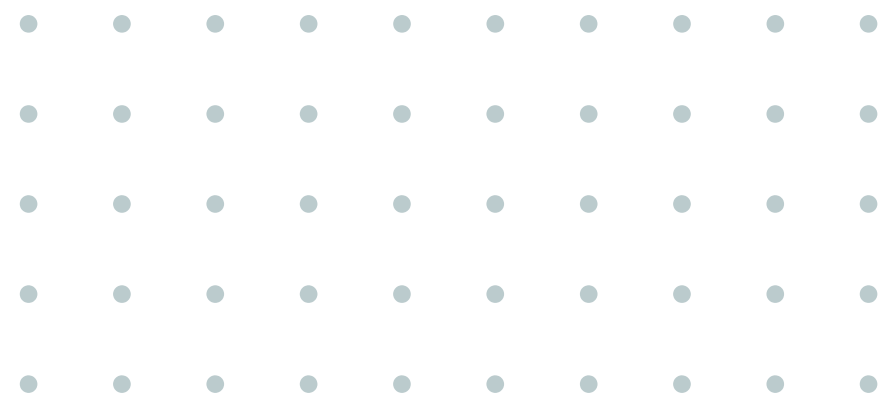
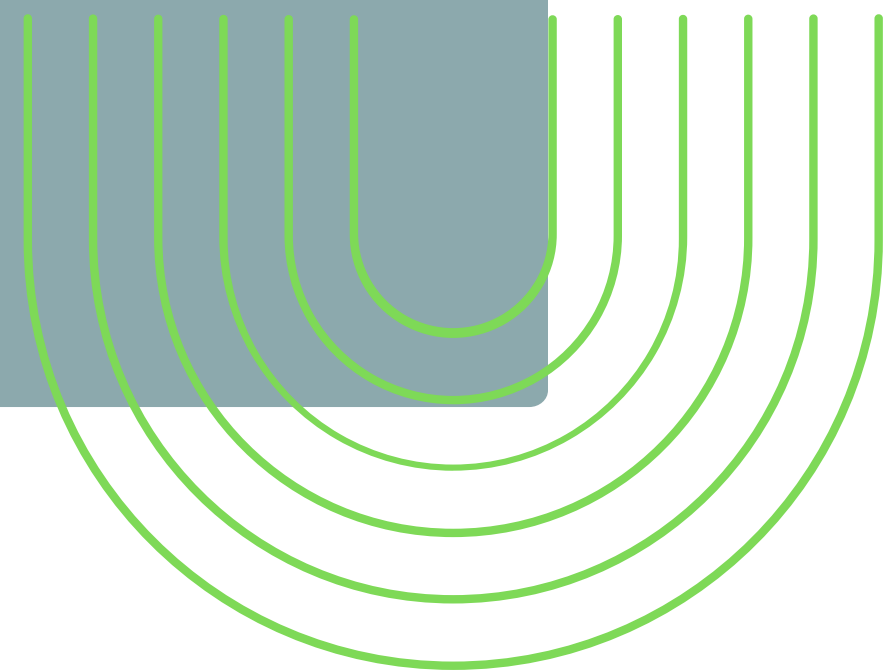


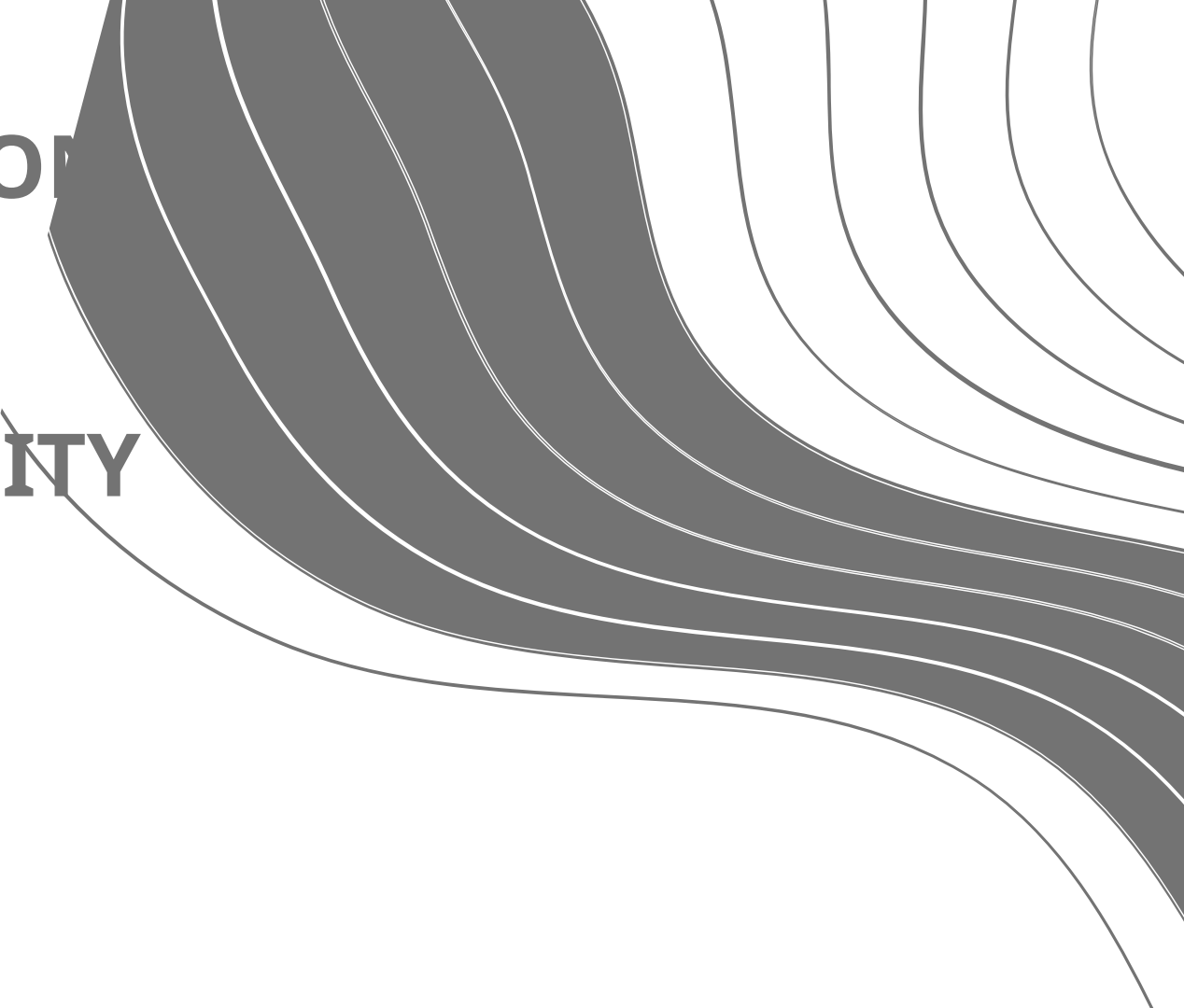


IDENTIFYING SOCIAL INNOVATION: SPOTTING WHAT WORKS

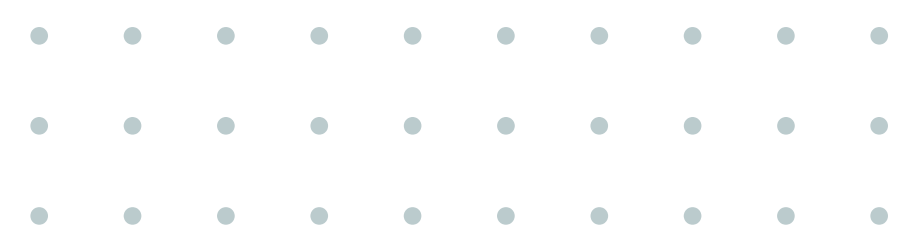
Train the trainers

The RESIST project is co-financed by the European Union (European Regional Development Fund) under the Interreg Baltic Sea Region Programme.





- 01. RECOGNISE AND SPOT SOCIAL INNOVATION**
Traditional innitiatives vs social innovation
- 02. DEFINITION, CHARACTERISTICS, CRUCIALITY**
Impact, sustainability, scalability
- 03. OBSTACLES**
Know the osbstacles
- 04. SHIFTING THE FOCUS TO COMMUNITIES AND OWNERSHIP**
Other way around; grassroots
- 05. COLLABORATIVE NETWORKS, ETHICS, CULTURE**
Networks; ethical & cultural perspective



**TABLE OF
CONTENT**

Why Identifying Social Innovation Matters

Many impactful innovations exist, but not all are scalable or effective.

How do we recognize what works and avoid investing in ideas that fail?

Train-the-Trainer Focus: Teaching others to identify, evaluate, and scale social innovation.

What is Social Innovation?

Definition: Social innovation refers to new ideas, products, or solutions that address pressing social challenges more effectively and sustainably than existing approaches.

Key Characteristics:

- **Novelty:** Introduces a fresh perspective or an unconventional solution.
- **Effectiveness:** Solves a problem in a more impactful way than current methods.
- **Scalability:** Can be expanded or replicated in different contexts.
- **Sustainability:** Maintains impact over time without continuous reliance on external funding.



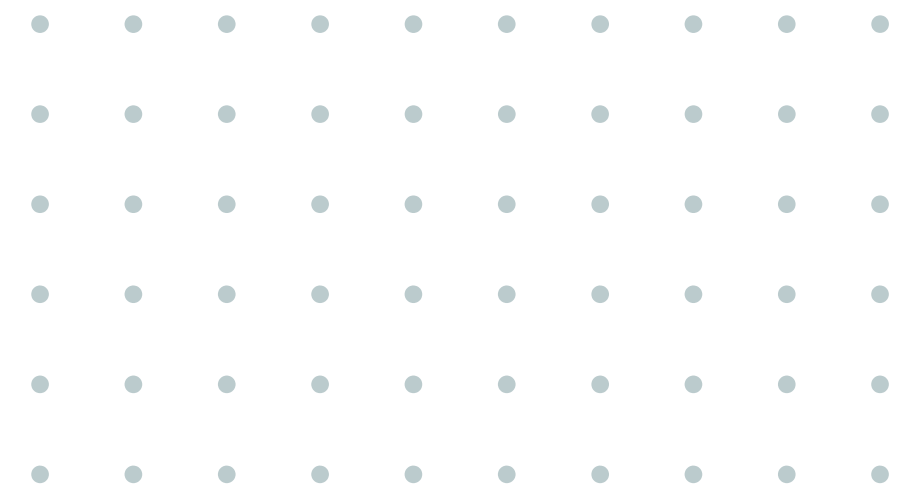


TRADITIONAL INITIATIVES VS. SOCIAL INNOVATION

Traditional initiatives often focus on short-term relief, whereas social innovation aims for systemic change.

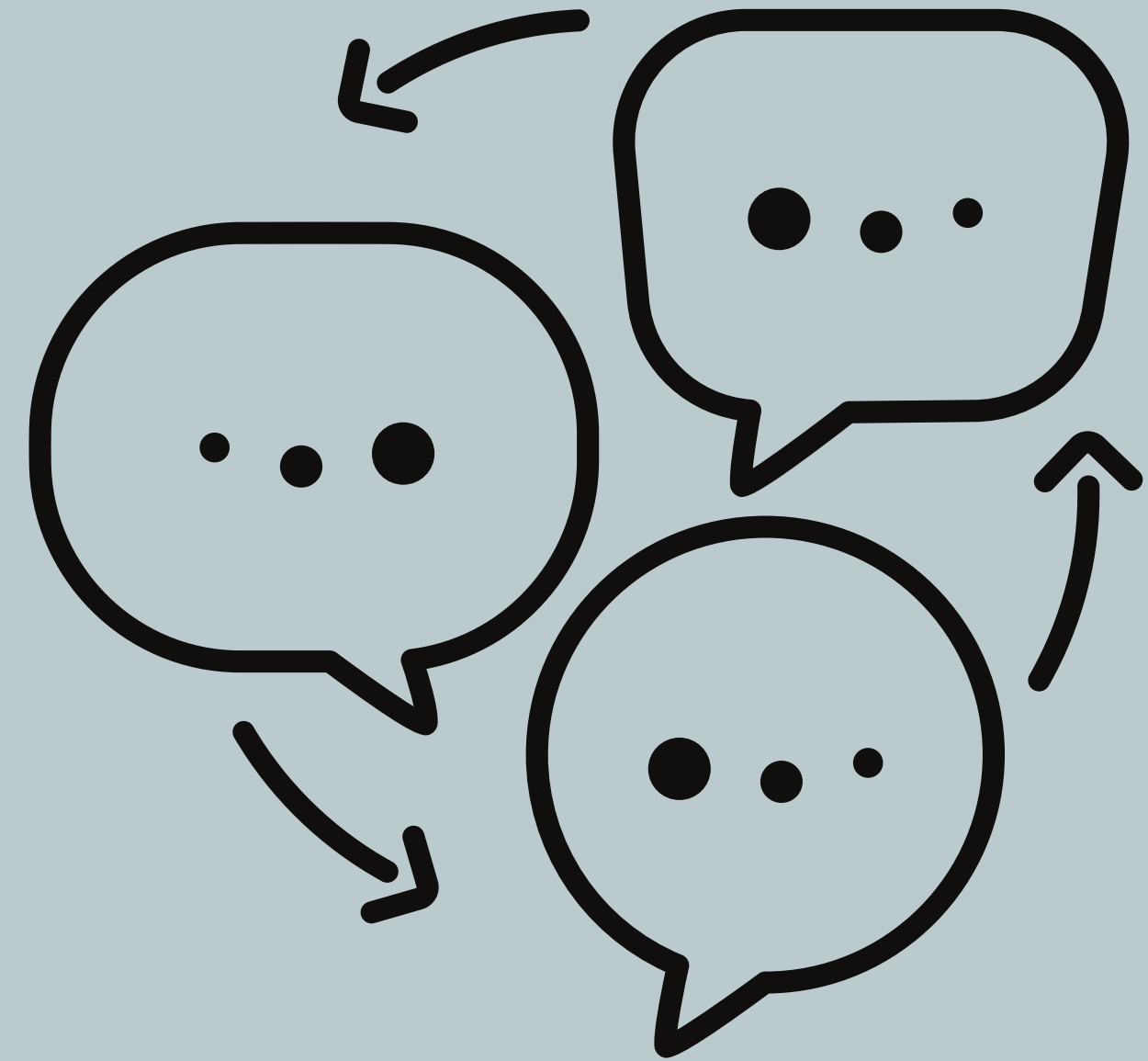
EXAMPLE

Providing food aid vs.
developing a local, self-
sustaining food cooperative.



Understanding Social Innovation

Let's discuss!



What makes an idea a
social innovation rather
than just a project?

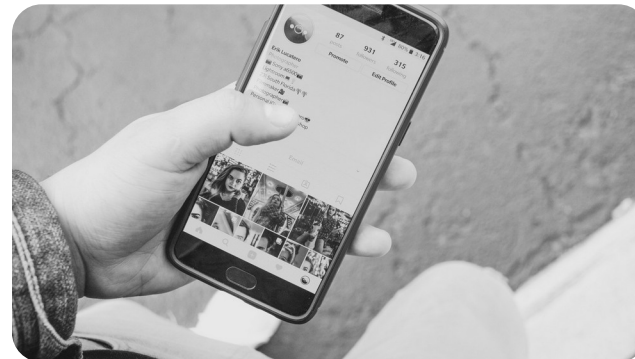


Why Do We Fail to Recognize Social Innovation?



Hype vs. Real Impact: Not every idea is an innovation

True social innovation requires measurable, long-term impact beyond initial hype. To differentiate, we must assess whether a solution effectively addresses root causes, scales sustainably, and produces verifiable benefits rather than just capturing interest.



Short-Term Wins vs. Long-Term Change: Is it just a pilot, or can it scale and sustain?

Short-term wins in social innovation often come from pilot projects or temporary interventions that show quick results but may not be sustainable or scalable in the long run. In contrast, long-term social innovation focuses on systemic solutions that address root causes and can be expanded or adapted across different regions or contexts.



Why Do We Fail to Recognize Social Innovation?



Who Benefits? If the community is not involved, it's not a real innovation.

For social innovation to be truly impactful, it must be designed with and for the community it aims to serve, rather than imposed from the outside. Many well-intended projects fail because they are developed by external organizations without consulting local stakeholders, leading to solutions that don't fit cultural, economic, or social realities.

Overcoming the Hype Trap

Ensuring solutions are developed with a deep understanding of the community's needs.

Distinguishing between projects that sound appealing vs. those that create real, lasting change.



Key obstacles in identifying social innovation.

Lack of Data & Evidence –

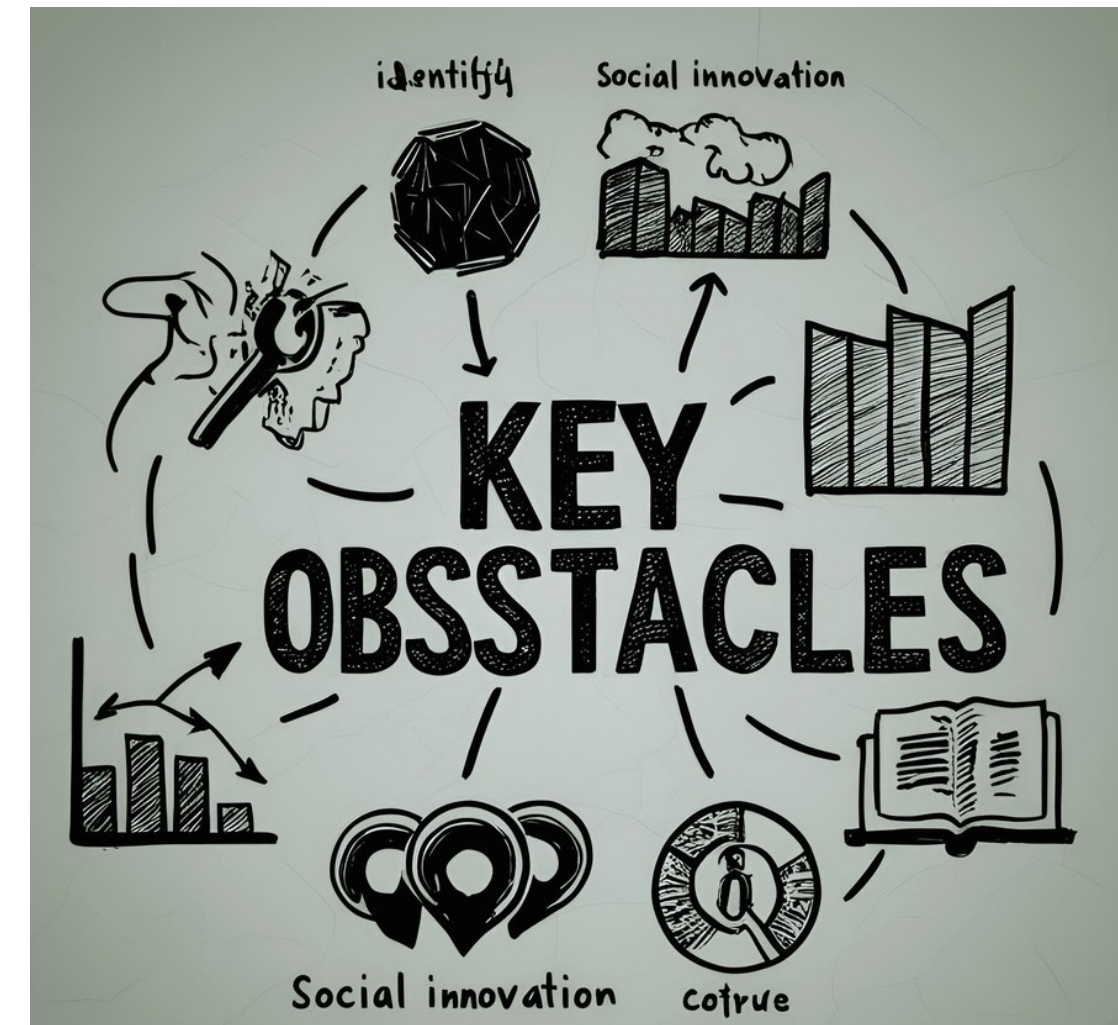
Many projects claim impact but lack proof.

Bias Toward Tech-Driven Solutions –

Social innovation isn't just about new apps!

Resistance to

Change – Many existing institutions resist adopting new models.



Why Identifying Social Innovation is Crucial

- Many social programs receive funding, but not all create meaningful change.
- Identifying true social innovation helps direct investments where they have the highest impact.

EFFICIENCY

Social innovation addresses root causes rather than symptoms.

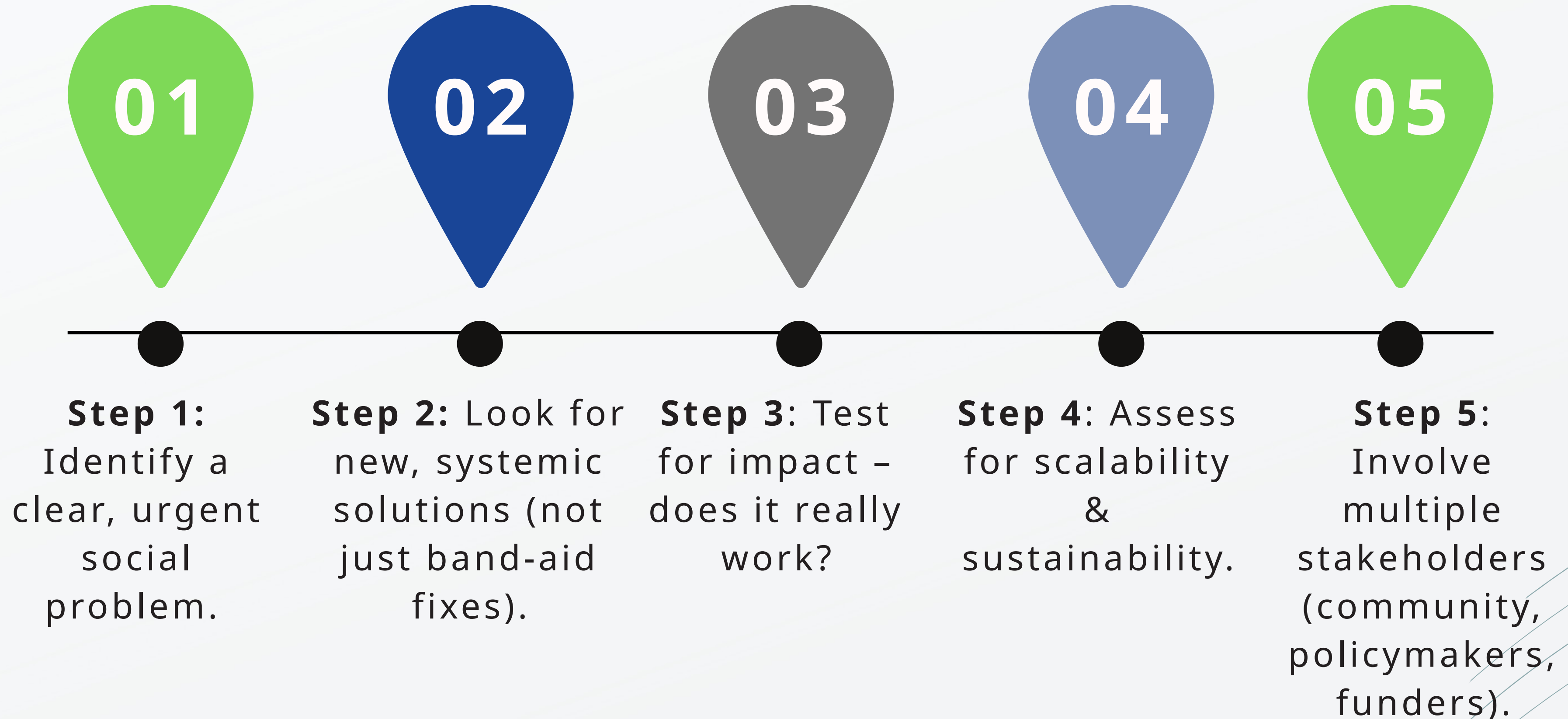
SYSTEMIC CHANGE

A robust strategic plan is the compass that guides organizational growth. Evaluate your current strategic planning processes and refine them for agility and adaptability.

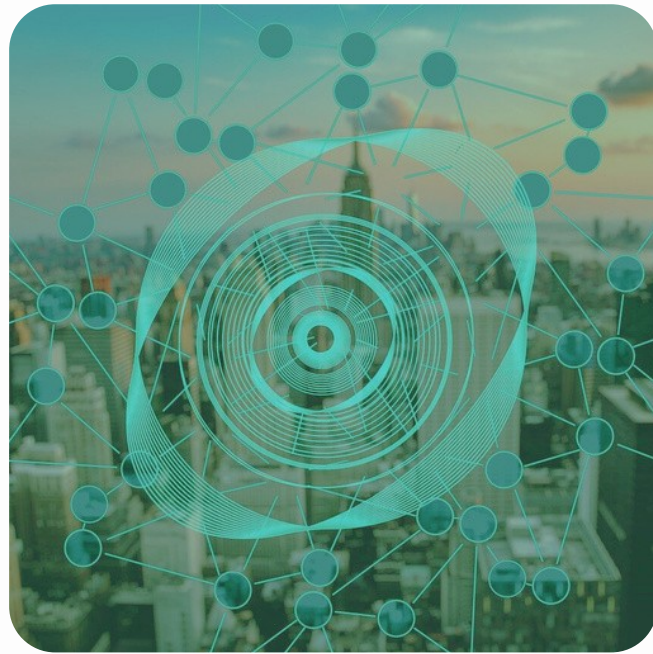
EMPOWERMENT



How to Spot Social Innovation



Three Critical Factors for Identifying Social Innovation



Scalability



Sustainability



Impact



Community-Led Solutions vs. Imposed Solutions:

Innovations that emerge from within the community are more likely to be sustainable and impactful compared to solutions imposed by external organizations.



Ensuring Local Ownership

Successful social innovations empower local stakeholders to take ownership of the solution, fostering long-term success.





Case Study: Technology-Based vs. Grassroots Innovation



Example 1:

A high-tech water purification system deployed in rural areas but abandoned due to lack of maintenance training.



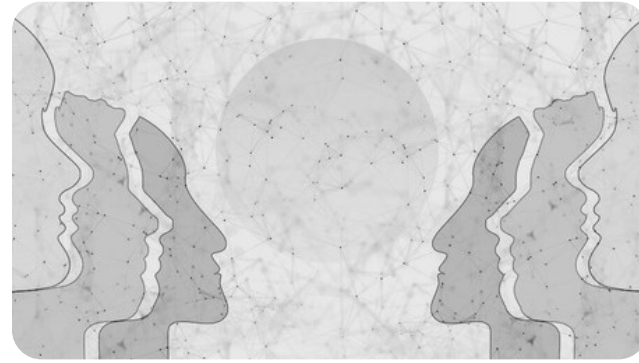
Example 2:

A simple rainwater harvesting system designed by local communities that remains in use for decades.

Lesson: Simplicity and community involvement often lead to sustainable impact.



Building Collaborative Networks for Social Innovation & scaling



Why Networks Matter:

Social innovation thrives on collaboration between NGOs, governments, businesses, and grassroots organizations.

Partnerships bring diverse expertise, funding opportunities, and policy support.



The Role of Mentorship:

Experienced social innovators can guide emerging changemakers.

Mentorship bridges the gap between theory and real-world application.

Ethical Considerations



Avoiding Biases in Identifying Innovation

Ensuring inclusivity and cultural relevance in social innovation selection.

Avoiding the assumption that Western models work globally.



Transparency

Social innovation should be assessed through open, ethical evaluation criteria.



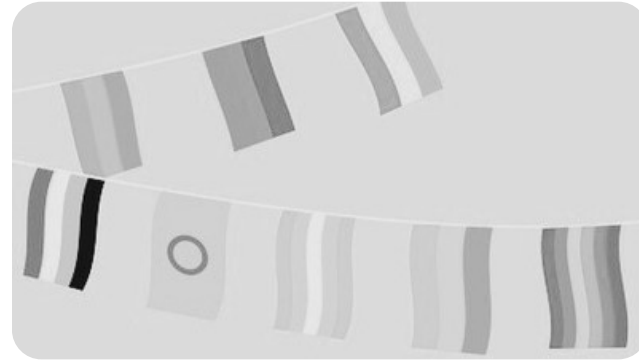
Accountability

Ensuring that projects don't unintentionally create dependency.





Adapting Social Innovation to Different Cultural Contexts



The Challenge of One-Size-Fits-All Solutions

- Social innovations need to be adapted to different communities, traditions, and infrastructures.
- Example: Microfinance models differ between Asia, Africa, and Latin America.



Strategies for Cultural Adaptation

- Engaging local leaders in the innovation design process.
- Conducting cultural feasibility studies before launching an initiative.

The Future of Social Innovation

Emerging Trends:

- a. Hyper-Personalization of Solutions: AI-driven social programs that adapt to individual community needs in real time.
- b. Regenerative economy models focusing on sustainability.
- c. Decentralization & Community Empowerment



The Future of Social Innovation

The Role of Young Innovators:

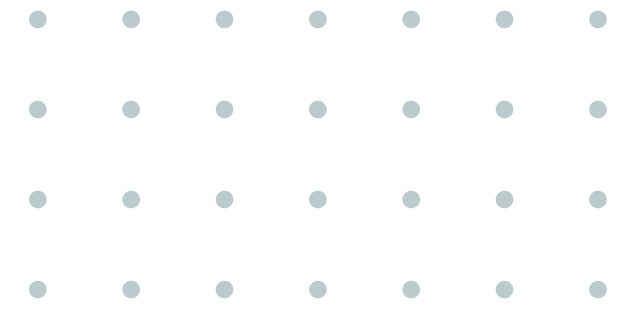
- a. Encouraging youth entrepreneurship in social impact.
- b. University incubators and hackathons driving the next wave of solutions

Interdisciplinary Collaboration:

- a. Encouraging youth in social impact.
- b. The merging of technology, policy, and community engagement to drive systemic change.



KEY TAKEAWAYS & LESSONS LEARNED



UNDERSTANDING SOCIAL INNOVATION

Innovation is not just about new ideas but about sustainable, scalable solutions that create real impact.

IDENTIFYING WHAT WORKS

Avoiding hype and focusing on measurable, evidence-based innovations.

Ensuring community involvement in every stage of development.

SCALING & SUSTAINING IMPACT

Successful innovations are those that can be adapted, replicated, and sustained over time.

Policy, funding, and mentorship are key to scaling social innovations.

YOUR ROLE MOVING FORWARD

Whether as a practitioner, policymaker, investor, or community leader, you have a role in shaping the future of social innovation.

Final Reflection & Next Steps

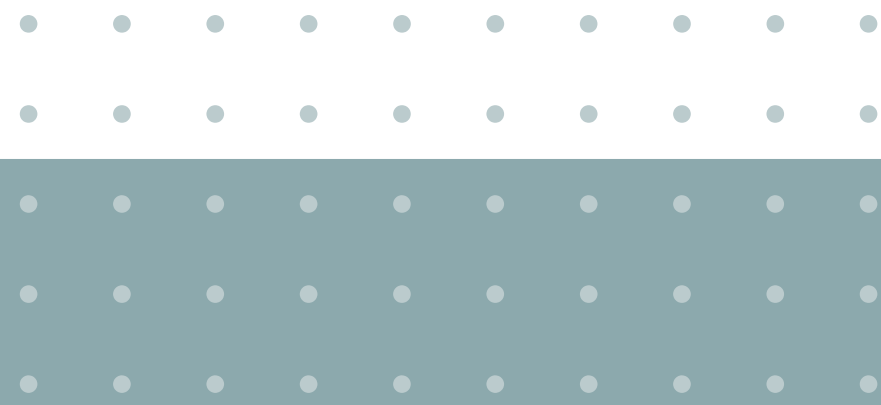


Reflect on Key Questions:

- What social innovations have inspired you the most?
- How can you apply the lessons learned in your own work or community

Commit to Action:

- Identify one step you can take to support or implement a social innovation.
 - Engage with networks, share knowledge, and advocate for innovative solutions.
- 



THANK YOU

Have any question?

