Quantitative measurement of the quality of a social economy project

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Abstract. Highlighting the qualitative impact that the implementation of a social economy project generates is difficult to achieve, as we are talking about projects with a social impact for which the economic factor is not a priority one. Under these circumstances, the assessment of the quality of such an approach can be made taking into account long-term social implications, psychological implications, comfort and safety, etc. To quantify the activities and the impact on the quality of life, we can define a number of indicators to quantify these aspects. In order to quantify such an aspect, we have to consider mainly 2 categories of elements: target group and project indicators.

1. Introduction
The implementation of three border areas projects with specific objectives (human resource development, integration of vulnerable groups on the labor market and the development of profit generating activities) is a challenge both in terms of their achievement and impact assessment which generates it.

Under these circumstances, the qualitative assessment of such approaches becomes difficult, and such an assessment must be based on a number of concrete indicators [1 - 3]. Starting from this point, we consider that the indicators that can best outline such an approach [4 - 7] fall in principle in two broad categories: project indicators and target group indicators, as shown in Figure 1.

![Figure 1. Scheme of qualitative / quantitative evaluation of a project](image-url)
Using the Global Product / Service Quality Indicator, [8] by analogy, we can build a synthetic indicator of social economy projects, taking into account the two categories of data, namely project indicators and target group indicators.

2. Working Methodology

For the calculation of such an indicator we considered two distinct phases, the definition of the indicator and the application of the indicator in the case of such a project.

2.1. Defining the indicator

The definition of the indicator has started from the general formula of the Global Quality Indicator [8] and, using the expert method, have been determined the weightings of this indicator. The expert's method of determining the importance of a quality feature involves selecting a number of people working in the field and applying a questionnaire on the importance of quality characteristics. A questionnaire was applied to a number of 20 social enterprise managers that aimed at identifying the weight of each indicator in the overall quality indicator [8].

\[ X_G = \sum_{i=1}^{n} x_i \times p_i \]  
(1)

with

- \( X_G \) = Global Quality Indicator,
- \( x_i \) = specific value,
- \( p_i \) = weight / importance of the feature.

In the case of social economy projects, we consider it useful to assess quality using a global project quality indicator that sums the values for the project indicators and for the target group.

In this case, the project quality indicator can be defined as:

\[ P_{QS} = (\sum_{a=1}^{m} t_a \times p_{at}) \times p_t + (\sum_{a=1}^{m} p_{i_a} \times p_{ai}) \times p_i \]  
(2)

with

- \( P_{QS} \) = Project Quality Score,
- \( t_a \) = target group value,
- \( p_{at} \) = importance of the element,
- \( p_t \) = importance of target group in indicator,
- \( p_{i_a} \) = project indicators value,
- \( p_{ai} \) = importance of the element,
- \( p_i \) = importance of project indicators value.

2.2. Calculating the indicator

As far as the project indicators are concerned, the situation is presented in Table 1 below, which performs a comparative analysis of the proposed / assumed and achieved levels for the project “Active measures for the development of social economy in the Bucharest-Ilfov and South-Muntenia Regions”.

The proposed objective of the ”Active measures for the development of social economy in the Bucharest-Ilfov and South-Muntenia Regions” project was to facilitate social inclusion and increase employment level, including by promoting entrepreneurial culture for 46 people from Bucharest-Ilfov and South-Muntenia regions. The total target group of the project was of 136 persons, out of which 125 belong to vulnerable groups, and 11 managers of social economy structures (SES) from the two implementation regions.

The 125 persons belonging to the vulnerable groups benefited from the first part of the intervention of information and counselling services, and in the 11 SES included in the project, 35 persons were employed. These persons, selected and engaged in the new SES, have benefited from a complementary package of services and training courses for the adaptation and maintaining at work, and implicitly, the sustainable development of SES.
| Indicators                                                                 | Prognosis | Achievement |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|-------------|
| Immediate production indicators (output)                                 |           |             |
| Number of incorporated social economy structures                         | 11        | 11          |
| Number of people benefiting from guidance / counselling - social economy  | 125       | 147         |
| Number of participants in training - social economy                      | 136       | 135         |
| Number of ESF participants - women                                       | 15        | 19          |
| Number of ESF participants - Roma persons                                | 25        | 32          |
| Number of ESF participants - people with disabilities                    | 15        | 31          |
| Number of ESF participants - other vulnerable groups                     | 70        | 65          |
| Number of communication and promotion events - social economy            | 2         | 0           |
| Result indicators                                                        |           |             |
| Number of jobs created by social economy structures                      | 46        | 47          |
| Number of certified training participants - social economy               | 125       | 135         |
| Number of jobs maintained by social economy structures                   | 46        | 47          |

The target group analysis is presented in the table below.

| Target group                                                                 | Prognosis | Achievement |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|-------------|
|                                                                            | Women     | Men         | Women     | Men         |
| Families having more than 2 children                                        | 4         | 6           | 8         | 4           |
| Mono-parental families                                                      | 4         | 1           | 7         | 1           |
| Managers of the social enterprises                                          | 15        | 0           | 20        | 0           |
| People who left school early                                                | 3         | 7           | 4         | 7           |
| People living from the guaranteed minimum income                            | 20        | 20          | 9         | 15          |
| Persons with disabilities                                                   | 8         | 7           | 14        | 17          |
| Roma people                                                                 | 10        | 15          | 13        | 19          |
| Young people over 18 leaving the institutionalized child protection system  | 3         | 2           | 0         | 0           |

Starting from the defined indicator, the calculation methodology and the resulting values are presented in Tables 3 and 4, which allow the calculation of the Global Quality Indicator of a social economy project. The data source is the project under consideration.

Regarding the importance of each indicator, the 20 selected specialists set a importance percentage of 66% (1320 points) for target group values and 34% (680 points) for project indicator values. Taking into account the importance coefficients assigned to the project indicators and the target group, and the values previously calculated, we can calculate the value $X_{GP}$ using the formula below:

$$p_{GQS} = (\sum_{a=1}^{m} t_a \times p_{at}) \times pt + (\sum_{a=1}^{m} p_i a \times p_{ai}) \times pi = 0.9087$$ (3)
Table 3. Calculation for target groupe

| Target group                                         | Prognosis | Achievement | $t_a$ | $p_{\text{at}}$ | $t_a \times p_{\text{at}}$ |
|------------------------------------------------------|-----------|-------------|-------|----------------|-----------------------------|
| Families having more than 2 children                 | 10        | 12          | 1     | 11.11%         | 11.11                       |
| Mono-parental families                               | 5         | 8           | 1     | 11.11%         | 11.11                       |
| Women                                                | 15        | 20          | 1     | 11.11%         | 11.11                       |
| Managers of the social enterprises                   | 11        | 11          | 1     | 11.11%         | 11.11                       |
| People who left school early                         | 10        | 10          | 1     | 11.11%         | 11.11                       |
| People living from the guaranteed minimum income     | 40        | 24          | 06    | 11.11%         | 6.67                        |
| Persons with disabilities                            | 15        | 31          | 1     | 11.11%         | 11.11                       |
| Roma people                                          | 25        | 32          | 1     | 11.11%         | 11.11                       |
| Young people over 18 leaving the institutionalized child protection system | 5        | 0           | 0     | 11.11%         | 0                           |
| **TOTAL**                                            | **84.44** |             |       |                |                             |

Table 4. Calculation for project indicators

| Project indicator                                         | Prognosis | Achievement | $t_a$ | $p_{\text{at}}$ | $t_a \times p_{\text{at}}$ |
|----------------------------------------------------------|-----------|-------------|-------|----------------|-----------------------------|
| Number of incorporated social economy structures         | 11        | 11          | 1     | 22             | 22                          |
| Number of people benefiting from guidance / counselling - social economy | 125       | 147         | 1.17  | 10             | 11.76                       |
| Number of participants in training - social economy      | 136       | 135         | 0.99  | 12             | 11.91                       |
| Number of jobs created by social economy structures      | 46        | 47          | 1.02  | 25             | 25.543                      |
| Number of certified training participants - social economy | 125       | 135         | 1.08  | 8              | 8.64                        |
| Number of jobs maintained by social economy structures   | 46        | 47          | 1.02  | 23             | 23.5                        |
| **TOTAL**                                                | **103.35**|             |       |                |                             |

3. Discussions and conclusions

The values calculated for the project under consideration indicate a performance of more than 90% of the assumed values. The indicator allows quantifying the qualitative aspects of implementing a project at the congruence of several areas with specific objectives. Such an indicator has a number of advantages, including:

- The possibility of quantifying heterogeneous elements
- High applicability for projects in different areas
- Allows a synthesis view of the impact of a project

It also has a series of limitations, generated in particular by the reporting of values to those assumed, but can be improved.
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