

The
Research
Toolkit

EQUAL*Reach*

Metrics That Matter: Measuring Business and Social Impact Together



What is EqualReach?

EqualReach is an impact-driven, B2B freelancing marketplace connecting organizations to vetted, highly-skilled teams from refugee communities around the world.

Together, we create dignified work while achieving your business goals.

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Introduction:

From Research to Action

Building on the findings from Toolkit 1: Research & Insights Report, this resource provides a practical framework for organizations seeking to measure both business performance and social value through a unified, data-driven approach.

Across industries, leaders are recognizing that success is no longer defined solely by profit margins or productivity, but also by how a company contributes to the well-being of its people, communities, and planet. Yet while the aspiration to measure blended value is growing, consistent methodology remains elusive.

This toolkit bridges that gap by outlining the types of metrics organizations can track—business, social, and blended—and by offering guidance on integrating them into everyday decision-making. It draws on EqualReach's research, global benchmarking, and industry best practices from leading corporate responsibility and sustainability frameworks.

This toolkit explores the evolving role of metrics in defining value creation, providing organizations with a lens to measure and communicate **both economic and societal outcomes** effectively.

How Performance Measurement Is Evolving

Performance measurement has shifted from a financial-only focus to a dual lens encompassing both business outcomes and social impact. This transformation is driven by several intersecting forces:

Talent and Workforce Pressures

The global labor market is tightening. Companies are rethinking how they attract, develop, and retain talent in increasingly competitive industries. Measuring workforce inclusivity, engagement, and development is becoming a strategic imperative (OECD, 2023).

Regulatory Accountability

Governments and multilateral bodies are codifying sustainability and human-rights standards into law. Regulations such as the UK Procurement Act (2023), the EU Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD), and the Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive (CSDDD) require organizations to integrate and report on environmental and social indicators across supply chains (European Union, 2024).

Investor and Consumer Expectations

Over 90 percent of global consumers expect companies to act responsibly (Nielsen, 2022), while Gen Z and Millennial employees consistently choose employers that align with their values (Deloitte, 2023). Investors, too, are prioritizing environmental, social, and governance (ESG) factors—signaling that social impact is not peripheral but material to business success.

Together, these dynamics are reshaping how organizations define and measure performance. Leading companies are adopting a blended measurement mindset—linking people, purpose, and profit to deliver value for all stakeholders.

The Case for Blended Measurement

EqualReach's 2025 research revealed that organizations across sectors are increasingly seeking holistic performance indicators that reflect both economic and social outcomes. Yet only one in three currently measures these dimensions together.

Traditional KPIs—such as margin, efficiency, and revenue growth—capture financial health but miss how inclusion, sustainability, or ethical sourcing affect long-term resilience. Blended measurement closes that gap.

As one sustainability executive explained in an interview:
"Our investors want proof of impact. Our employees want purpose. Our leadership wants growth. The only way to align them is through integrated measurement."

Blended measurement enables organizations to:

- Demonstrate accountability and transparency across stakeholders.
- Quantify how social initiatives drive business outcomes.
- Align internal decision-making with external reporting standards such as CSRD and ISSB (European Union, 2024; IFRS Foundation, 2023).



Understanding **Metric Categories**

EqualReach defines three primary categories of measurement—Business Metrics, Social Metrics, and Blended Metrics—each serving a distinct purpose but designed to inform one another. While each category serves distinct goals, organizations achieve the most insight when business, social, and blended metrics are tracked together.

Classic Business Metrics: Still the Foundation

Traditional indicators of operational performance that remain central to corporate dashboards. These include:

1. **Growth:** revenue generation, market share
2. **Profitability:** gross and net margins, cash flow
3. **Customer satisfaction:** Net Promoter Score (NPS), retention rates
4. **Productivity:** output per employee, process efficiency

Social Impact Metrics: Building a More Complete Picture

Indicators that assess contribution to people, local communities, and community impact. These include:

1. **Diversity, Equity & Inclusion:** workforce representation, pay equity, supplier diversity
2. **Workforce & Employment Impact:** skills development, employee retention
3. **Sustainability & Environmental Impact:** carbon emissions, energy use, waste reduction
4. **Community & Social Partnerships:** volunteer hours, social investments

Blended Metrics

Metrics that capture the intersection of financial and social performance—where purpose and profit reinforce each other. These blended indicators reveal the full value chain of impact, helping organizations prove that social progress and business performance are interconnected. These include:

- **Productivity gains linked to inclusion or employee well-being**
- **Cost savings from sustainable operations**
- **Customer loyalty tied to ethical sourcing practices**
- **Innovation rates associated with diverse teams**



Why **Blended Metrics Matter**

Integrated measurement tells a more complete story of value creation. It also builds stakeholder confidence, strengthens brand equity, and aligns operations with evolving global frameworks such as CSRD, ISSB, and the Sustainable Development Goals (European Union, 2024; IFRS Foundation, 2023; United Nations Global Compact, 2023).

Studies by McKinsey (2020) and Deloitte (2023) show that companies with strong inclusion and sustainability practices outperform peers in innovation, employee retention, and market share. PwC (2024) further notes that over 70 percent of investors expect disclosure of measurable social outcomes alongside financial results.

Simply put, measuring blended impact is both a compliance requirement and a competitive advantage.



Examples of **Blended Metrics in Practice**

- Retail: Measuring sales growth alongside food-donation volume to show how waste reduction drives efficiency and community impact.
- Technology: Tracking innovation output after implementing inclusive hiring initiatives.
- Finance: Evaluating the link between community-investment programs and customer retention.
- Manufacturing: Reporting emissions reduction as both environmental stewardship and cost optimization.

These examples demonstrate that social and financial metrics, when aligned, create stronger stories of organizational performance.

Designing an **Integrated Measurement Framework**

Establishing a blended measurement framework begins with alignment—linking social impact activities directly to business objectives. EqualReach recommends a five-step approach adaptable to any organization.

Define Purpose and Material Areas

Identify where your organization can create the greatest shared value—such as workforce development, ethical sourcing, or digital inclusion.

Map Existing Metrics

Catalog current KPIs across departments. Business systems often contain proxies for social outcomes (e.g., engagement scores, supplier audits).

Identify Gaps and Set Targets

Pinpoint missing data and set measurable, time-bound goals. Even directional targets foster accountability.

Integrate Across Teams

Align sustainability, HR, procurement, and finance metrics under common objectives. For instance, link supplier diversity data with cost-efficiency measures to illustrate shared outcomes.

Communicate and Iterate

Report transparently and refine continuously. Integration is iterative, not static.

Challenges and Enablers

Challenges

- Fragmented data ownership and inconsistent definitions
- Lack of standardized tools and cross-team collaboration
- Limited executive understanding of social metrics' strategic value

Enablers

- Technology: Data platforms and AI tools that integrate multiple performance dimensions.
- Regulation: Global frameworks (CSRD, ISSB) that establish consistent expectations.
- Partnerships: Collaborations with social enterprises and intermediaries like EqualReach that quantify social value in business terms.

Toward a Shared Language of Impact

Achieving global consistency in measurement requires shared definitions and benchmarks. When organizations align their social and business data within a single reporting structure, they enable comparability, credibility, and learning across sectors. EqualReach supports this transition by helping companies embed ethical outsourcing and inclusive employment metrics into mainstream business reporting, turning qualitative outcomes into measurable results.

Conclusion and Next Steps

Metrics that matter illuminate how business operations create both financial and social value. Organizations that measure both effectively demonstrate operational excellence, social leadership, and resilience.

The next toolkit, Toolkit 3 – The Business Case for Ethical Talent Sourcing, builds on this measurement foundation to show how inclusive, refugee-led, and socially driven sourcing models bring blended impact to life in practice.

Together, the EqualReach Toolkit Series provides organizations with the evidence and frameworks to embed measurable impact into every facet of business strategy.



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What We Do

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