



Module 3 – Chapter 3.1.3

Activity 5. Write your mission statement

Time estimated: 1 - 2 hours

Type of work: group work

Source: Social enterprise toolkit. 2017. A resource for communities and individuals setting up a social enterprise in Ireland

<https://www.socent.ie/>

1. Introduction

The first step for any social enterprise is to be clear about what you want to achieve, what your motives are and what you will do to achieve them.

You need to have a well-defined business idea that communicates well what you do, how you do it and why you do it.

Tackling a problem or challenge becomes the organisations' social mission.

2. Defining your issue/ cause/ need

Social enterprises often come down to the question 'Why?'. This question is generally what sets them apart from a regular business. Your issue or your cause can be a social, environmental or economic issue that needs to be tackled. It is important to identify to whom are the beneficiaries. Beneficiaries are those that will primarily benefit from your social enterprise.

Exercise 1: Your cause

You will need to understand the issue you are trying to face to understand it better. You will need to focus on the components of your cause. Let's start with a simple exercise.

What needs changing?

- Who is most impacted by your cause?
- Are there any characteristics about those affected, like their age or circumstance, or their
- Try and identify the typical experiences of the target population / segments
- Identify trends or future expected changes that may change the situation (good and bad)

Says who?

- What are your sources for identifying this as a problem?
- Who else is dealing with the problem or bringing people's attention to it?

Is it a critical need?

- How large is the target population (ideally broken down by the separate groups outlined above)
- Is the problem growing / is the target population growing?
- To what extent is the problem being resolved today?

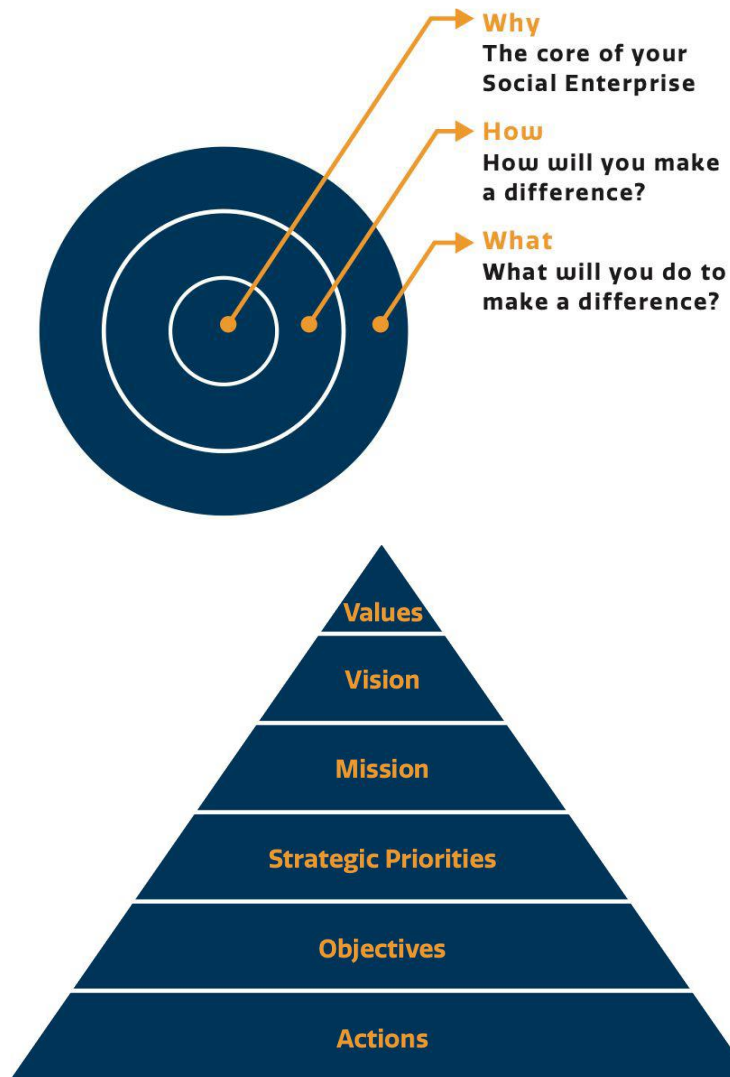
What is the best way to achieve things?

- Do I work with others?
- Should it be a social enterprise?

3. Vision, Mission and Values

You can simply start your social enterprise, but without a clear direction or setting achievable tasks, you will be more likely to fail than succeed.

A vision really gets to the 'Why' of your organisation. It is useful to start there.



Vision exercise: A vision is the world that your organisation seeks to create. From the last exercise, you should have identified the issue you are trying to tackle. In this exercise, let's look at ways of developing a vision.

You might find it helpful to put a timeframe to your vision. When you achieve it, you can always write another one! For example: 'By 2025 our Youth Cafe will be Dublin City's largest and most popular provider of advice, training and encouragement to young people seeking to improve their lives and their opportunities.'

Work on developing the words and phrases that best describe your social enterprise.

- Make sure the time frame is within the next 5 to 10 years.
- Imagine what the newspaper headline might read like about your successes
- Can people understand your message?
- Dare to be different and make it real



Storytelling exercise: Imagine you have been given four minutes to give a talk on your social enterprise. You are endeavouring to convince people of something that needs to be done and you have been given an opportunity to present your solution.

Try telling a story that does the following:

- Brings people on a journey
- Gives people a sense of the problem
- Who is most likely affected by the issue
- How are you going to solve it
- What is the impact of your solution?
- Do you have an ask, a key message you want people to leave with
- Is there an 'ask' or a 'call to action' that people will leave with

4. Mission

Now that you have got a vision, you need to work on how it will be achieved. A mission statement is much more focused on giving a brief insight into the internal workings and objectives of your project.

Your mission statement has to be short, specific and measurable. It expands on your vision statement, informing the reader how you plan to deliver the change you believe is required.

In social enterprises, you can also have it described as your 'social mission'. If you have a social enterprise, your mission statement will naturally be focused on your social causes.

Mission exercise: Write yourself a mission statement that says:

What are you going to do?	
Who is going to do it?	
How it will be achieved?	

The mission statement needs to mean something to you and everyone who comes into contact with your organisation. It should include the who, how and what. For example:

'Dublin City Youth Cafe works with young people to deliver personalised programmes that help them develop skills and goals and the space and support to achieve them. It does this



by bringing the best youth workers, mentors and advisors together in a safe and supportive environment.'

Your mission statement:



