

Western Heads East (WHE)

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Welcome to today's episode on IV breakfast TV featuring a group of Western students who have created a comprehensive Western Heads East impact assessment. Let's take a look at what the program is all about. People from the west often focus on a skewed view of East Africa. I'm here to tell you a different story about how I was able to learn and be part of a thriving community program where empowered women contribute to sustainable economic development, maternal health, and community health nutrition of East Africa, and East Africa, we work alongside woman and community to implement a social enterprise model for the production of a probiotic yogurt called Fiti.

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Yogurt mamas are women in these communities, who are part economically while they bring health to their communities. The mama produced probiotic yogurt in nearly 200 kitchens across East Africa. They become leaders in the community on health, education, and nutrition. I know that Western had these has some key project goals. Let's hear from a student why they should be measured and the impact should be the floor is all yours. Nice to meet you. And thank you for this opportunity. In a broader context. impact assessments are necessary to measure the effect of organizations, especially those that focus on contributing and non financial activities for Western Heads East specifically, they're focused on creating wholesome impact that goes well beyond financial metrics. This program has the goal of achieving sustainable social enterprises that contribute to the health of communities, knowledge transfer, and empowerment of women and youth. Performing an impact assessment can help to decide the future of the organization's efforts and how to best build capacity. At this point in roster has these progression as they approach their 20th anniversary, the program to reflect on their ability to achieve these goals.

Wow, thank you for providing that insight Shafeeq. I can also imagine that over the years, there's been a significant amount of evolution and spin-off effects that the program has enabled. So this is a great way to assess the impact of this progress. Most definitely. And it was a highlight for me to be able to see all that Western Heads East has accomplished and their optimistic outlook for continual improvements as well. Thanks, Shafeeq. So from my understanding, you've been working on this project since September, tell me a little bit about the different stakeholders and how they interact with one another. Most definitely. So the impact assessment evaluates Western has these as a university program, so not just solely as a yoga social enterprise. This encompasses the communities, which includes East London, East Africa, and the western campus community hubs, which includes the yogurt kitchens in East Africa, and they become community hubs for people to learn about things like health and find support, as well as academic aspects such as research and papers and students, which includes the internships and classes. So it's been a long journey spanning a few months, but how did you actually go about starting to develop your assessment Ella.

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So we knew we wanted to use a theory of change framework to pinpoint the areas of impact. This started by identifying the key stakeholders, so you can see them up here, and their relationships to one another. This chart helped us see the overlap and pinpoint these impacts. So if we go to the next slide, we can see that we've organized these inputs into segments of London, Western University, East Africa, or standard elements. And why did you break down East Africa into those specific parts.

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So we broke them down into these elements, because they were the beginning step in the impact and they were directly Instituted bu Western Heads East. There, these inputs carry out the activities here, which we organized here in the activity section, which was organized into both the London and East African based yogurt kitchens as well as Western University. These activities show the direct actions of Western heads east, for example, the distribution of yogurt, probiotics objects, this was Western husband's main idea point when they started the program.

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Right. So Western heads, he started with the idea to get these probiotics to developing nations to help boost immunity specifically during the initial response to the HIV AIDS pandemic.

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Yes, and as we know, now, the program developed well beyond that idea. The outcomes from these direct activities carried out by Western heads, these are shown here, and the outputs section. Not only were these yogurt kitchens developed in order to get this probiotic to locals, but other programs were developed in order to empower women youth. There's numerous research publications and student bodies that have learned from this program.

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This sounds like a broad scope of change. How does this all affect the people and other stakeholders related to the program?

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So as you can see from these outputs, they have led to a diverse set of outcomes. Some outcomes have were directly affected, affected by the hands on work of Western heads east. And some of these initial outcomes go beyond the work of Western heads east and have produced their own effects.

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Could you give me an example, for sure. one instance where this happened was the creation of the yogurt kitchens, the work of Western Heads East

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directly produced yogurt kitchens as a way to distribute the FITI probiotic, these kitchens have gone on to create their own programs from within the kitchen. Many communities have turned the Yogurt kitchens into community hubs where members can come and participate in programs to learn about nutrition or sexual health. The direct outcomes have gone on to form their impact that can be measured through more nutritional practices. And the higher ages of first time mothers. Seems like the program has really taken on a life of its own. It has. And that is exactly what helped us sum up the impact of the program. The ultimate impact of Western heads east all of these elements that it encompasses is connected to the community. Community is a sense of the sense of those in your neighborhood, but also global community. An example this is the research publications. These are conducted by academics from places in the world like Canada, The Neterhlands and Pakistan, about social enterprise programs conducted in Africa. And these programs in Africa also connect the local community through facilitating the opportunity to meet and learn from each other.

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I think community connectivity is a great way to sum all that up. Thank you for walking us through the theory of change and how you got there. I look forward to diving into this outcome some more.

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Welcome, Christine. So what is the theory of change supposed to be used for?

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Well, we developed an assessment framework that basically uses the outcome component of the theory of change that Ella mentioned as its backbone, and we recommend that Western heads East uses it moving forward to assess the broader impact of the program.

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How does it work? Well, there's two distinct steps. The first is determining which of the three buckets of social capital, knowledge capital, or human capital the project outcome falls under, then the next step is deciding whether or not those outcomes are a direct or an indirect result of Western Heads East.

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And how do you know which bucket the outcome falls under and whether it's direct or indirect? Well, social capital, by definition is the tangible and intangible resources that help communities overcome existing economic and social challenges. You can view social capital, as something that is used to help build the capacity of communities to become more resilient.

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Interesting. So like, just the nutrition from the FITI yogurt sachet count as a social capital? Yes, exactly. And what you just mentioned is a direct outcome of the program because Western has ease has a direct hand in its creation and distribution. But an outcome like public health awareness, for example, is a lot more indirect.

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Okay, so what about knowledge? So knowledge capital is quite straightforward. It's the academic

resources and knowledge synthesized as a result of the Western has these programs. So that's anything from published articles to research to student learning in classrooms,

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and human capital? Human Capital is the skills cultural knowledge exchange in experiences possessed by an individual or population that is tied to the Western he heads East program, you can see human capital as an intangible asset that's basically a cornerstone for personal development for all individuals.

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Okay, so correct me if I'm wrong. An example of a direct outcome would be the skills these interns gain from the program and an indirect outcome is the female empowerment piece that yogurt Mama's gain? Exactly.

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Seems like I'm getting the hang of it. Has this framework been used or tried before? Just this year, we've actually had three interns use it just to measure the larger impact of Western Heads East and I think they're here to speak more about their experiences. Starting with how the program helps the community that large let's hear from one of the students on how they're measuring social capital. Hi, Chantelle.

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Hi! Pleasure to be here. From tell how exactly do these yogurt kitchens help communities in which they operate.

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So firstly, since Western heads East has a hand in setting up the kitchens, a direct outcome includes the nutritional benefits, which helps the community's capacity to tackle social issues like malnutrition. So the yogurt helps those who are malnourished in both East Africa and London and I've seen studies found that probiotic yogurt helped HIV plus individuals in each in East Africa strengthen their immune system to alleviate the side effects of treatment.

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Exactly. Another direct outcome is the resources like business plans for the yogurt Mama's and

Western Heads East also hire student interns to support the kitchens and the program. I understand the internship program has grown quite a bit. It has another direct outcome is the awareness of the Western hazards program itself. As it gets more notice Western international consider the impact of the social enterprises and drawn more partnerships to grow. Hmm, nice. So have people been inspired by this program? Absolutely. We learned that there are tons of spin off programs and this falls under

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indirect Social capitals because Western itself doesn't necessarily have hand in operating these programs. An example of one energy under development is a milk collection program for the yogurt kitchens.

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But the growing reach of the program, I'm sure a lot of members of the community in East Africa have learned a lot about business and health. Under social capital, we look at the actual avenues that allows for the knowledge translation, which we classify as an indirect outcome. Western heads east never intended for these Europeans and East Africa to become community hubs. There are numerous meetings that take place there which provide education on things like health topics, by providing these avenues that East African communities can be better informed to overcome social challenges. That's awesome. And what are you doing to keep track of all of this? It's a big feat. But for those direct social capitals, our framework tracks the operations of the kitchens year over year, and quantitatively tracking activities by the program office, then for the indirect social capitals, tracking the number of spinoff programs, speaking engagements and meetings that take place at the hubs. This can be collected through student interns, or creating systematic procedures to ensure that the kitchens are bookkeeping. Our team also believes that with every quantitative measure, we need to question the quality of every additional unit as well. For example, we can create a whole book of resources, but are they actually being used and do the yogurt mamas find them helpful? Right, because numbers only tell you so much. And what about all the knowledge to tackle social issues which you previously mentioned? Yes. So we call that indirect outcome, public health awareness. And that will have to be done through surveys to gauge the level of understanding on those topics, as well as the accuracy of their knowledge. It's difficult to capture all the social issues that these kitchens help with. Every community is different. And something we've been keeping in mind is separating any efforts done by external parties to tackle the same issue, so we don't overestimate the actual impact of Western heads east. Well, thank you so much, Chantelle I think that gives the audience a great overview of how central social capital is to the Western heads these programs. I do believe another student is going to help us get a better understanding of how they're measuring knowledge capital. Hi, Victoria. Hello, thanks for having me. Victoria, how exactly does Western heads East build knowledge

capital? Yeah, for sure. So knowledge capital is a direct outcome of the academic resources and knowledge published from research conducted by the Western Heads East program. So this is mainly been facilitated through westerns ability to collaborate with the East African partners to independently or co published research findings based on the program itself, which we have categorized as academic development.

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So the collaboration of these two groups leads to professionally published findings. Yes, exactly. So in fact, Western has actually collaborated with the East African partners, and has had the ability to co produce upwards of 53 papers, as well as independently published 44 papers on research findings. Wow, that's fantastic. It looks like the beneficiaries of this research would span far and wide. How exactly are you keeping track of this? Yeah, absolutely. So we know the direct beneficiaries of the research to be the student interns, researchers and faculty at Western and East African university partners. But what's harder to keep track of is the indirect beneficiaries of this knowledge, such as the students who have studied this research in school or different faculty members that may have incorporated it into their lectures. However, our main attempt at tracking the reach of the research is to keep track of the citations of the independently and co-produced papers to get a better idea of how other people are interacting with the research findings. Then looking to the future we hope to collect more data on how many people are learning about Western heads east and the classrooms through lectures or published cases, as well as gather some faculty and intern testimonials to reflect on their academic development through the publishing the of the research findings.

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Thank you for those insights Victoria. Our next student is Shafeeq and he will be sharing with us the final capital which is human capital. Thanks for having me. Really excited to be here today. So we've learned a lot about social and knowledge capital. Tell me a bit about what human capital is. Yeah, for sure. So under human capital, we have four outcomes personal financial independence, entrepreneurship, development of yogurt, mamas, youth and intern development and knowledge transfer. for personal financial literacy, the mechanism of play is job creation. Through our proxies, were able to determine how the financial well being of the mamas are improving. For example, closing the income gap between men and women is a huge step forward. And it stems from the yogurt kitchen. Wow, that sounds amazing. So it sounds like the kitchen is a complex organization. Does the western head esst program provide business training? Yes, they do. And this actually brings me to my second outcome entrepreneurship

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developed of the yogurt mamas under our first mechanism called business acumen development, we look at a few metrics to determine how well the head mom is able to run the kitchen, which in turn reflects her ability to execute the training Western heads east provided. Awesome. It also seems like these proxies would help determine the sustainability of the kitchen, which is another great insight about the program's outcomes. There are talks, it seems like female empowerment is quite common. Yes, and that's another mechanism to although it's indirect by being in an environment that fosters growth and development, the women are able to feel like they have an individual identity. When looking at this over many years, we can see improving overall mental state.

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That's great. Let's turn to other groups that the kitchen helps. One of the outcomes is youth and intern development. Although it seems like this is an indirect outcome of the program. That's right, the youth benefit from professional and personal development and the interns are also developed through their internship or working at the youth cafe, the Yogurt kitchen and through university partnerships, youth in East Africa and in London, are able to develop new skills. Through yearly surveys, we can measure how skill development is improving each year.

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That's amazing. So it seems that personal development would include creativity, opportunities and satisfaction.

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That's right. Altogether, we're able to look at if the youth are better able to envision the future and are more satisfied with themselves, which indicates better confidence and desire to continue growing. Turning to interns, their awareness of societal issues increases by being exposed to other cultures and global problems. directly. They also gain from their key takeaways from the internship so they can reflect on these activities and grow as an individual.

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Wow, that's spectacular. Lots of development. For many stakeholders. Your final outcome is knowledge transfer. Tell me more about it. Yeah, for sure. So we have three mechanisms for this outcome. Under public engagement. We can measure this through the number of views on the internet, blog posts, and also the number of unique customers at the kitchen. More views and customers indicates greater awareness of the program. With campus community engagement, we can look at how many students apply for the internship and how many staff and faculty are

involved in the program. Oh, very interesting. So if you were to look at this year over year, then this would tell us how interest in the program is changing. And ideally, you want to see this increasing. Exactly, you got it. And lastly, intergenerational knowledge transfer is indirect. And we can measure this through surveys to capture mama to youth teachings. The mom has testimonials about how they're teaching their kids indicates knowledge transfer. More transfer indicates better ability for others to work in business settings and carry forward this learning.

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Thanks for sharing this, it definitely seems like holistically knowledge exchange is a theme. Let's now turn to the team's recommendation. Seems like this framework has a lot of potential What now? Well, thanks Kasia. The framework is quite a powerful tool. The recommended next steps moving forward for Western heads East is basically filling the gaps. Our intern identified our entrance but a lot of work and going through drives of data and they determined some key pieces of information missing for measurement for each capitals. And that's things like your over your data of employees at each yoga kitchen, faculty testimonials and alumni engagement with the program

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I've ever done this missing missing data pieces of data. This framework sounds quite perfect, don't you think? Well, like any tool, it has its drawbacks. Limitations of its framework include better measurements rely on some qualitative data like surveys and interviews. This data can require a lot of manpower and resources to collect as you can imagine, also, the framework is currently very biased towards measuring positive impacts and takes no account of negative externalities. So this is currently just for Western heads east. But do you think this framework can be used outside of the setting? Absolutely. And I think Victoria will be talking about that briefly. Hi, again, Victoria. So are there any other applicable situations or contexts for your framework? Yes, there are. Um, we believe this impact assessment can be used by future international projects that Western or other institutions organized to help inform program or internship creation and trickle down benefits to local communities. Additionally, the emphasis shows the importance of international partnerships and how they can be used to facilitate knowledge transfer, and capacity building. We hope that the framework can show which aspects of this global partnership were effective, and how those aspects can be built into other international programs. Finally, we also believe the framework could help Western heads East MP expansions to different continents in hopes of help guiding what impact they would like to make. That sounds like a huge value. Add. Are there any last parting words?

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I think that we just all really enjoyed working on this project and the entire team is very excited for the implementation of our recommendation and possible future application. So thanks so much for having us. Well, thank you so much for joining me today on IV breakfast TV. It was a delight to dive into your project and the great work you have produced for our fellow breakfast stirs. Be sure to tune in tomorrow for early holiday special