

Lives Improved: quantifying Vodafone Foundation's public benefit

Lives Improved is an indicator used by the Vodafone Foundation to estimate our overall impact. It is the single impact indicator we collate across all programmes run by the Vodafone Foundation (UK registered charity 1089625) and affiliated local Vodafone, Vodacom and Safaricom Foundations. This is in conjunction with detailed monitoring and evaluation of individual programmes.

The Lives Improved methodology was originally devised in collaboration with KPMG and data collection started from the beginning of the 2016/17 financial year. The methodology was refined in October 2018 to improve the robustness of data collection, interpretation and assurance. This remains a work in progress and may be subject to further review and improvement as we learn from embedding this in our work.

How is Lives Improved calculated?

Lives Improved estimates how many beneficiaries have benefitted from Vodafone Foundation programmes. The metric is calculated for each programme run by the 28 Foundations. The data is collated in our Public Benefit Dashboard, enabling us to track cumulative progress towards the Vodafone Foundation's global goal of 1 billion Lives Improved by 2025.

The number of Lives Improved is calculated across two categories, direct and indirect:

- **Direct Lives Improved** – the targeted recipients (beneficiaries) of the programme being delivered (e.g. patients receiving treatment); and
- **Indirect Lives Improved** –
 - individuals with a close relationship to the direct beneficiary who also experience an ancillary positive effect on their lives as a result of the impact the programme has on the direct beneficiary (e.g. family members of patients)
 - those individuals who are employed to deliver or improve the programme (e.g. healthcare professionals involved in delivering care).

The number of 'Direct' and 'Indirect' Lives Improved are recorded per programme, per financial year, and attributed to the money spent on the project in that specific year.

How is the Indirect Lives Improved figure calculated?

Indirect Lives Improved is, in most cases, an estimate of the positive impact felt beyond the target beneficiary. This recognises that for many of our programmes the fact that an individual is able to lead a healthier or more productive life will also benefit other family members or the community around them.

Each Foundation is required to provide justification for estimates of Indirect Lives Improved. For example, estimates may be based on average household size in the country in question.

The data collected to date shows an approximate 30:70 ratio for Direct to Indirect Lives Improved.

What is the threshold for a life improved?

Due to the range of programmes and issues that the Foundations invest in, it is not possible to define a specific quantitative threshold marking when a life is sufficiently improved to be counted towards

the Lives Improved metric. The level of impact felt by individual beneficiaries varies broadly: in some cases, improvement to the quality of life is incremental; in others, the intervention is lifesaving.

We instead set a qualitative standard, rooted in programme-level theory of change, that ensures we can justify our role in improving peoples' lives. In most cases, direct beneficiaries will be recorded by their participation in a programme, for example as learners in our education programmes or patients in our health programmes. We recognise that participation alone is not sufficient to conclude improvement to a person's life and so require an initial assessment of need coupled with evidence that the intended outcomes are being achieved; for example, with the support of sample beneficiary testimonials.

We have defined some basic questions that we use to assess this consistently across all programmes:

Identifying a direct life improved	What was the baseline at the outset of the programme? Who is the target beneficiary?
Verifying 'improved'	Has the situation improved from the baseline? Do we have evidence from beneficiaries themselves that confirms that their situation has improved? Is the impact and improvement lasting?
Identifying an indirect life improved	Who can also be assessed to have benefited from the improvement to the beneficiary's life?
Verifying 'improved'	Do we have evidence to justify attributing this indirect benefit?

Local Foundation Managers are accountable for ensuring this standard is met prior to reporting the Lives Improved figure for each programme and are asked to document supporting evidence.

How regularly is the data collected?

Lives Improved reporting is integrated into on-going programme monitoring and reported by programme managers or delivery partners alongside other performance indicators.

Prior to the start of each financial year, as part of the grant application process, each Local Foundation is required to project ahead for the number of lives they expect to improve through each programme they have budgeted for (collected as 'Projected Lives Improved').

At the end of each financial year, each Foundation provides the actual number of Lives Improved by each programme financed during that year (collected as 'Achieved Lives Improved').

In order to link the number of Lives Improved to the financial input required to achieve them, each year a new entry is created for each project in the Public Benefit Dashboard. For multi-year projects, we only count the additional Lives Improved, resulting from the activities in that specific financial year. This is to avoid any double counting of Lives Improved.

Who is responsible for collecting the data?

The Group Foundation Governance Manager is responsible for collating the Lives Improved data from each local Foundation. The Governance Manager requests data updates from Local Foundation Managers at least twice each financial year.

The Local Foundation Manager (or Group Programme Manager for Group programmes) is responsible for collecting the Lives Improved figures for each of their programmes. They are also ultimately

responsible for ensuring the accuracy of the data and that there is sound justification and documented evidence for how the figures are calculated. Data collection should be built into on-going programme monitoring and, where third parties are relied on to provide the data, it will be included among the conditions of funding set out in grant agreements.

How is the data assured?

The data submitted by Local Foundation Managers will be assured annually on a sample basis. The Group Foundation Governance Manager will select a minimum of two programmes from each country and request evidence that clearly demonstrates how the Lives Improved figures for those programmes were reached and the source monitoring reports that justify an improvement to beneficiaries' lives. The data will also be independently assured from 2019.

What limitations have been identified?

- Lives Improved provides an indicator of the number of beneficiaries impacted by our programmes but not of the degree to which each beneficiary has been impacted. That is a recognised limitation and that is why we only communicate Lives Improved in terms of the reach of our programmes, not the depth of their impact, which is documented through individual testimonials and other programme metrics.
- For most programmes we can collate accurate numbers of direct beneficiaries. However, in the case of indirect beneficiaries we largely rely on estimates. In these instances, we require that there be a clear and objective rationale for the figure estimated.
- The data is provided by local foundations or delivery partners. The figures are sense checked on submission and assured on a sample, but there is a degree of trust involved that the figures provided are accurate. We ask that the Local Foundations retain copies of the data submissions from partners and these are subject to sample reviews to corroborate the figures being entered into the Public Benefit Dashboard.
- Approaches to programme management, monitoring and evaluation vary across our programmes to reflect local circumstances and capabilities. This helps us to be realistic and cost effective in our approach. Through peer support and learning we are encouraging the sharing of best practice in objective setting, baselines, approaches to evaluation and monitoring. We also promote an adaptive approach to programme management so that we continually learn and improve in our practice.