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Evaluation of the DELA Accelerator Programme

Final Report

Rotterdam, 08 November 2022

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Client: IKEA Social Entrepreneurship (ISEBV)

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Abbreviations

DAC	OECD Development Assistance Committee
EQ	Evaluation Question
FDG	Focus Group Discussion
ISEBV	IKEA Social Entrepreneurship BV
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
LRP	Lead Responsible Person
M&E	Monitoring & Evaluation
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
MSC	Most Significant Change
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
PPP	People & Planet Positive
SE	Social Entrepreneur
SCO	Systems Change Observatory
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound
ToC	Theory of Change
VfM	Value for Money

Executive Summary

The objective of the evaluation is to review the programme performance using the OECD/DAC criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and cross-cutting issues following key evaluation questions.

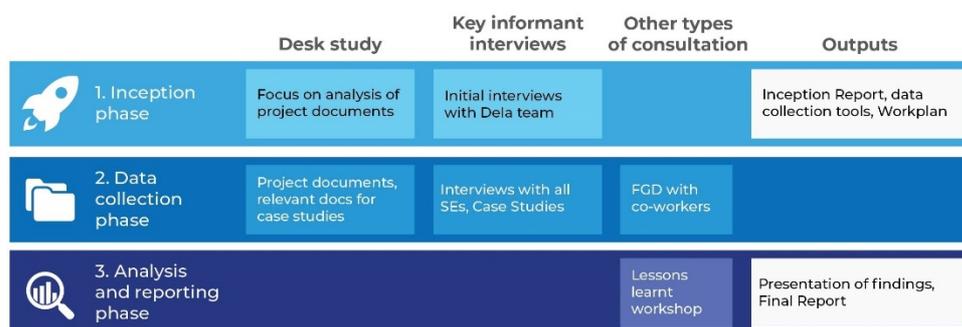
This overall evaluation was combined with three other central purposes of the study requested by ISEBV:

- Documenting the evolution of the Dela programme;
- Formulating learnings regarding the Dela programme and partnership between ISEBV and Ashoka;
- Providing recommendations for future Dela programmes and partnerships.

Approach and limitations

The evaluation methodology involves: 1) outcome harvesting and 2) most-significant change stories. Outcome harvesting is the collection of evidence on emerging impacts and working backwards to determine whether and how the intervention contributed to the result, as opposed to tracking previously defined outputs, outcomes and objectives. The most-significant change approach involves obtaining and analysing personal accounts of change to identify and understand the most significant cases – both positive and negative.

As standard practice, the study has developed and used an Evaluation Matrix as a basic assessment tool, which is inspired by Dela’s Theory of Change. The figure below summarizes our approach and activities across the phases of this study:



Limitation of this analysis: The most important limitation of this evaluation concerns the length of time required for significant changes to emerge, given that the Dela programme’s interventions are relatively recent.

Programme background

The Dela Accelerator is Ashoka's long-standing and widely-applied accelerator programme supporting social entrepreneurs in strengthening their strategies to address the root causes of social challenges and create deep, long lasting impact. The Dela programme is a collaboration between IKEA Social Entrepreneurship BV (ISEBV) and Ashoka to provide capacity building and mentoring to cohorts of social entrepreneurs (SEs). ISEBV was established by the Inter IKEA Group in 2019 to provide financial and non-financial support to SEs within and outside the IKEA business. Although ISEBV has expanded its portfolio of accelerators for social entrepreneurship with five more initiatives, Dela remains ISEBV's first and largest programme, now entering its third and final year, and the only one with a global reach.

The objective of Dela is to accelerate the ideas and impact of SEs inside and outside the IKEA value chain by strengthening their systems change strategies. Dela's implementation is undertaken by Ashoka with the support and co-design participation of ISEBV.

Main findings and conclusions

The Dela programme is based on a clear rationale and is highly relevant, given the importance of social entrepreneurs (SEs) to addressing societal challenges around the world. The programme's philosophy is to achieve systematic change at a high level.

The programme focuses on Ashoka fellows, who offer a range of specialised, high-performing SEs with proven impact. All Ashoka fellows are "change makers" focusing on complex social challenges with innovative ideas towards transforming society's systems. Dela has been successful in selecting SEs capable/suitable for promoting systems change. While the pool of SEs is sufficiently large, Dela focuses on a relatively small number of entrepreneurs. Furthermore, majority of the participating SEs are in higher development stages. As Dela expands, it is important to consider the pool of SEs and stages of entrepreneurship where Dela would have more added value to the specific needs of the SEs according to their individual progress in the several development stages.

Broadly, the strategy phase of the programme has provided relevant support. The majority of the SEs found the support highly relevant with increased clarity on their systems thinking and focus. Despite this, expectation management and clarity on goals have been difficult. **In the case of scoping/experimentation (former implementation stage under Dela I) stages, the relevance of the support was contingent on the contextual needs, expectations and stages of development of the SEs.**

Broadly, the programme has been successful in matching co-workers with SEs. The IKEA co-workers have demonstrated high degrees of commitment, professionalism and know-how. These elements have been identified as key attributions toward maximizing the support the Dela programme can offer to SEs.

The IKEA co-workers were provided with the relevant support. However, in some cases there was a lack of clarity in roles, responsibilities and expected milestones. In the evolution of the three editions of the programme, this was improved, albeit with room for further improvement.

The effectiveness of Dela varies across the three phases and stages of interventions. The strategy phase has proven effective in stimulating clarity in directions. However, further reflections are needed on the depth and timeline. Scoping and experimentation show varying degrees of effectiveness - in some cases, there is clear evidence of outcomes, while in others, the evidence is very limited.

- **The overall design of Dela's Strategy Phase and, in particular, the templates used during this phase have been regarded by SEs as useful for the visualization and structuring of their systems change strategy. Nonetheless, they have also been classified by a variety of SEs and co-workers as "tedious", "excessively complicated", and, at times, "academic".**
- **As exemplified by cases, there are some cases of significant changes, and there were two key drivers behind the outputs and short-term outcomes of the programme - the incentive to strategic clarity and setting out a vision; and the focus of Dela on the scaling of impact and solutions.** This underlines the fact that the programme presents the potential to create a significant impact within this space, in accordance with the objectives of the participating SEs.

In all, the Dela programme has been perceived to provide a significant contribution to the vast majority of participating SEs in working towards developing strategies for systemic change. However, the programme's contribution to the implementation of strategies is difficult to trace in 50% of the case studies. This is, in part, due to the inherent characteristics of systems change, which requires time and largely due to the MEL framework of the programme, which lacks a clear pathway to trace the contribution of the programme.

In general, the outcomes of Dela at a higher level have so far been limited. While initial long-term effects were already assessed in several cases, we also observed clearly the importance of allowing enough time for the effects of a complex intervention to fully play out and reach its target audiences. Importantly our review strongly suggests that impacts at the beneficiary level are more likely to occur when the development of new strategies is followed through in the subsequent implementation-focused phases, especially if coupled with clear contribution targets.

The programme is reasonably efficient, as resources have been well used to produce outputs of decent quality. However, basic information to measure Value for Money (VfM) is missing, especially in relation to the overall costs of the programme and investments per SE. With the present reporting system, it will be impossible for the programme to report in a verifiable way on VfM and assess the relation between inputs and outputs and efficiency gains.

The partnership between the two organisations works well. The management team of Dela shows comradery, team spirit and commitment. The partnership brings complementary skills. There is room for strengthening further areas of efficiency gains – the IKEA team and co-workers, in particular, bring a high degree of practical, simplified approaches, which could be further adopted by the Ashoka team to address the concerns related to efficiency and operational modality.

The Dela programme does have a clear comparative advantage as implementing party, given its knowledge of international best practices and its ability to engage with a large number of SEs, thought leaders and highly professional IKEA co-workers. Nevertheless, the programme costs, without accounting for the substantial IKEA's time and resource contribution, appear to be relatively high, particularly given the relatively small number of SEs and levels of support.

Some examples of a good economy can be found in the use of thought partners – making use of a pool of costless, highly qualified experts with tools, resources, and insights is already a strong sign of efficiency gains. This aspect of efficiency could be built upon by engaging these partners with more clarity in roles and strategic support in the operation of the programme.

Stakeholder management has paid due attention to various stakeholders and engagement modalities. Due attention has been paid to the process of engagement with each party. The thought partners have been managed well. However, they have not been engaged enough within the programme to ensure sufficient learning. This, in a way, is a missed opportunity for the programme, given the technical know-how and knowledge of the Thought Partners, as they could play an instrumental role in the evolution and design of the programme.

The engagement with co-workers has been broadly successful. With the evolution of the programme, the co-workers were provided with appropriate briefing and guidance. All co-workers showed extraordinary commitment and support, although the majority felt the process, templates, and set-up were complex. A number of co-workers also outlined the need for support structures and clarity, which would have allowed them to be more effective.

One of the issues is that the programme design (Theory of Change and monitoring mechanism) shows some flaws, in particular, the lack of clearly articulated pathways of change from (lower-level) output indicators to outcome and impact indicators. In addition, the definitions of output, outcome and impact level are not always clear, especially when they relate to the contribution of the programme. An additional challenge is that the design of the programme is rather flexible, which on the one hand, offers learning and continuous improvement and evolution but, on the other – combined with a lack of clear outcomes (i.e. the contribution of the programme)

– reduces focus and increases the risk for the programme to be not impactful for the participating SEs due, for example, to the inability to address the specific needs and characteristics of the participating SEs.

The MEL structure lacks a more careful triangulation process of the inputs collected from the programme participants, especially for impact monitoring. This aspect is all the more important given that the information collected by the programme is perception-based and subjective by nature. An additional key concern of the programme is the reported outputs and results of the programme, which can be a potential reputational risk for the programme. In several instances, the reported results do not match with the reported/perceptions of the SEs, underlining the importance of a joint reporting system and robust triangulation of inputs.

Recommendations

The recommendations are based on the main findings and conclusions presented above.

1. Design of the programme: Re-examine key elements of the programme

Based on the evolution of the programme and learnings, it would be key to establish a robust design with a focus on results and the direct contribution of the Dela programme. This relates to the set-up of the programme.

- **Strategy phase:** Consider shortening the strategy phase and focusing on milestones and clear action plans; In cases where SEs are already well developed in strategy development, consider providing a “fast-track” process or tailor-made approach to remain relevant.
- **Implementation/Scoping/experimentation:** Extend the timeline for implementation with a focus on concrete support and clear deliverables and reporting. This can allow for more tangible outcomes.
- **Follow-up:** Dela III already enables a follow-up through grants. It is recommended that this follow-up includes clarity in terms of “who will qualify for a follow-up?” to manage expectations from the outset. This could include (i) SEs who showcase already capacity to scale, (ii) mid-way progress and outcome review to arrive at a decision and (iii) follow-up focused on scale-up opportunities by leveraging additional funding/expertise etc..

2. Design of the programme: Revise the modality of implementation and process

The Dela programme could consider revision of modality of its implementation to allow for it to address the priority needs of the entrepreneurs and facilitate deeper engagement and support. This relates to:

- **Selection process:** The call for application could already ask for a simplified business plan outlining the key challenge, need, idea and measurable targets envisaged. This can form a strong basis for the strategy phase to define and finetune this plan once selected.
- **Matching:** bring clarity to selection criteria and take on a business-oriented approach. Important factors of considerations that have come forward in our assessment for a potential fruitful matching has been the context, commercial aspects, content, and added value in co-workers and “thought partners” who can facilitate the progress of the needed targets SEs aim to achieve.
- **Efficiency:** In order to improve efficiency, reflect on the support team for the SEs – 1 co-worker, 2 Thought Partners + 1 co-ordinator should be enough to ensure continuity while avoiding extreme cases, e.g. one-on-one support or very large teams in which members contribute little. Ensure that there is clarity on expectations for ALL stakeholders – this means being clear on the roadmap and outputs/monitoring.
- **Joint reporting mechanism:** In order to avoid surprises, allow for a joint reporting mechanism led by the SE on a bi-monthly/quarterly basis along with co-workers and Thought Partners. This could be a one-page update on achievements, challenges and additional needs. This will allow for the programme to meet expectations and be more impactful in its support to address the needs.
- **Learning circles**– introduce monthly/bi-monthly learning circles amongst all stakeholders where each member (SE, co-workers, thought partners and management team) have the opportunity to share an open space to exchange experiences, lessons, and ideas in a concrete manner.

3. Review the efficiency of the programme

The programme could review its overall programme costs and investments per SE and seek to report in a verifiable way on VfM and assess the relation between inputs and outputs. A starting point for leveraging efficiency gains would be to establish how the programme wishes to assess its own efficiency, i.e. inputs (days, resources and investment) vs outputs (contribution to SEs progress in strategies and skills).

4. Consider reprioritizing the selection of SEs and tailoring the support

As Dela matures through its evolution, a key element will be to deepen its approach and focus on leveraging its impact. Based on our review, it is evident that the number of selected SEs has been highest, as well as the success rate in the maturity stage. At the same time, SEs at mature stages of development are likely to have different expectations, as evidenced in some of the case studies, and broader overall access and networks to leverage support. We believe that there is potential for more meaningful support across SEs at earlier development stages and recommend considering a focused approach, particularly for “nurture-stage” SEs. It is likely that providing more in-depth support to these enterprises based on their needs could lead to significantly stronger outcomes in this group and across the programme.

5. Further strengthen stakeholder engagement and management

The Dela team already pays due attention to stakeholder management; this can be further strengthened by:

- In order to strengthen its effectiveness in approaching each SE, it would be recommended to place a Dela Alumni/thought partner within its selection committee of co-workers and regular review process. This will not only increase the possibility of being needs-driven but also allow for greater buy-in and ownership
- Engage thought partners by including them in learning circles but also call on them for technical advisory support and independent feedback. Thought partners can provide particularly relevant insights, ensuring that high-quality recommendations and key insights can be gathered to improve the programme.
- Empower co-workers by offering them this opportunity as part of their professional development plans¹ and, if possible, leadership pathway.

6. Revise the Theory of Change and programme logframe approach based on clear pathways of change, including cross-cutting issues and synergies, and revise the indicators in line with reprioritization and set realistic targets.

This revision should be based on more detailed pathways of change, including cross-cutting issues and synergies. This should be supported by evidence and analysis to explain the underlying logic of the programme and how changes will lead to the desired results at various levels. This requires clear articulation of the causal links between programme interventions, outputs, outcomes and impacts. Once the revised Theory of Change has been established, the indicators can be revised in line with the reprioritization and realistic targets should be set. Merging too many different intervention areas in two tracks, as in the current ToC, while understandable, reduces clarity on the actual contribution of Dela. The use of logframes specific to each social enterprise can provide an approach to “unpack” the current ToC.

7. Revise M&E while paying specific attention to contribution analysis in line with the revised Theory of Change and logframe.

¹ We note that different organisations use varied terms for performance reviews/KPIs – this means that their annual reviews should consider their contribution to this programme as a key KPI

The revised Theory of Change and logframe approach with SMART indicators should form a solid basis for M&E during the remaining programme period. This also links to the need for a contribution analysis in line with a theory-based evaluation building on the clear pathways of change. Additional guidance on performance management is detailed in the final chapter of the report.

Guide to the reader

This report has been structured across five chapters

Chapter 1 Introduction. A presentation of the scope, background and methodology for conducting this evaluation. It highlights the key challenges and terms used.

Chapter 2 Relevance. An analysis of concepts and existing initiatives followed by the overall relevance of the programme.

Chapter 3 Effectiveness and Impact. A detailed evaluation of the programme's effectiveness.

Chapter 4 Efficiency. A review of the programme in terms of its value for money and its linkages with stakeholders and partners.

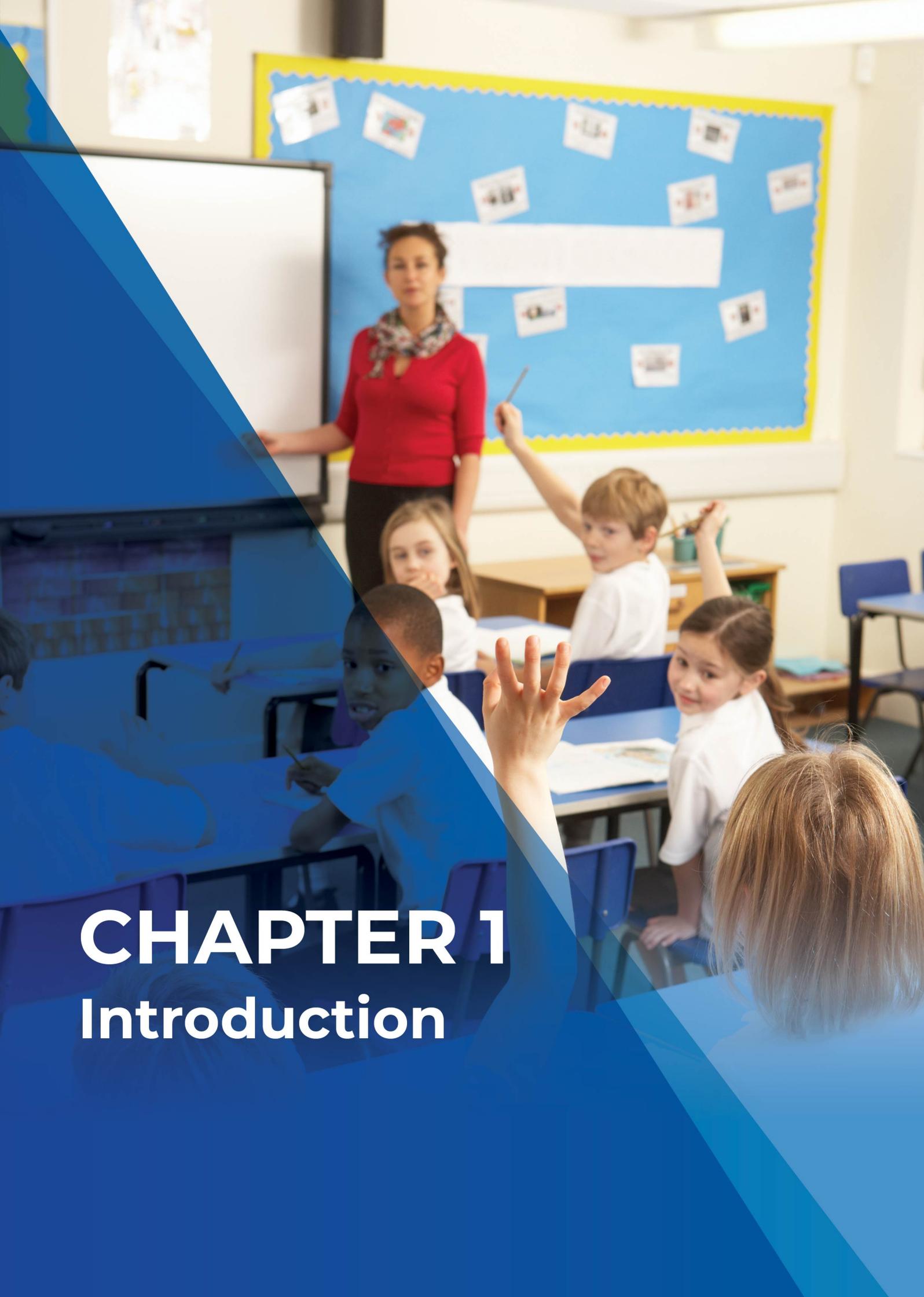
Chapter 5 Lessons Learned and Recommendations. A summary of conclusions and recommended actions.

The report is accompanied by three annexes:

Annex 1 presents an overview of the Dela programme.

Annex 2 presents the study methodology in detail.

Due to confidentiality, the **Case Studies** are not attached to this version.



CHAPTER 1

Introduction

1 Introduction

1.1 Objective and focus

The objective of the evaluation is to review the programme performance using the OECD/DAC criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and cross-cutting issues. This overall evaluation will be combined with three other central purposes of the study requested by IKEA Social Entrepreneurship BV (ISEBV):

- Documenting the evolution of the Dela programme;
- Formulating learnings regarding the Dela programme and partnership between ISEBV and Ashoka;
- Providing recommendations for future Dela programmes and partnerships.

Regarding the [scope](#), the evaluation will cover all three years of the Dela programme (Dela I, Dela II and Dela III). However, it is important to note that Dela III is still ongoing. Thus, the analysis of Dela III will focus on the evolution and design of the programme. The case studies, which form part of the outcomes of the programme, are concentrated in Dela I and Dela II.

1.2 Brief background

The Dela Accelerator is based on the Globalizer programme, which is Ashoka's long-standing and widely applied accelerator programme that supports social entrepreneurs (SEs) in strengthening their strategies to address the root causes of social challenges and create deep, long-lasting impact. The Dela programme is a collaboration between IKEA Social Entrepreneurship BV (ISEBV) and Ashoka to provide capacity building and mentoring to cohorts of SEs. ISEBV was established by the Inter IKEA Group in 2019 to provide financial and non-financial support to SEs within and outside the IKEA business. Although ISEBV has expanded its portfolio of accelerators for social entrepreneurship with five more initiatives, Dela remains ISEBV's first and largest programme, now entering its third and final year, and the only one with a global reach.

The objective of Dela is to accelerate the ideas of SEs both inside and outside the IKEA value chain by strengthening their systems-change strategies. Dela's implementation is undertaken by Ashoka with the support and co-design participation of ISEBV. The programme has a monitoring framework, which closely reflects the monitoring framework implemented by Ashoka in its Globalizer programme². The Dela team collects evidence across the programme's activities, outputs and short-run outcome levels, mainly through satisfaction and outcomes surveys and self-assessments. However, the programme has never gone through an external and independent evaluation process.

With the aim of assessing the performance of the programme and providing learnings and recommendations to the ISEBV and Ashoka, Ecorys was commissioned for the "External Evaluation of the Dela Accelerator Programme". In this Final Report, we present the results of the evaluation and recommendations for improving the programme and deepening its impact, which rely on extensive document analysis, meetings, interviews, and focus group discussions (FGDs) with programme participants and implementers.

Each evaluation criteria (relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and impact) has been broken down into specific evaluation questions, for which indicators are defined. The detailed evaluation matrix is presented in Annex 2.

² The Globalizer programme is Ashoka's international accelerator programme for social entrepreneurship, which is used by Ashoka not only for the Dela programme but also in partnerships with other companies. It corresponds the first phases of the Dela Accelerator, i.e. the Strategy Phase and the Summit, whereas the subsequent ones are exclusive to Dela.

1.3 Approach

The overall approach of this evaluation is inspired by two main evaluation methods 1) outcome harvesting³ and 2) most-significant change stories.

Outcome harvesting

Outcome harvesting is defined as “an impact evaluation approach suitable for retrospectively identifying emergent impacts by collecting evidence of what has changed and, then, working backwards, determining whether and how an intervention has contributed to these changes.” So it works backwards from outcomes observed rather than measuring progress toward predetermined objectives or outcomes. This way, it captures not only intended effects but also unintended effects and/or indirect effects. This approach is considered particularly appropriate for evaluations of interventions in dynamic, uncertain situations. In assessing the effects, it is important that the link between the intervention and the effects is plausible.

Source: based on https://www.betterevaluation.org/plan/approach/outcome_harvesting

This was especially relevant to understand the effects of the programme, both intended and unintended, and to see to what extent the effects differ between SEs as well as between IKEA co-workers.

The second main method that inspires our approach is the most significant change stories.

Most significant change

The most significant change (MSC) approach involves generating and analysing personal accounts of change and deciding which of these accounts is the most significant – and why. By identifying the most significant change in a participatory way, it helps in clarifying the values held by different stakeholders on what is considered a significant change. MSC can contribute to understanding how change comes about (activities, processes, causal mechanisms) and under what circumstances (contexts). This can therefore help to develop or improve the theory of change. As the approach often focuses on very positive examples, for a balanced assessment, it is also good to take into account some less successful examples.

Source: based on https://www.betterevaluation.org/en/plan/approach/most_significant_change

The most significant change stories allowed us to zoom in on a number of specific SEs, of which the impact has been particularly high or low.

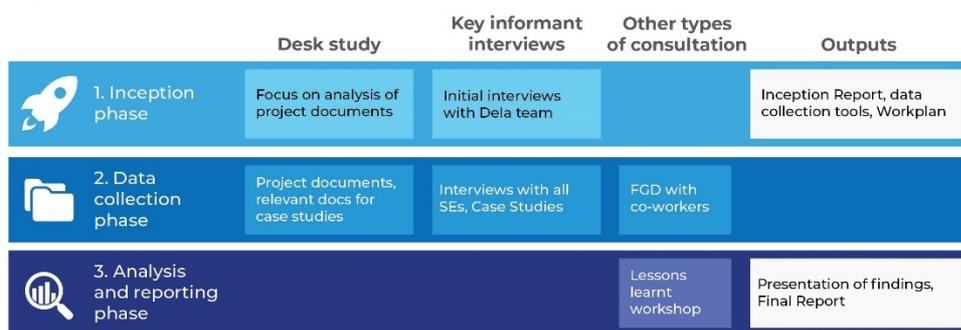
Based on the above two, our data collection strategy has been adapted to include:

- **Width** - High-level overview of SEs. Next to desk review of documentation and M&E data, this includes one-on-one interviews with selected SEs to gauge insights on key successes and challenges;
- **Width** - FGDs with co-workers. Next to the desk review, this includes smaller FGDs based on regional focus to gauge insights on the relevance of learning and how it feeds into the broader outcome;
- **Depth** - Case studies to dive deeper into the most significant change stories involving the most significant changes, successes and challenges.

A schematic overview of the approach is summarised in the figure below:

³ Outcome harvesting is a method that helps to understand the outcomes and impact of the programme at different levels, which is one of the key objectives of this evaluation.

Figure 1: Schematic overview



These activities have been implemented:

1.3.1 Scoping interviews with the Dela team

The first step of the process was to conduct scoping interviews with the Dela team. The study team conducted a total of seven interviews, both in-person and remotely, with Ashoka and ISEBV personnel involved in Dela, each of which lasted approximately one hour. The conversations focused on gaining additional insights on the programme, implementation modalities and key challenges. Additional interviews were conducted throughout the evaluation, with key Dela team members clarifying other aspects of the programme.

1.3.2 One-on-one consultations with selected SEs

We interviewed 14 Dela I and Dela II participants in this activity. The one-on-one structured interviews were intended to capture key characteristics and driving factors. The questions encompassed:

- The relevance of the support received and value added;
- The extent to which support has led to scaling or systemic change;
- The key factors behind successes and failures;
- The stories containing the most significant changes.

Additionally, we selected a sample of four SEs amongst (i) those that ended their participation at the Summit and (ii) amongst participants of Dela III. For these participants, the selection was done either randomly or by following up on information from the programme's M&E framework.

1.3.3 Focus-Group Discussions and interviews with selected co-workers

Based on the review of the existing documents and interviews, we planned a total of five focus-group discussions (FGDs) based on the regional distribution of the social entrepreneurship projects that involved them. Due to lower-than-expected participation levels, the initial plan was reduced to two FGDs, covering cases in South Asia and Europe. These FGDs had three participants each and lasted for one hour, in which we explored their contribution to the programme, the understanding they obtained and concrete examples of impacts in the follow-up to their participation.

Given the difficulties with participation and agenda incompatibilities, the FGDs were complemented by 11 one-on-one interviews with co-workers aimed at exploring the same themes of the group discussions. All in all, the FGDs and one-on-one interviews gave us valuable insights into the experience of 17 co-workers that supported 12 SEs in Dela I and II.

1.3.4 Case studies

Our case-study approach was inspired by the MSC, which directed us to zoom in on SEs for which the impact has been particularly high or low. They allowed us to focus not only on which effects have occurred but, crucially, to understand *why* these occurred:

- To what extent have these results depended on the actions of the SEs supported by the Dela programme?
- To what extent was their context conducive to the intended outcomes?

Thus, the case studies played a crucial role in assessing the *contribution* made by the Dela programme.

The selection of the case studies was based on desk studies, key informant interviews and a series of interviews and focus-group discussions as outlined above.

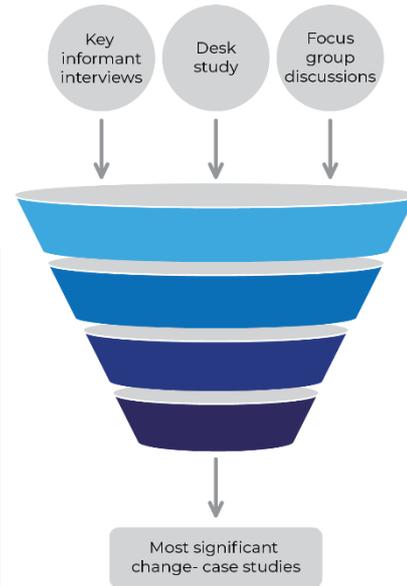


Table 1: Selection of case studies

Social Entrepreneur	Topic	Dela version
SE 1	Social protection	Dela I
SE 2	Agriculture	Dela I
SE 3	Gender	Dela I
SE 4	Sustainability	Dela I
SE 5	Informality	Dela II
SE 6	Informality	Dela II
SE 7	Employment	Dela II
SE 8	Agriculture	Dela II

The case studies included interviews with the social entrepreneur (SE) but also, where possible, with his or her team, the IKEA co-workers involved and the Thought Partners. This allowed for validation and triangulation of the outputs and outcomes of each SE. In addition to the eight SEs, our team engaged with eight social-enterprise team members, 17 co-workers, and eight Thought Partners.

1.4 Challenges and limitations

The key challenges to the evaluation were:

- **Contradictory inputs.** Throughout the consultations, the evaluation team received vastly different and contradictory assessments from different stakeholder groups. This is mainly related to reported achievements and successes by Dela reports and the perception/inputs of the stakeholders and the triangulation process. Filtering through the accounts of outputs, outcomes and contributions to determine the study’s findings proved particularly challenging in the context of Dela.
- **Relation between inputs and outputs.** Identifying the relationship between the inputs and outputs of the programme was not entirely straightforward. Dela adopts a broad intervention approach based on a theoretical framework. On the one hand, it provides a high-level overarching vision and outcomes based on expectations, but on the other hand, it presents little detail related to outputs and intermediate outcomes in the Theory of Change. A detailed logical framework connecting these variables, as well as indicators for measuring them, is not available at the programme level or at the level of SE support. Despite following a methodological approach that accounts for this, e.g. Outcome Harvesting, the fluid nature of outputs and outcomes across interventions proved especially challenging for the study.

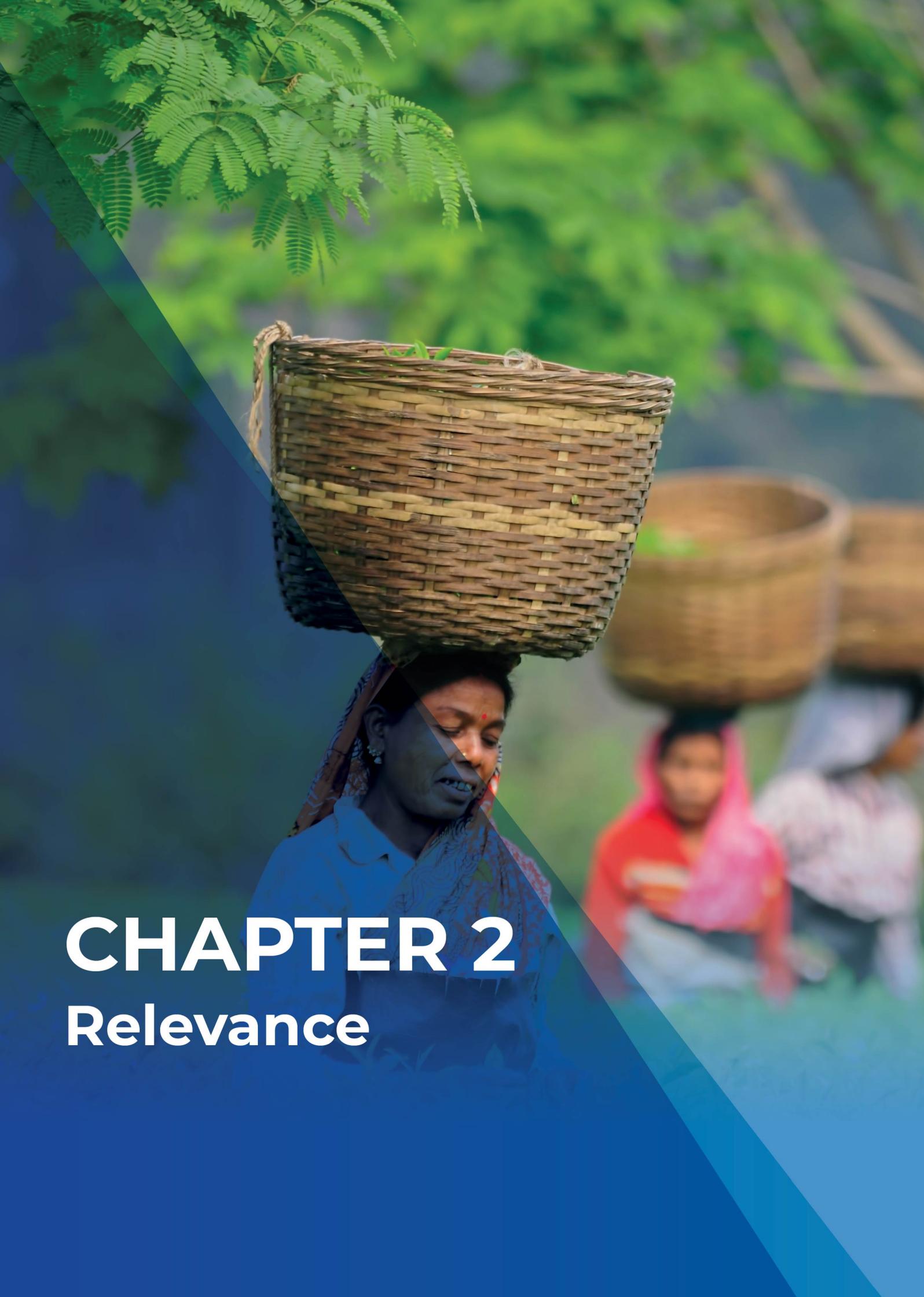
- **Broad nature of the programme:** Due to the wide nature of the programme, SE cases vary to a great extent across all relevant aspects – sectors, markets, strategies, countries, etc. Therefore, in designing the recommendations, we had to strike a careful balance and provide overarching recommendations on the design and set-up rather than focusing on the type of support since, in our assessment, this varies greatly across the unique characteristics and needs of the participating SEs.
- **Contribution of the programme.** Many of the SEs had been involved in a variety of programmes and support initiatives. Obtaining focused inputs and tracing the direct contribution of the Dela programme towards achievements was a challenge.
- **Timeline and budget:** The timeline for the evaluation was relatively short, especially in view of the ambitious stakeholder-consultation strategy. The level of resources allocated to such a complex study proved challenging.

The key limitations of the evaluation were:

- The assessment of long-term outcomes of the programme is limited by both the time required for systems-change to emerge and recent interventions of Dela, some of them still ongoing (Dela III), as identified at the beginning of the study. Consequently, instead of focusing on programme impacts and working backwards to outcomes and activities, we focused our analysis on medium-term outcomes. Long-term outcomes are assessed only indirectly or, at times, inferred. Naturally, being unable to observe the complete trajectory of the intervention fully playing out increases the scope for speculation about results and demanded extra care for assessing the effectiveness and contribution of Dela.
- Basic information that is required to measure value-for-money (VfM) is missing, especially in relation to the overall costs and investments per SE. Within the present reporting system, it is impossible for the programme to report in a verifiable way on VfM and assess the relation between inputs and outputs. While the overall cost structure is well documented, covering specific activities and the type of costs, this information is not available for the specific SEs.
- While we have reported on the evolution of the programme structure and the redesign of its various phases, the evaluation took place while important changes to the programme were still ongoing, especially in the Scoping and Experimentation phases. This dynamic environment, to some extent corresponding to undertaking several evaluations in the context of one programme, created some “noise” for the assessment of programme activities and impacts across SEs and co-workers. Moreover, some of the emerging findings might be less applicable to the current configuration of the programme.

1.5 Confidentiality

In conducting this evaluation, we maintained the confidentiality of the observations and insights shared by the different stakeholders. Therefore, the report ensures that all quotes/comments are not identified by individual members. This is in accordance with consent arrangements made with participants and good evaluation practices. For the purpose of learning, evidence and triangulation, we have provided a summary of the SEs under each summary topic – it is important to note that this is based on the triangulation of all information.



CHAPTER 2

Relevance

2 Relevance

In this chapter, two key Evaluation Questions (EQs) regarding the relevance of the Dela programme will be answered in line with the evaluation matrix (see Annex 2 for the detailed evaluation matrix). These questions refer to the:

- Overall relevance of the programme;
- Relevance of interventions and selection of SEs and co-workers.

Key findings for “Relevance”

- The objectives and aims of the programme are highly relevant in the context of the landscape of social entrepreneurship support and the challenges it faces.
- The programme’s inclusion of Ashoka fellows offers “change makers” and a focus on complex social challenges with innovative ideas towards transforming society’s systems.
- Dela has been successful in selecting social entrepreneurs capable of and suitable for promoting systems change. While the pool of social entrepreneurs (SEs) is sufficiently large, Dela focuses on a relatively small number of entrepreneurs.
- The majority of the SEs found the support in the strategy phase of the programme highly relevant to increasing clarity on their systems thinking and focus. Nevertheless, expectation management and clarity on goals have been difficult.
- In the case of scoping/experimentation stages, the relevance of the support has been affected by the lack of attention to the contextual needs and stages of development of the SEs. More specifically, for some reported cases a generalised approach was perceived to be insufficient to address the specific needs and characteristics of the participating SEs.
- The programme has been broadly successful in matching co-workers with social entrepreneurs. The IKEA co-workers have demonstrated high degrees of commitment, professionalism and know-how. These elements have been identified as key attributes in maximizing the support the Dela programme can offer to social entrepreneurs.
- The IKEA co-workers were provided with support. However, there was a lack of clarity in roles, responsibilities and expected milestones. This was improved as the programme evolved, albeit with the need for further improvement.

2.1 Relevance of the overall programme

Background

Entrepreneurship broadly involves the identification, evaluation and utilization of opportunities, although the literature is peppered with various definitions and interpretations. For traditional entrepreneurship, this mainly entails the development and introduction of new products or services with the objective of creating value in a commercially viable manner. The implication of such a definition is centred on the idea that activities are focused on profit generation. Building on this concept in the 1970s, the influential economist Joseph Schumpeter identified devotion and persistence as the fundamental pillars that drive entrepreneurs to stimulate economic progress. Successful entrepreneurship is therefore argued to result in a chain reaction, ultimately encouraging other economic agents to expand and spur their innovation towards a tipping point in which it renders existing products, services and business models obsolete⁴. Schumpeter asserts that in the absence of entrepreneurial agents which fundamentally contribute to creating economic value, an economy would inevitably become static and, as a result, subject to decay – marking their influential necessity to ensure growth.

⁴ Joseph A. Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy* (New York: Harper, 1975): 82-8.

In recent years, social entrepreneurship has evolved significantly and received increased attention from various actors, including thought leaders, academia and business advisors. Contrary to the value creation objective of entrepreneurship for personal or shareholder wealth, its objective lies in the creation of social value by meeting the needs of society⁵. While both sets of entrepreneurs are driven to achieve innovation and change, the most significant differentiation is the notion that traditional entrepreneurs are spurred on by financial compensation and SEs by altruism⁶.

From the perspective of SEs, social enterprises differ from traditional entrepreneurship in relation to objectives, characteristics of goods and services delivered, collaborative relationships and the potential to engage in system-building activities⁴. Overall, SEs face multi-faceted challenges and contexts, including drivers and barriers:

- **Political and governance structures:** this includes the overarching economic and political environment faced by SEs (macroeconomic stability, policy environment, social protection framework, access to credit and finance, business-enabling environment, government entrepreneurship support, amongst others);
- **Legal and regulatory factors:** this includes economy-wide and sector-specific legal and regulatory factors that influence the operation of SEs and tend to be highly context-specific (e.g. taxation, regulatory barriers and incentives, labour regulations, ease of doing businesses). In Central America, for example, the vast majority of businesses, regardless of status, tend to face the same tax and regulatory burden⁵, whereas in Europe, these contextual factors are very different;
- **Social-economic factors:** this includes essential socio-economic differences between countries and contexts, strongly related to economic and institutional development, which limit and determine the need for social innovations and their potential for diffusion (e.g. income levels, urban vs agriculture relevance, informality levels, access to education, access to the internet and digital tools, entrepreneurship level, etc.).

Social entrepreneurship and systems thinking

Following this, social entrepreneurship and System Change Theory has been coined by various actors, such as the [Systems Dynamic Group](#) at the Sloan School of Management at MIT and the [Catalyst Movement](#), where systems thinking was adopted in the organisational and public innovation space. Systems change in the context of social entrepreneurship is a term increasingly used to describe purposeful social-enterprise initiatives and innovation, with a focus on system-level interventions. While the concept has been vibrant in policy and practice over the years, it has received little empirical attention from researchers.

In the various analyses undertaken, discussion has surrounded the underlying drivers of system change. According to the literature, it tends to be located at the intersection of an institutional shift in regulations, economic configurations and cultural assumptions. In order to better enable and equip the capabilities of SEs, it appears important to better understand the pathways to change. Clearly, systems change requires time and resources, but systems change requires time and resources and it is unclear how standard research can inform practice and policy for it.

Existing initiatives

Given the above barriers, important initiatives have been undertaken to examine the impact of systems change by various key institutions. The [Ashoka Network](#) has been working on identifying and accelerating the world's leading social entrepreneurs. Targeting a wide array of societal issues, its support aims to unleash the impact of SEs towards achieving systemic change around the world. Other institutions and initiatives that aim to support social entrepreneurship with ample attention to the System Change Theory include, for example:

- The [Systems Change Observatory](#) (SCO) at the Skoll Centre of Social Entrepreneurship, Saïd Business School, initiated a community of practice and research, focused “on long-term empirical study of systems

⁵ Certo, Trevis & Miller, Toyah. (2008). Social Entrepreneurship: Key Issues and Concepts. *Business Horizons*, 51, 267-271.

⁶ Martin, R. L., & Osberg, S. (2007). Social Entrepreneurship: The Case for Definition. *Stanford Social Innovation Review*, 5(2), 29–39.

change efforts in the social impact space, including pathways, challenges and solutions”. With the use of data on more than 100 social entrepreneurial ventures, the initiative aims to create actionable products in support of systems change in both practice and policy;

- The [Schwab Foundation for Social Entrepreneurship](#), a sister organization of the World Economic Forum, is a leading global platform that accelerates outstanding models of social innovation. It is composed of a community of over 400 social innovators spread across 190 countries worldwide. The foundation aims to support sustainable and inclusive solutions by supporting social innovators in several key pillars: community building, connecting SEs, generating solutions in partnership, identifying the next generation of SEs and other services such as connecting SEs with various academic institutes;
- [Echoing Green](#) is an organisation established to support social innovators through fellowships and other innovative leadership initiatives where it provides seed funding and leadership development support to achieve transformational change. Its community of nearly 1,000 SEs active in various thematic areas enables it to provide a broad and dynamic ecosystem to propel SEs with the aim of achieving impact.

While various organisations and initiatives are increasingly adopting the systems change approach, as outlined in earlier research, it remains limited, and few programmes exist that support social enterprises in a practical manner. For example, while the Echoing Green organisation provides leadership developments in the form of a personalized framework consisting of a comprehensive programme to build and grow leadership skills, its fellowship programme does not provide any clear indication that on-deck support for the reiteration of the social entrepreneur’s strategy towards achieving systematic change is provided. Similarly, while the Schwab Foundation offers various programmes and tools under its capacity-building pillar of the provided support for SEs, such as the Harvard Programme on System Leadership, it does not provide individual and practical support for establishing a systems-change approach.

Contrary to the initiatives outlined above, the Dela programme’s main objective is to support SEs in enhancing and scaling the level of impact they can achieve and propagate in their approach to address various societal or environmental challenges. This is mainly aspired to be achieved through the redefinition of their strategies with the aim of achieving systematic change in their respective fields.

The overarching philosophy is to achieve systematic change. This process allows the SE to express their values and examine the “big picture”. In addition, the programme puts more emphasis on establishing a practical strategy toward achieving several smaller goals or “targeted systems change”. This approach of the Dela programme has been reported to be particularly successful in filling the gap between the existing initiatives that support social entrepreneurship with the Theory of Systematic Change. More specifically, while most existing initiatives support SEs embodying the theory of systems change in their organisation, the Dela programme goes beyond this by providing hands-on support to implement, strategize, and reflect on the theoretical framework of the theory in their organisation. The objectives and aims of the programme are therefore highly relevant to the needs of the next generation of social entrepreneurs.

2.2 Relevance of the interventions

2.2.1 *Has the programme been successful in selecting SEs/ venture models capable/ suitable of (potentially) promoting systems change? Is the pool of SEs sufficiently large, or should it be expanded?*

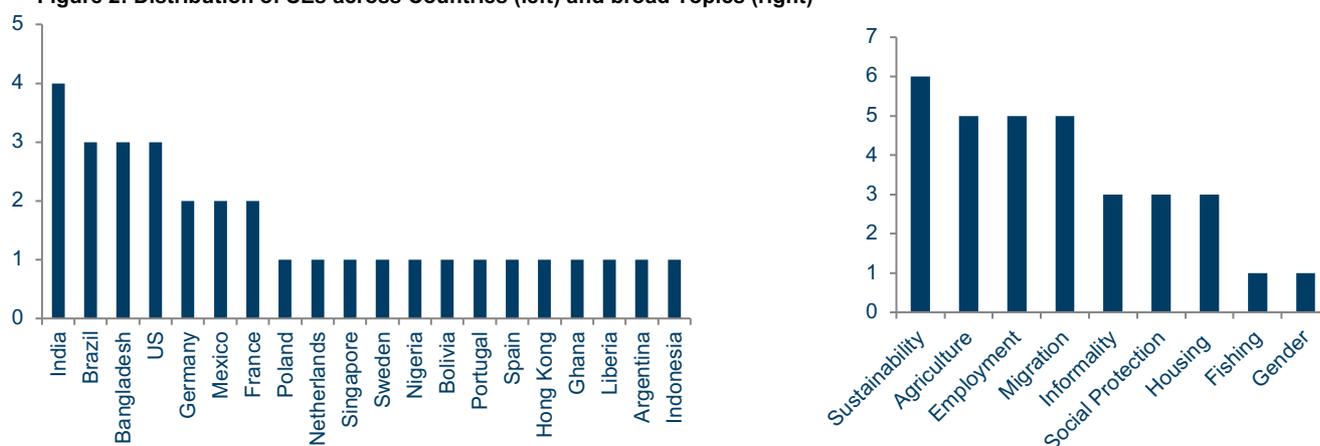
In the course of the three editions, the Dela Accelerator has supported or is supporting 36 SEs worldwide, although not all have concluded the programme. These members are spread across the globe, encompassing several themes and stages of development. All SEs are lifelong Ashoka Fellows who have been selected by Ashoka to participate in the accelerator programme.

Ashoka fellows are described as “change makers” – referring to their focus on developing innovative systems to alleviate complex social challenges, bringing lasting benefits to societies. This element of the programme provides a clear pool of potential Dela participants that are already actively involved in achieving these goals to various extents.

According to the Dela team, the key selection criteria for the accelerator participants were: impact potential, openness to collaborate, capability, financial sustainability, relevance and suitability for the programme – e.g. interest in strengthening their systems change strategy as opposed, for example, to the ambition of participating in a traditional business accelerator model.

Figure 2 includes the countries and sectoral distribution of SEs across countries and broad topics (Dela I, II and III).

Figure 2: Distribution of SEs across Countries (left) and broad Topics (right)

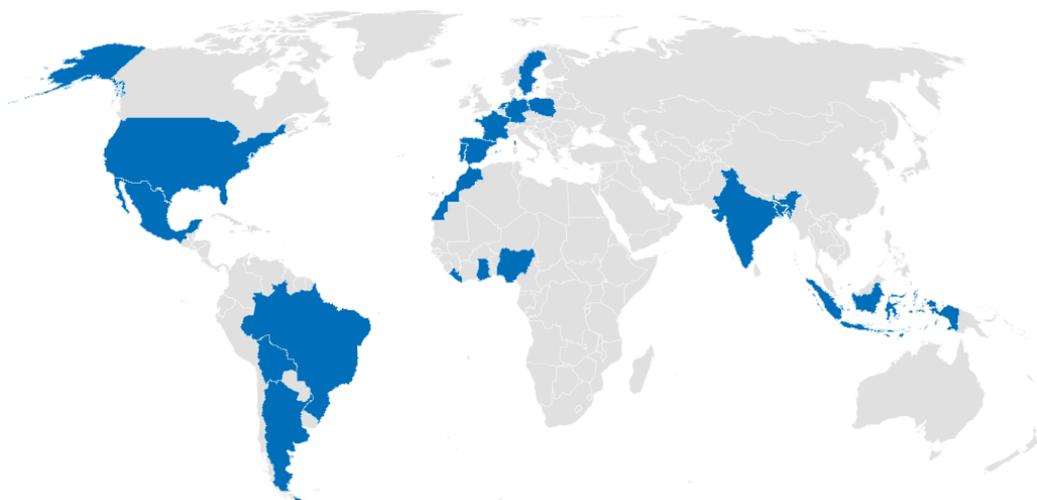


As can be seen above, Dela participants are located in Europe, Latin America, South Asia, South-east Asia, Africa and North America, across 20 countries. In terms of topics, we can also observe that SEs are widely dispersed. While we have classified projects into nine categories, the overview shows that the majority of them have a transversal approach, encompassing various topics. Gender equality and digital solutions, for example, are common themes, while entrepreneurship is addressed by several social enterprises in the context of migration and informality. Moreover, the operational model of these projects varies greatly – some have a localised ambition, such as removing barriers to while others follow highly scalable digital models that allow impacts over millions of lives. Such differentiation predominantly stems from the different contextual aspects the social entrepreneur is targeting. For example, while bottlenecks inhibiting women’s participation in the formal labour market are locally bound, the creation of an online platform enabling young unemployed individuals to develop their digital skills knows few geographic boundaries.

The Dela programme does not have a strictly defined sectoral focus and the social entrepreneurs it supports are spread across the globe, covering several thematic areas and different stages of development. The geographical distribution is shown in Figure 3.

While no clear geographic patterns can be identified, the impact of the Dela programme has been in some cases reported to reach places beyond the operational base of a social entrepreneur. For example, while based in a single country in Europe, two social enterprises were able to propagate their work internationally. In one case, this can be directly attributed to the Dela programme’s contribution in providing relevant support in their efforts to achieve this by means of a conceptualizing and implementing a franchising model.

Figure 3: Geographic distribution of selected entrepreneurs participating in Dela I,II and III



It is important to note that entrepreneurs participating in the Dela programme mainly represent SEs in the “mature” phase of their development. The development of a social enterprise can be categorized into four distinct phases. The “incubation” phase describes a desire to tackle a societal issue and a vision of how this might be accomplished. The “birth” stage involves the mapping the different pathways of how to take action, including harnessing resources or expertise. The third “nurturing” stage encompasses the gaining of traction by the lessons learned from the previous two development phases, acquiring access to field data, and the evolution of the social entrepreneur’s model to overcome various obstacles. Finally, the “mature” phase involves achieving stability in the process and scaling the project towards solving societal issues by means of adaptation and evolution to overcome limited resources and other obstacles.

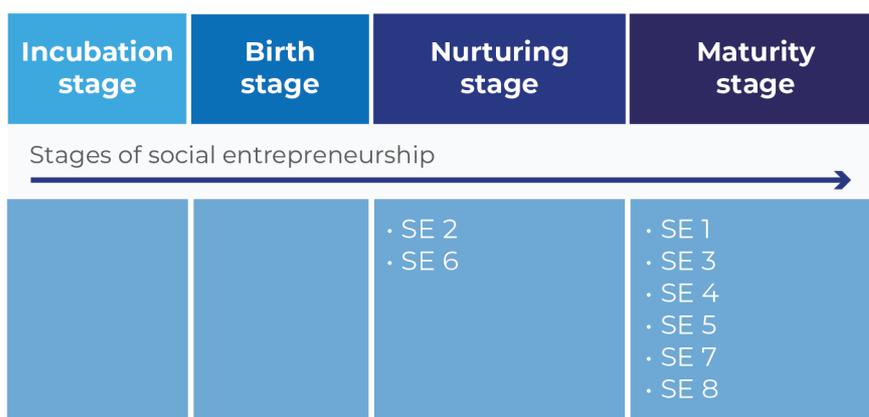
Box 1: Relevance across cross-cutting aspects

In all, a reasonable gender balance was observed in the programme. Of the 96 IKEA co-workers enrolled in the programme, 56% were women. Among the 32 SEs selected across the three editions of Dela, women accounted for 43%.

The vast majority of 71 programme co-workers are “Western” (from Europe, Australasia or North America, 81%). The remaining 19% include people of Turkish, Indian, Japanese, Indonesian and Mexican nationality. At the same time, only 38% of Dela SEs are located in these countries, with the rest coming from Latin America (22%), South Asia (22%), South-east Asia (9%), and Africa (9%). While a high concentration of Western co-workers (notably from Sweden) might be expected, we feel the programme selection of co-workers is insufficiently diverse, especially in light of the geographical spread across SEs. It is therefore considered that a greater effort should be made to match SEs residing in the Global South with co-workers located or with relevant experience within this region. Not only would this increase the programme’s diversity of co-workers, but it would also allow for the SEs to receive more context-specific assistance. Hence, addressing this mismatch could have positive consequences in terms of the quality of the support offered to SEs by providing a greater diversity of experience and contextual expertise.

An overview of the different phases and the categorization of the selected SEs case studies for the during Dela I and Dela II are shown in Figure 4. This categorisation is based on the various consultations with the SEs and co-workers on the perceived level of development of the participating social enterprise, which is then cross-referenced with the specific features of each development phases described above. The analysis of the participating SEs during the first two editions of the Dela programme demonstrates that the majority are situated in the mature phase.

Figure 4: Overview of the development phases of a social enterprise



Note: own elaboration. Assessment of the study team based on information collected from case studies.

In summary, Dela has been successful selecting SEs/venture models capable/suitable of (potentially) promoting systems change. While the pool of SEs is sufficiently large, Dela focuses on a relatively small number of entrepreneurs. Furthermore, it has been identified that the majority of the participating SEs are situated in the mature phase of development. Therefore, as Dela expands, it is important to consider the pool of SEs and stages of entrepreneurship where Dela would have more added value to the specific needs of the SEs according to their individual progress in the development stages.

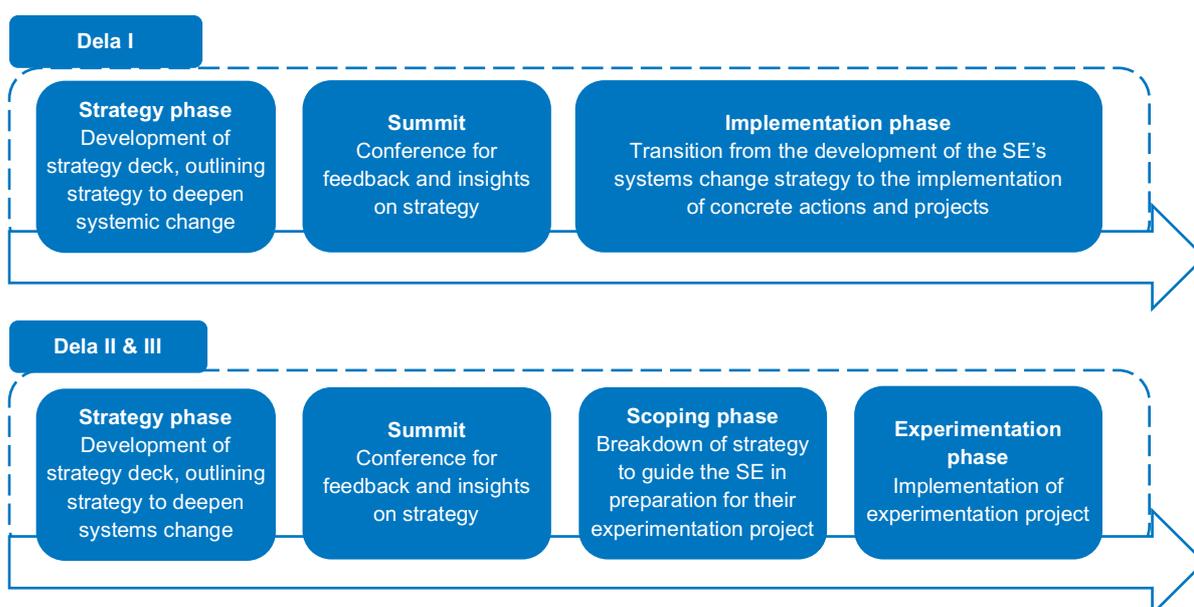
2.2.2 Does the programme provide the appropriate support needed for the selected SEs?

Dela has been subject to an intensive co-creation process with the ISEBV team that resulted in important modifications to the programme in relation to both the standard Globalizer approach and throughout its three editions. Therefore, it is key to review the support in each of the phases and stages of the programme.

Dela I, the first iteration, was comprised of three main phases. The first two phases (Strategy Phase and Summit) correspond to the standard Globalizer approach, whereas the third phase (Implementation Phase) is a co-creation of the Dela team. For Dela II and Dela III, the Implementation Phase evolved into two new phases – the Scoping and Experimentation Phases – due to the understanding of the Dela team that the methodology used for implementation could be improved and restructured to better fit the needs of SEs at this stage.

Figure 5 provides an overview of the phases of the programme.

Figure 5: Phases of Dela I, Dela II and III



Strategy phase

In the **Strategy phase**, a project team is formed around each social entrepreneur, comprised of one IKEA co-worker, 2-3 external “thought partners” from the Ashoka network and 1-2 Ashoka facilitators, known as the lead responsible person (LRP). The LRP is a member of the Ashoka Globalizer team with in-depth knowledge of Systems Change who leads the process as a coach/consultant. Co-workers and thought partners are usually senior, well-connected professionals – external thought partners have been involved in previous Globalizer accelerators.

In this phase, the focus is on designing a systems-change approach to the systemic problems identified by SEs. The team meets for weekly 1.5 hour calls for a total of 16 weeks, and SEs must dedicate additional 1-3 hours to the accelerator. They also receive several materials, such as articles and case studies, from the programme and the team, as well as the Ashoka Globalizer online course. The Strategy Template is used throughout to produce two key outputs: the Summit presentation and the Strategy Deck.

During the strategy phase, the support team helped the SEs to clarify the problem they are addressing and underpin it with data. This is followed by mapping out the root causes and respective systems responsible. The SEs then select a system for which a key intervention will lead to an alleviation of the current problem. Following this, the team lays out specific milestones, before identifying stakeholders and the most suitable strategies and tools. The strategy phase is facilitated by the Ashoka Globalizer staff who are experienced in systems thinking.

It has been reported during the consultations that the most important work lies in identifying the true scale of needs and working backwards to develop an appropriate design. Integrating a systems-change approach can be particularly helpful in navigating the inherent complexity of realising the objectives and vision for social enterprises, which often face significant challenges in terms of capacity and available resources.

Box 2: Positive feedback on the strategy phase

According to an entrepreneur (Dela I), the strategy phase was well structured and proved to be rewarding. The framework provided by Ashoka made it clear which steps had to be followed and the possible tools that could be implemented. The strategy phase’s step-by-step guide helped the social entrepreneur to stay organized while also providing them with the liberty

to explore new ways to think about their work and systems change strategy. Accordingly, the support provided during this phase proved to be fruitful for the defining and structuring of the SE's systems change strategy. It led to a better understanding of the theory of system change and provided the social entrepreneur with knowledge about the practical steps needed to develop a well-structured and impactful systems change strategy.

For one participating social entrepreneur in Dela II, the main objective was reported to stem from the needs of the social enterprise to develop a systems-change methodology accompanied by the creation of a strategy to accomplish its goals and objectives. Accordingly, the strategy phase was set up by establishing an area of focus and selecting a scope that is manageable for the vision and objectives of the social entrepreneur to create a more effective journey and promote systems change. This approach has proven to be successful as social entrepreneur has reported having successfully implemented these elements in their strategy. As a result, the reiteration of the social enterprise's strategy has been reported to be one of the most significant and impactful contributions from the Dela programme and has been in use by the social enterprise since its participation in the programme.

Box 3: Expectation management – clarity is key

Two Dela I social entrepreneurs (SEs) reported that they expected more hands-on support to develop products and provide financial contributions or partnerships to propagate the social enterprise. Nevertheless, in both case studies, SEs reported to have benefitted from the programme by refining their strategy and reappraising their objectives and goals.

At times (twice during Dela II), the support was below the SEs' expectations. In one case, the SE had developed a clear systems-change strategy prior to joining the Dela programme. Instead of receiving support for redefining the strategy of the social enterprise, it needed tangible product development support and therefore expected to receive on-hand assistance to develop this to achieve the goals and ambitions of the social entrepreneur. According to SE, this sort of support did not materialize during the several phases of the programme, and they considered the support provided by the Dela team unclear and insufficient. While the programme was strong in selecting IKEA co-workers with knowledge and skillsets matching the topic being explored by the SE, a mismatch of expectations highlights the importance of expectation management during the strategy phase.

In order to assess the relevance of the support in the strategy phase across the SEs that have been selected as case studies, various direct questions were asked during the numerous FGDs and one-on-one interviews with the SEs and co-workers. This allowed for the triangulation of the key insights of the consultations. The responses to these questions were then categorised in three main categories; sufficient, moderate and needs more attention. The first, comes from both the support team offering the appropriate support, and the SEs perceiving this support as sufficient or appropriate for its specific needs. Secondly, the "moderate" category is awarded to a specific case when the support offered was not seen as sufficient or if the SE's expectations of the support was not fully met. The "needs more attention" category is awarded when both the support provided is insufficient and the expectations of the SEs are not met.

The figure below summarises the relevance of support in the strategy phase from the perspective of SEs.

Figure 6: Perceived relevance of the strategy phase by the SEs

 Sufficient		 Moderate		 Needs more attention	
Dela 1	Dela 2	Dela 1	Dela 2	Dela 1	Dela 2
• SE 4	• SE 5 • SE 7 • SE 8	• SE 1 • SE 2 • SE 3			• SE 6

Note: own elaboration. Assessment of the study team based on interviews with the SEs.

The figure above demonstrates that most SEs, both from Dela I and II, found the support provided during the strategy phase to be either moderate or sufficient. It is important to note that, whilst three SEs from Dela I identified this support as being moderate, three SEs from Dela II considered that they were sufficiently supported. Hence, this may be interpreted as an improvement in terms of the support provided between Dela I and II.

Summit and implementation/scoping/experimentation

The **Summit phase** lasted three (Dela I) or four days (Dela II)⁷. During the first two days of the Summit, SEs receive feedback from Summit “thought partners” on their newly developed strategy. The third day is called Leadership Day, which is “created a space for the SEs to reflect on the implications and challenges of their role and journey as change leaders for large-scale impact” (Dela I Second Impact Report, p.10). Finally, on the fourth day, called Experimentation Day, a “new approach co-designed with Antrop was tested, in which the SEs and their teams of Strategy Partners and Experimentation Partners applied methods and principles of design thinking in getting to know each other more deeply.” (Dela II Final Report, p.15).

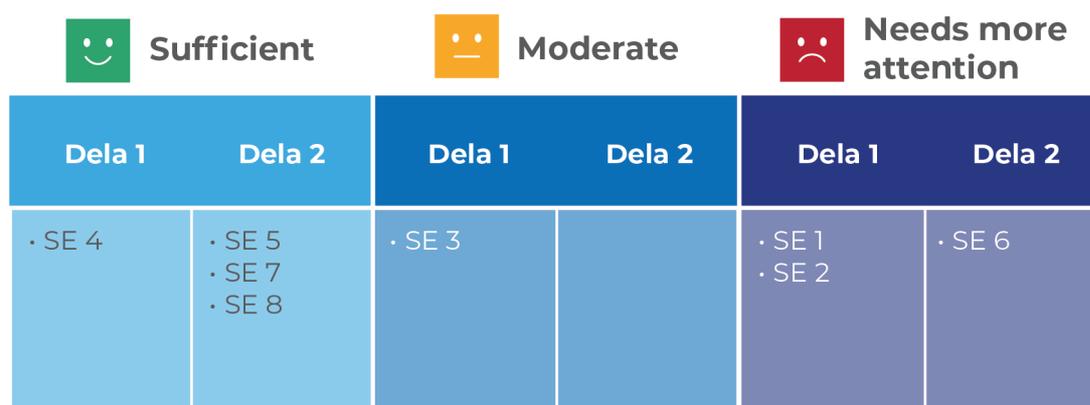
For Dela I, the Summit was followed by the **Implementation Phase**. In this phase, SEs were matched with Implementation Partners selected amongst IKEA co-workers that supported them in scoping, planning, launching and executing their strategies through online teamwork and onsite visits. Given the challenges of designing “a programme while delivering it at the same time” (Dela I Second Progress Report, p. 13), i.e. the necessity of planning and preparation before SEs were ready to transition into implementation, the Dela team observed throughout and after its conclusion, this phase was redesigned into the Scoping and Experimentation Phases for Dela II.

During the **Scoping phase**, the focus of SEs was on the preparation of their experimentation project, aiming at supporting the SEs in the next steps of the development of their strategies, which could be through a planned-based project (more in line with the “implementation” concept of the previous edition) or a prototype-based approach. For this phase, the SEs’ team was matched with an Experimentation Partner – that could be the same as the Strategy Partner – selected from the pools of IKEA co-workers or Microsoft Co-workers included for Dela II, which were presented and involved with SEs already during the Summit. Like before, the work involved 1.5-hour weekly team meetings for 10 weeks, in which SEs used a scoping tool, co-created by the Dela team, to focus the experimentation scope, understand the needs, and breakdown and roadmap the incoming experimentation process.

⁷ For Dela I, the Summit was composed of three days: Strategy Day, Implementation Day, and Leadership Day.

Finally, the **Experimentation Phase** focused on allowing SEs to advance further in their projects along a planned- or prototype-based based approach, as discussed above. The teams were given the freedom to develop their activities in a less structured work format and without mandatory weekly assignments or tools, with each SE given the flexibility to define the tools and way of working. For this phase, SEs were matched with Experimentation Experts that were selected based on the competencies needed and requested by SEs. These experts were selected from both IKEA and Microsoft during Dela II. Out of the skills indicated during scoping, only "one competence was not covered, that of Legal Expertise in digital topics." (Dela II Final Report, p.13).

Figure 7: Perceived relevance of the scoping and experimentation (implementation) phases of the Dela programme per social entrepreneur (SE)



Note: own elaboration. Assessment of the study team based on interviews with the SEs.

Furthermore, the figure above illustrates that half of all SEs consulted found the support provided during the strategy phase to be sufficient. It is pertinent to highlight that, two SEs from Dela I identified that they needed more attention, whilst only one SE from Dela II was part of this same category. Additionally, the number of SEs that considered the support to be sufficient increased from one to three when moving from Dela I to Dela II. Therefore, this may also be interpreted as an improvement in terms of the support provided between Dela I and II.

Overview of main findings on the appropriate support needed for the selected SEs

The following findings can be made on the support during the strategy phase from the consulted SEs:

- Overall, the support during the strategy phase has offered clarity, insights and focus for the majority of the SEs.
- Inputs from co-workers and “thought partners” were perceived to be highly relevant.
- In some cases, SEs had clarity on their strategy phase and advanced systems thinking. Therefore, the support provided was merely a reiteration.
- The tedious nature of the documents and templates during the strategy phase⁸ was cited as “academic”, “overly complicated”, and in limited cases, not relevant to the needs of the SEs.
- Expectation management and management is an element cited by a number of SEs, thought partners, and co-workers. This firstly relates to setting a clear expectation on what the programme can and cannot offer. Secondly, it relates to clear “goal posts” – clarity in outputs and aims that need to be achieved by the end of the programme.
- This links to the contextual needs of SEs and possibly their stages of development - SEs well advanced in their strategy had higher expectations during the implementation and scoping phases
- Based on the contextual needs, some cases highlight the need for tailor-made and more in-depth support.

⁸ This aspect is further elaborated in the next chapter – effectiveness and impact

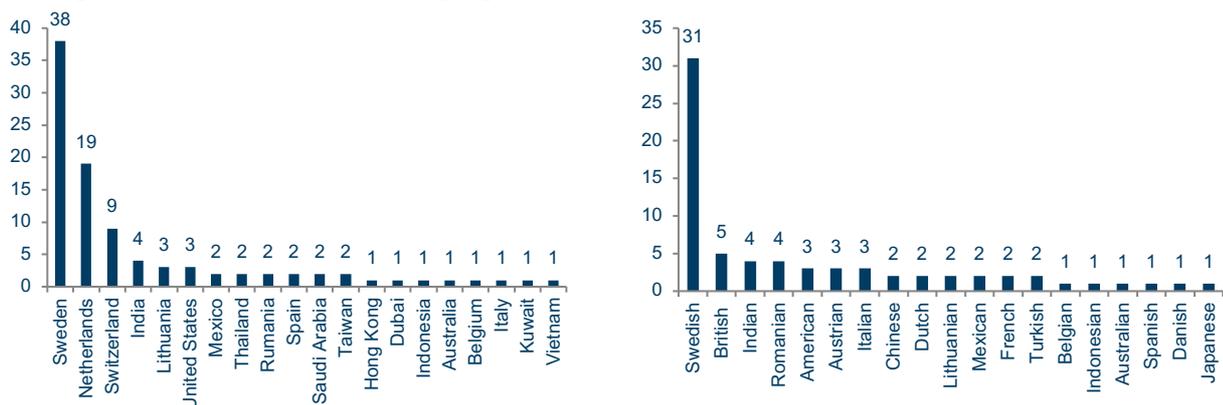
Therefore, broadly, the strategy phase of the programme has provided relevant support. The majority of the SEs found the support highly relevant with increased clarity on their systems thinking and focus. Despite this, expectation management and clarity on goals have been difficult. In the case of scoping/experimentation (implementation) stages, the relevance of the programme is impacted due to a lack of sufficient attention to the contextual needs and stages of development of the SEs during the strategy phase which then, in some reported cases, leads to unrealised milestones in the later phases of the Dela programme.

2.2.3 Has the programme been successful in selecting IKEA co-workers that can (potentially) support SEs? Does the programme provide the appropriate support to the selected IKEA co-workers?

Together with the entrepreneurs, the programme seeks to engage approximately 155 IKEA co-workers until its end in early 2023. The co-workers have a central role in the Accelerator programme, working together with the SEs in all phases of the process. They are instrumental in the development, planning and implementation of the ideas of SEs. Besides supporting and offering advice in the areas of business planning, project management, and strategic vision, it is envisaged that their engagement with SEs will lead to greater insights and understanding of the social impact and systemic change. The target group is typically involves senior managers who have significant experience and the capacity to adapt to various circumstances. This can however vary, most notably for the experimentation partners, dependent on the type of tasks required by the SE. The selection requirement is varied, but the primary focus is a commitment to social entrepreneurship and systemic change and the willingness to embark on a journey with entrepreneurs and support them in their growth.

Figure 8 provides an overview of co-workers obtained from a sample of 96 co-workers supplied by the Dela team (the sample is reduced to 71 persons in the case of nationalities – right-hand side) across all three years of Dela. Sweden dominates in terms of both location and nationality, although there is a greater variety of country contexts in the case of the latter.

Figure 8: Location (left) and Nationality (right) of IKEA co-workers



Each co-worker is expected to dedicate the time as they see fit. While across all projects, there is structured check-in between the co-worker and the SEs, this can vary depending on the case and through the evolution of the projects.

An influential element of the relevance of the programme has been identified as the match between the various co-workers and the SE and the thematic area they operate in. Two components to achieve an appropriate match have herein become apparent. Notably, the matching of skills appropriate to the needs of the SE and the matching of

co-workers with an open mind, engaging attitude, and affinity towards the goals and purpose of the social entrepreneur.

Box 4: The importance of appropriate matching

A match between a “thought partner” and one participating social entrepreneur during Dela II during the programme’s strategy phase has been described by both stakeholders as a near-perfect. The thought partner had selected the social enterprise as a first choice as it concerned a thematic area and purpose in which the thought partner was familiar and passionate about the local context and objectives. This strong match resulted in an outstanding collaboration and reiteration of the strategy during the first phase of the Dela program. The thought partner is still in touch with the SE to keep tabs on the progress of the social enterprise since the end of the programme.

While the collective knowledge and understanding of the team are crucial for the successful completion of the strategy phase, specific knowledge and experience in various fields, sectors, or networks become imperative during the later phases of the programme. For example, while one participating social entrepreneur during Dela I has shared a positive experience of evaluating and thinking about their strategy in a different manner, the most significant contribution has been the matching with an expert from IKEA to provide support and advice on a particular subject. As this subject formed the crucial basis for the social enterprise’s long-term strategy to maximise impact in different countries, their specific needs consisted of expert consultations on this topic. As identified during the strategy phase, they were matched with an IKEA co-worker that provided extremely valuable advice and support on the subject which propelled the SE forward in implementing their strategy and reaching their objectives.

Figure 9: Perceived appropriateness of the level of support by IKEA co-workers per social entrepreneur

 Sufficient		 Moderate	
Dela 1	Dela 2	Dela 1	Dela 2
• SE 4	• SE 5 • SE 7	• SE 1 • SE 2 • SE 3	• SE 6 • SE 8

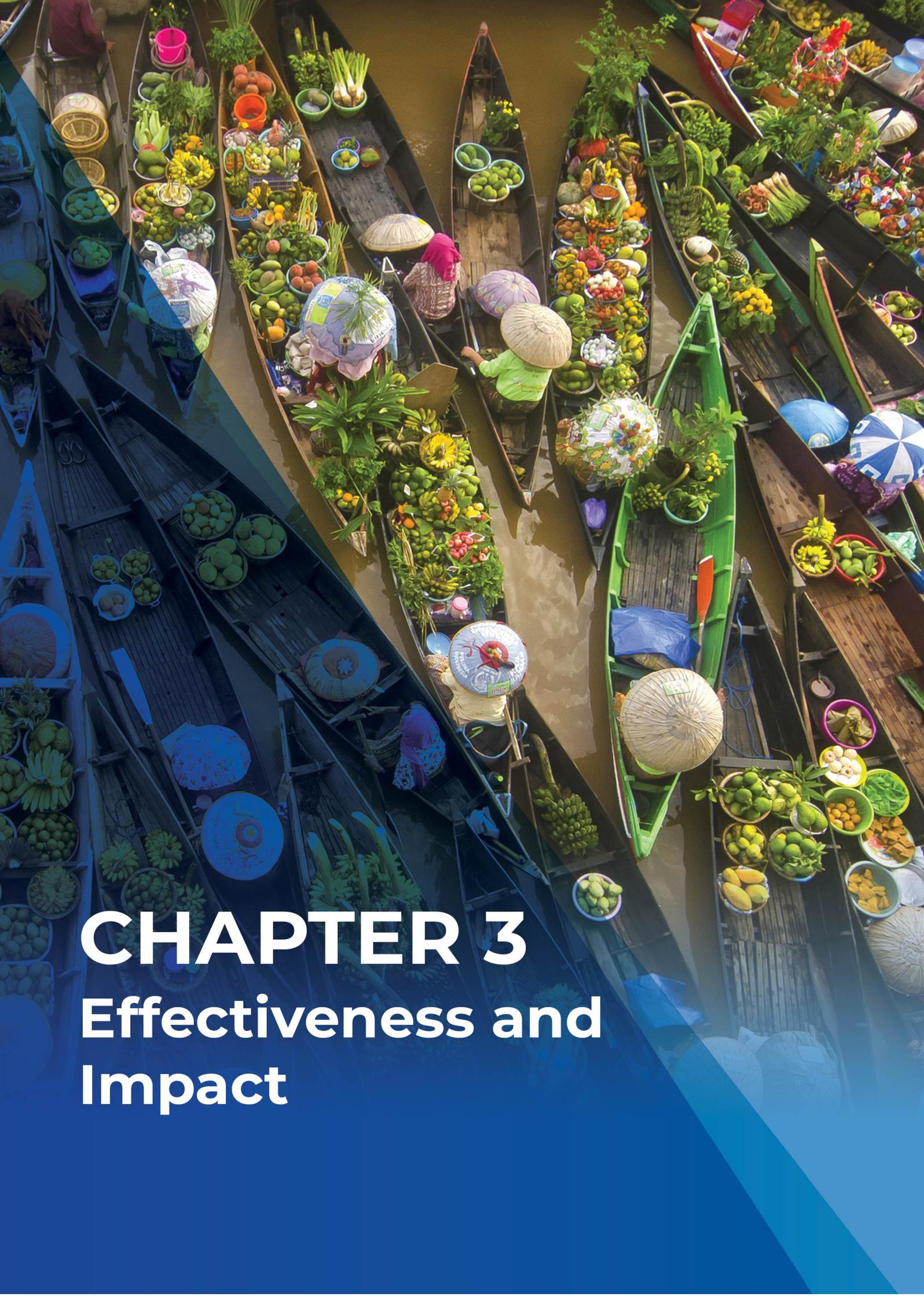
Note: own elaboration. Assessment of the study team based on interviews with the SEs.

The evaluation team has the following observations:

- Broadly the programme has been successful in matching co-workers with SEs. The IKEA co-workers have demonstrated high degrees of commitment, professionalism and know-how. These elements have been identified as key attributes toward maximizing the support the Dela programme can offer to SEs.
- To this end, the matching process for co-workers and “thought partners”, where one categorically indicates three SEs one would like to support, should pay more attention to enable matches with co-workers in terms of skillset and their motivation.
- While a match based on the skill set is of significant importance, the extrinsic motivation of the co-worker that ultimately aligns with the values, affinity and context of the SE is also identified as particularly influential in creating a successful match. This happened in most but not all cases reviewed.

- During the course of the programme, a lack of clarity impacted the progress - this was most notable during the scoping/experimentation (implementation) phases. More specifically, some IKEA co-workers and external “thought partners” were unaware of their exact roles and responsibilities.
- Due to the lack of clarity on the exact roles and responsibilities of some IKEA co-workers and external thought partners, three case studies during Dela I and 2 case studies during Dela II were identified to have received moderately appropriate support from the IKEA co-workers.
- According to some co-workers and thought partners, they could be further supported through clarity in roles and responsibilities. Many cited the need for an inventory of tools/platforms where the co-workers can effectively and efficiently find the appropriate expert, tool or network in accordance with the needs of the SE. As identified during the stakeholder consultations, often identified steps forward or required expertise was identified during the strategy phase, but opportunities were not fully utilised as the extent of knowledge of the team of co-workers was limited on a particular subject. The creation of a platform where different teams of co-workers can exchange ideas and thoughts and request support for specific elements of the programme could therefore be beneficial to overcome this challenge.

Given these challenges, it is fair to conclude that the co-workers did an outstanding job of supporting the SEs.



CHAPTER 3

Effectiveness and Impact

3 Effectiveness and impact

In this chapter, the EQs regarding effectiveness and impact are answered in line with the evaluation matrix (see Annex 2). In order to reduce overlaps in the analysis, we have reorganized the presentation, and the sub-questions of the evaluation matrix were consolidated into four sections. Section 3.1 focusses on the strategy phase and strategy development. Section 3.2 focuses on strategy adoption and connecting short-term and medium-term outcomes. Section 3.3 assesses medium- and long-term outcomes of the programme. Finally, Section 3.4 discusses the outcomes of the programme for IKEA co-workers.

Key findings for “Effectiveness” and “Impact”

- The effectiveness of Dela varies across the two phases and stages of interventions. The Strategy phase is effective in stimulating clarity in the directions and strategies of the SEs to leverage systematic change. However, reflections are needed on the depth (specific needs of the SEs) and timeline which is relatively short given the scope of the programme.
- The adoption and implementation of strategies, which are highly influenced by the Scoping and Experimentation (or Implementation) phases, show varying degrees of effectiveness - in some cases, there is clear evidence of outcomes and contribution, whereas, in others, the evidence is limited.
- The overall design of Dela’s Strategy phase and, in particular, the templates used during this phase have been classified by a variety of SEs and co-workers as “tedious”, “excessively complicated”, and, at times, “academic”.
- There are two key drivers behind the outputs and short-term outcomes of the programme - the incentive to strategic clarity and setting out a vision; and the focus of Dela on the scaling of impact and solutions. These characteristics suggest that the Dela programme presents the potential for significant contribution to achieve impact within this space.
- The programme’s contribution to the implementation of strategies is difficult to trace in many cases. This is partly due to shortcomings in the MEL framework of the programme, which lacks a clear pathway to trace the contribution of the programme.
- In general, the outcomes of Dela at a higher level have so far been limited. Beyond the obvious importance of allowing enough time for the effects of a complex intervention to fully play out and reach its target audience, the review of the Dela programme strongly indicates that impacts at the beneficiary level are more likely to occur when the development of new strategies is followed during in the subsequent implementation-focused phases, especially when coupled with clear contribution targets.
- Combined with various other factors, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic significantly impacted the effectiveness of the Dela programme, and in particular Dela I.
- Overall, IKEA co-workers were able to benefit from the programme at the personal level and, to some extent, at the level of soft professional skills. However, across the board, co-workers indicated that the programme does not promote concrete changes in the way of working at IKEA: its strategy or aspects such as the development of value chains.
- IKEA co-workers do not consider that Dela has a relevant role to play regarding support to IKEA’s strategy.

3.1 Have the SEs set out new strategies for their organisations to promote systems change?

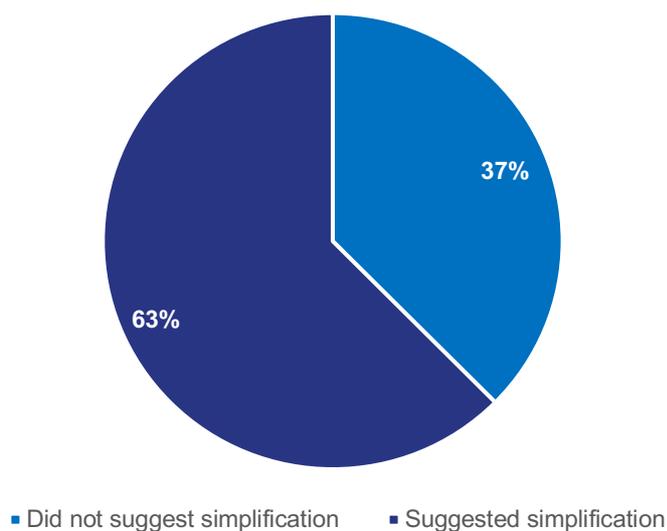
Out of the initial cohort of 12 SEs during Dela I, 11 completed the Strategy phase and Summit and nine went through to the Implementation phase, completing the whole programme. Each SE who completed the programme received an estimated total of 167 hours of support from IKEA co-workers and 290 hours from other experts. During Dela II, all 12 SEs who joined the programme completed the strategy phase, and ten completed the “scoping” and “experimentation” phases.

The strategy phases in all Dela editions followed a similar approach. After the selection of SEs for the programme from the pool of the Ashoka Fellowship network, a team composed of IKEA co-workers and “thought partners” was assembled. The Strategy phase largely entails following a stepwise approach to provide clarity, refine or create a strategy, in an interactive process with advisors and, frequently, assisted by other members of the social enterprise. The SE is then supported in articulating a new long-term vision of the organisation (re)structuring existing ideas and ambitions while simultaneously working to leverage its impact.

Overall, the strategy phase has been effective in promoting the development of new strategies and an increased focus on systems change across supported SEs. However, some aspects of its design and, in particular, the templates used during this phase were criticised by a variety of SEs and co-workers, sometimes being termed “tedious”, “excessively complicated”, and, “academic”. For some entrepreneurs, particularly those in the developed stages of their operation, the exercise was found to be repetitive.

These stakeholders indicated the need for a more tailored approach, which was corroborated by co-workers, who pointed to the important role of complementing, and sometimes replacing, some of the programme tools with other approaches used outside of the programme. Considering the limited capacity and resources of many of the SE, the templates and “homework” were found to take excessive time and resources to complete.

Figure 10: Share of SEs suggesting the programme could benefit from simplifying templates (case studies, Dela I & II)



Note: own elaboration. Assessment of the study team based on interviews with 15 SEs.

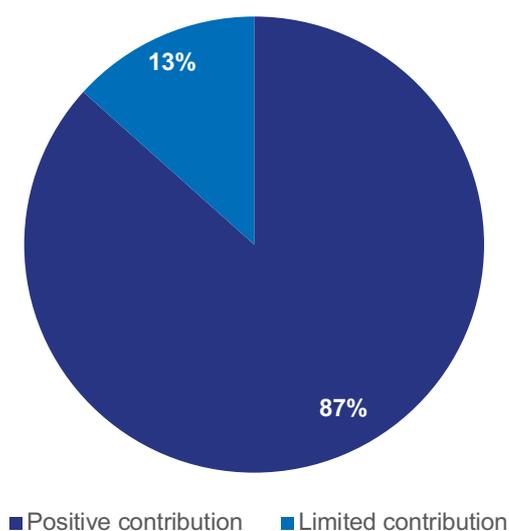
These perceptions indicate a clear opportunity for simplification and streamlining of Dela’s Strategy phase. However, the methods used in the programme were far from being entirely rejected by participants. As indicated by a Dela I entrepreneur,

“the templates initially seemed like a lot of work but once you go through the material it starts to make a lot of sense”.

Additionally, two SEs stated that the templates and materials provide a good guideline to go through the process. Through them, they were able to identify and allocate more time to aspects that were found particularly relevant to the needs of the social entrepreneur. The perception of SEs regarding the usefulness of some of the tools, e.g. some homework-type assignments, also depended on the capacity of the IKEA co-workers to offer support regarding their background and objectives.

In general, the Strategy phase provided a good level of structure to direct SEs and their teams into exploring new ways of working and leveraging their systems-change strategy. For the most part, the SEs of Dela I and II also reported appreciation for the dedication and expertise of the Strategy Advisors. The insights gained from IKEA co-workers and thought partners, as well as the exposure to these collaborators, were broadly appreciated. The majority of SEs reported receiving relevant contributions and outputs in terms of redefining the strategy and scope of objectives. In only a limited number of cases, SEs had already established, in their view, a fully appropriate strategy with a strong systems-change focus before entering the programme and considered the programme's inputs to be absent.

Figure 11: Share of SEs that reported the Dela programme has positively contributed towards achieving systematic change strategies (Dela I & II)



Note: own elaboration. Assessment of the study team based on interviews with 15 SEs.

We consider this perception to be grounded on two key pillars of Dela's strategy phase: stimulating clarity in strategy and refocusing SEs towards scaling impact. Boxes 5 and 6 below exemplify the central role these guidelines have had in strengthening the effectiveness of the strategy phase.

Box 5: Role of clarity and setting out a vision

The initial interviews with SEs carried out by the study team prior to the selection of the case studies provided strong indications regarding the role of Dela in providing assistance and incentivizing the social enterprises to invest their own time and resources into the development of a clear long-term strategy. As a Dela III fellow put it: "their vision was too broad before Dela. The Dela programme allowed us to go into the root issues and come up with something more concrete connecting the big vision with accountable goals."

These perceptions were corroborated by the case studies. For example, the strategy phase's templates provided a Dela I SE with a clear structure through which she was able to frame and define her systems-change strategy. Based on this structure, the SE and her team identified new stakeholders within the national ecosystem and devised a strategy to promote the organisation's representation of important actors in official government statistics. Most importantly, based on Ashoka's framework and structure, she was able to adapt and formulate her own formal data gathering structure to be implemented in future instances.

In turn, when a Dela II SE joined the Dela programme, the social enterprise was young, counting with only 11 employees, and in rapid growth. Nonetheless, the systems change strategy was still unclear to the SE and the team. The SE highlighted

that the strategy phase's step-by-step guide genuinely helped them to stay organized and visualize a clear systems-change strategy whilst giving them liberty to explore ways to rethink the work and the impact the organisation aimed to achieve. Based on the Ashoka templates and discussions that ensued, the SE and the team were able to identify the root causes of local farmers' weakened bargaining power. Once these root causes were made explicit, the SE managed to define a new systems-change strategy and a new strategy to promote impact by developing a low-cost digital tool designed to promote information flows and market access for smallholders.

Box 6: Promoting strategies that scale impact

The strategy phase helped one participating SE in Dela I to redefine his strategy's scalability and outreach. The process allowed the SE to visualize the different elements that constituted his systems change strategy. Based on this understanding and the discussions with co-workers, the SE reported he was able to identify the elements that could be expanded in order to generate more far-reaching impact. Whereas he was previously only focussed on impacting few farmers, the strategy phase gave him more knowledge and understanding to expand and scale up operations in order to generate impact across the broader industry.

Likewise, another Dela I SE joined the Dela programme in search of ways to scale up his operations and expand internationally. During the programme's different phases, he was advised by an IKEA co-worker and external experts with specialized knowledge about business development and franchise models. The co-worker and external experts were able to provide hands-on knowledge and the expertise needed to scale the organisation's business model via franchising. The SE and team were able to discuss various important franchising elements, such as franchising contracts and other aspects, including legal issues. This clear match between the SE's needs and the co-worker and external experts' areas of expertise helped him set out a new strategy to promote broader change via franchising.

According to another Dela II SE, the strategy phase's guide helped him visualize and define the goals for the systems-change strategy he had long intended to develop. Most importantly, it also helped him establish how his operations could be scaled in order to achieve a broader impact. Based on the support received, he was able to set out a new strategy to promote systems change by devising and creating a foundation and stakeholder alliance to cooperate with other stakeholders and propagate impact across Europe.

A reading of the overall evidence indicates that, more often than not, the strategy phase offered clarity and important insights to SEs. Despite shortcomings identified in the programme design and templates, these factors were instrumental in promoting relevant instances of change at the strategic level for a large section of the programme fellows, either in the form of completely new strategies or improvement and refocusing of pre-existing strategies. Overall, the programme has been effective in promoting the development of new or significantly improves strategies and an increased focus on systems change across supported SEs.

3.2 To what extent have the new strategies been taken up in practice in the organisation? Has the programme promoted significant *actions* by SEs to achieve impact?

The main impact question of an evaluation is what long-term changes, intended and unintended, are likely to occur or have occurred as a direct result of the programme. In the case of the Dela program, as explored in section 3.4 below, assessing these impacts is largely unfeasible due to their long-term nature, and the short period that has elapsed since the conclusion of the intervention. However, a crucial and necessary impact question concerns how likely the programme is to achieve its intended impact and to what extent any observed outcomes can be attributed to Dela.

In this regard, the programme's Theory of Change offers a starting point by articulating the pathways of change across outputs, outcomes and impact indicators. In the case of Dela, as will be explained Chapter 4, the ToC does

not provide a detailed account of the underlying causal connections between the programme's interventions and the desired outcomes and impacts. This approach has the advantage of providing great flexibility in terms of programme design but comes at the cost of reducing the level of clarity in the expected contribution and impact of the programme.

However, following the trajectory of each SE and the short-term outcomes (or lack thereof) observed across the several SE cases gives important indications regarding the contribution of Dela to possible impacts. Setting out adjusted or completely new strategies is clearly a necessary condition for establishing the role of Dela and has been an area of success for the programme, as seen above. However, actually adopting them as long-term guidelines inside the organisation and implementing them in practice, even if partially, with the support of the programme, indicates changes to SE's *modus operandi* that testify to the influence of Dela, especially if these changes can be considered significant in the context of SE's overall business.

When it comes to the effective implementation of new strategies across Dela, the picture that emerges from the case studies is more heterogeneous than the one seen in the previous section. Despite gaining insights and elaborating new strategies, a group of SEs experienced none or only limited changes to their strategies in practice. Box 7 provides a more detailed analysis of the findings regarding the case studies, for which we observed that the implementation of strategies and the effect on social organisations was limited.

Box 7: Specific case studies with unclear or moderate outcomes for the implementation of new strategies

Out of the eight case studies assessed for the evaluation, the study team considered that in half of them, the programme significantly promoted the creation and adoption of new strategies by SEs. In other cases, the results were moderate or absent.

A unique example is provided by a Dela II social entrepreneur. Due to misalignment in understanding, expectations and clarity on outcomes, the overall support was hindered significantly from the strategy phase, as the SE considered the strategies set out did not promote a significant step forward relative to the previous goals of the company. As expected, problems stemming from the initial misalignments were only potentialized during the follow-up stages. A SE from Dela I, on the other hand, received important support from Dela designing a multi-stakeholder strategy. Although their ideas concerning data-driven systems change were already present before participating in the programme, they lacked a clear, structured and replicable framework that could be repeatedly used to account for different stakeholders. Although the framework developed by Dela was considered useful by the SE and team to frame their modes of thought and test their ideas more rapidly, given the scale at which the organisation was already operating, the systems-change strategy of the organisation did not significantly change after the Dela programme.

A distinct case is provided by another Dela I SE, who indicated the programme had helped him identify objectives, ambitions and needs, broadening his knowledge and vision. However, significant challenges remained for the adoption of the strategy, especially regarding finance, which implied enhancing their operations and increasing scale in a way that would allow the organisation to advance in the new strategy. Thus, the actual uptake of the new strategy remained very limited. Finally, another Dela I SE indicated that IKEA co-workers helped the organisation to refine their systems change strategy, adapt the organisational structure, and setting out a new franchise strategy for systems change. In practice, however, the SE observed that the organisation's systems change strategy was not significantly adjusted following the Dela programme because (i) the key aspects of the systems change approach of the organisation, e.g. regarding policy advocacy and mode of operation, was already well-developed and successful and (ii) there was some mismatch of expectations and a lack of contextual knowledge and engagement from co-workers.

Although in one case the take up of strategies was effectively not feasible due to an initial failure to develop a new or improved strategy, the remaining three cases discussed in Box 7 have in common the presence of promising results from the strategy phase that were only moderately adopted by social organisations later on. In other words,

these are cases in which the strategies prepared during Dela did not add significantly to the previous vision and processes followed by social organisations before the start of the programme. In some instances, these limitations were caused by the presence of requirements for putting in motion the desired strategies which SEs and the Dela team were unable to address during the programme. For example, a lack of resources to develop the desired solution was a key barrier to a SE; however, funding needs was an area the programme was not equipped to support. In other cases, we observe that the *contribution* of the Dela programme, i.e. the extent to which the strategies and support offered by Dela added to previous approach followed by SEs to promote systems change, was limited in practice.

Figure 12: Participation in Dela contributed to setting out and *implementing* new strategies to promote systems change

 Sufficient		 Moderate		 Needs more attention	
Dela 1	Dela 2	Dela 1	Dela 2	Dela 1	Dela 2
• SE 4	• SE 5 • SE 7 • SE 8	• SE 1 • SE 2 • SE 3			• SE 6

Note: own elaboration. Assessment of the study team based on Case Studies.

One should note that the cases classified as “moderate” indicate instances in which the organisation was strengthened to a certain extent but the uptake and/or contribution of Dela was limited and below potential. These cases remain in contrast with the remaining SEs for which stronger and clearer uptake was achieved. We discuss these cases in greater detail in the upcoming section, together with an in-depth overview of medium- and long-term outcomes.

In summary, the Dela programme has been partially effective in promoting the uptake of new strategies. In half of the case studies, SEs’ core strategies have remained unchanged or, more often, changed little as a result of their participation in the programme. This result is largely connected to barriers in the follow-up phases, after the development of strategies.

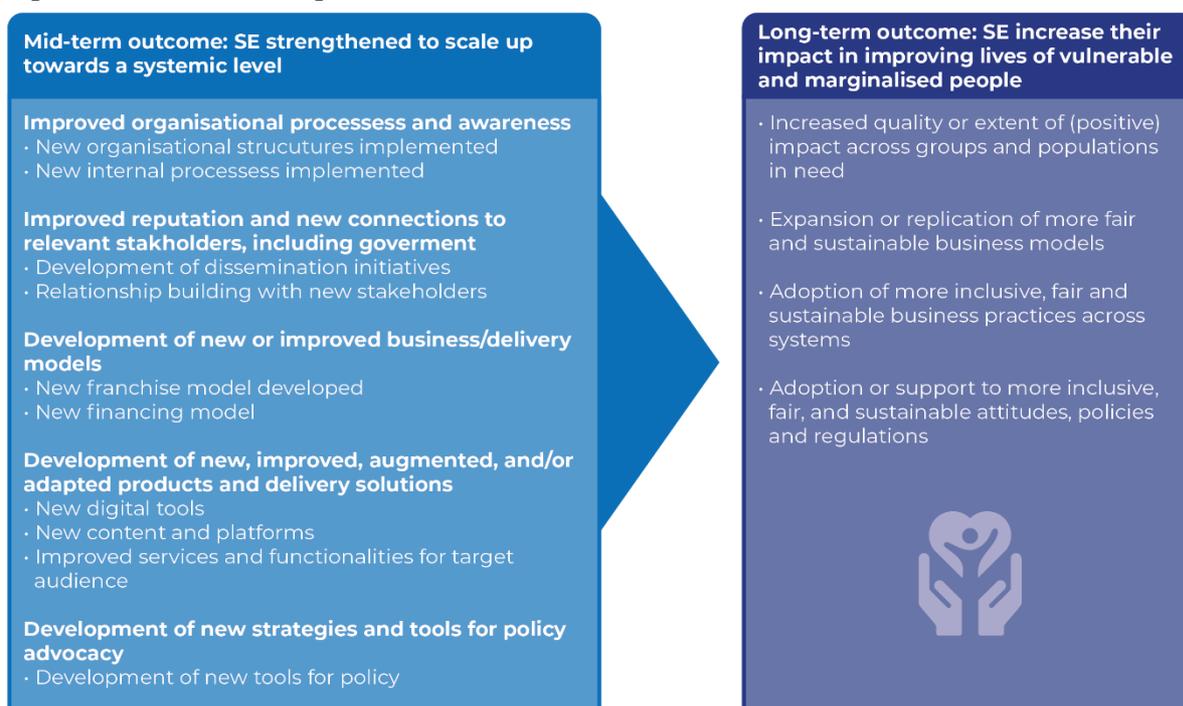
3.3 Has the programme helped SEs in contributing to systemic change (e.g. replication or adoption of solutions, policy changes, etc.)? What are the outcomes of the programme at higher levels (mid-term and long-term)?

As highlighted in Section 1.3, one of the key analytical building blocks of our methodology is “outcome harvesting”, which allows us to depart from the observed outcomes to determine whether and how an intervention has contributed to these changes, as opposed to “measuring progress toward predetermined objectives or outcomes”⁹. This is especially useful considering in the context of Dela’s current ToC which, as argued above, is only defined at a very high level.

⁹ https://www.betterevaluation.org/plan/approach/outcome_harvesting

Figure 13 is an overview of the *achieved* medium- and *desired* long-term outcomes emerging from the analyses of case studies. We have included the higher-level outcomes set out in Dela’s Theory of Change (ToC). These outcomes are translated from practical and specific case studies into larger and comprehensive categories. Developing these outcomes and their interrelationships in-depth through a detailed programme-wide ToC or several SE-specific ToCs would mean an important advancement in the programme’s monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) framework, as argued in Section 4.1.1. Nonetheless, the list below offers an insight into the medium-term outcomes that the programme’s SEs are aiming to achieve.

Figure 13: Outcome harvesting of Dela interventions



Note: own elaboration. Assessment of the study team based on the Case Studies.

While Figure 13 depicts medium-term outcomes achieved by SEs, the long-term outcomes are aspired to but not necessarily achieved. In this regard, our analysis considers that promoting systems change is a long-term task that, when successful, tends to only play out after several years. Fully determining the higher-level impacts of the programme is largely unfeasible within the context of the evaluation, which took place while Dela III was ongoing and little time has passed since the conclusion of Dela I and Dela II. However, by focusing on medium-term outcomes and indirectly assessing long-term outcomes, the case studies provide insights on SEs that are already having a significant impact on lives and those that are more likely to do so – as well as on others that are unlikely to achieve this.

Box 8 discusses SEs for which Dela was able to successfully promote medium-term outcomes, as well as initial or likely long-term outcomes.

Box 8: Medium-term and first long-term impacts of the Dela programme

Systems change takes time. However, the support offered by Dela has enabled a few social entrepreneurs to already promote an impact on the livelihoods of vulnerable people.

In discussions with his team of advisors at Dela, a Dela II SE in South Asia explored the idea of expanding the scope of his organization and setting out new strategies to promote change. After developing a new strategy to strengthen his work in

policy advocacy and institutional support to informal entrepreneurs, the SE used the support offered by Dela during the Scoping and Implementation phases to develop and implement a data collection process in a key city, using the survey results to promote an online media campaign. The successful outcomes of this campaign allowed the organisation to expand its contacts across relevant government ministries. Moreover, with support from Dela, the SE expanded its activities to also deliver trainings to the target group on key aspects of their business, and introduced digital payments platforms to support them. The organisation indicated that these solutions are already being extended to the target group.

Leading a successful social business since its founding, a SE in Europe already had a history of successfully offering trainings to at-risk populations across in several countries through more than 100 schools, promoting their access to the labour market in tech sectors. During Dela, the SE's organisation was able to develop and put into practice a smart network with the aim of creating a stakeholder alliance to fight against the same societal problems. This has enabled the SE to receive new sources of funding to expand its areas of impact. A second contribution was the conceptualization of the use of its digital platform towards other training centres and other vocational training organizations outside of the IT and tech sectors. The SE reports being already offering these solutions with a growing impact on its revenue sources and increased potential for impact across a much broader audience.

Similarly, a SE active in Europe focused on simultaneously promoting social and environmental impact by promoting the integration of young unemployed people was found to have benefitted from its participation with the Dela programme. During Dela, the SE developed a strategy to implement a new franchising model for scaling internationally. The Dela programme's contribution to this initiative can be described as having three components. First, the matching of IKEA co-workers and "thought partners" that are engaged, intrinsically motivated and hold overall passion or affinity for the goal or topic the particular SE is trying to confront. Secondly, the design of the Dela programme provided for clear tools and structure which were, in this particular case, used in a way that allowed ample freedom for the SE to explore and identify the specific needs (e.g. guidance, expertise, advisory support) would entail. Thirdly, the appropriate reaction of the Dela team to provide the SE with pertinent support and expertise that answered the specific needs of the SE to implement the new model flawlessly. All in all, the Dela programme has resulted in direct and tangible impact across medium-term and initial signs of long-term outcomes.

Finally, a fourth SE active in improving the livelihoods of smallholders greatly benefited from its participation in the Dela programme on multiple fronts. First, the Strategy Phase allowed the SE to support in defining and structuring the strategy around systematic change. Additionally, the Strategy Phase was particularly successful in identifying the specific needs of the SE which were matched with the appropriate experts in the later phases of the programme. This was part of the continuous support and advisory role that was provided by the external experts and proved to be vital for the successful participation of the SE in the Dela programme. Finally, after the successful completion of the Strategy Phase, the SE was provided with ample support to propel the development and functionalities of the digital tool entailed by the organisation's new strategy. Although this end-product was not completed during Dela, the support provided by the programme was considered key to further developments after the end of the support, which has the potential to promote long-term outcomes.

The four cases discussed above have in common the fact they achieved significant medium-term outcomes through the support provided in Dela. Moreover, although only indirectly, we observe some evidence of the impacts of Dela programme at the beneficiary level. At least two of the cases above offer a concrete glimpse of the effect ideas and solutions developed during the programme can have at higher levels. In other cases, the longer-term outcomes are not yet fully present but, in our view, are likely to arise as SEs further develop and implement the solutions devised during the programme.

The review of the evidence strongly suggests that medium-term outcomes and impacts at the beneficiary level are more likely to occur when the development of adjusted or new strategies is followed through in the subsequent implementation-focused phases. The follow-up promotes the concrete testing of these strategies, which can translate into the refinement of the more abstract ideas developed during the first phase of the programme into

concrete, applicable, and actionable steps for social enterprises. Moreover, when fully successful, it can provide the necessary organizational and skills support, as well as the required commitment for SEs to implement some of the new strategies envisioned during the early stages of the programme.

Figure 14: Contribution of the Dela programme towards achieving outcomes at a higher level

 Sufficient		 Needs more attention	
Dela 1	Dela 2	Dela 1	Dela 2
· SE 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · SE 5 · SE 7 · SE 8 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · SE 1 · SE 2 · SE 3 	· SE 6

Note: own elaboration. Assessment of the study team based on the Case Studies.

Figure 14 summarizes the study team's assessment regarding the contribution of Dela for SE achieving higher-level outcomes. One emerging feature of Dela are the differences between the two initial years of the programme. Given the centrality of the scoping and experimentation phases regarding strategy uptake and outcomes, Dela I's relatively unstructured implementation phase seems to have had a relevant impact on the support offered to SEs. These problems were reinforced by the Covid-19 pandemic, which impacted the programme in several ways. For example, both the SEs and the teams of co-workers and thought partners reported limitations in available personnel due to medical-related absences. Furthermore, due to international travel limitations, some planned visits from Advisors to the SEs were severely limited in Dela I.

Taken together with the discussion in the previous sections, another emerging feature of the programme support is the strong *mutual dependence* of results across the different phases. In other words, SEs that did not benefit from strategy development or that, thereafter, were unable to implement these strategies to a significant extent were not set on a trajectory toward long-term impact by Dela. On the former case, the main example is offered by the SE that entered the programme with mistaken expectations regarding the design and offered by Dela and, consequently, was unable to set out a significantly improved strategy in the initial phase of the programme. On the latter, an important case is offered by the SE that could not overcome the key funding constraint to implement the strategy (on both accounts, see Box 7).

Connected to the above, the effective *contribution* of Dela is another driving factor for the results achieved by the programme. We have touched upon the issue in the previous section while discussing the uptake of strategies by social entrepreneurs. As mentioned, one important aspect of contribution is ensuring that the strategies designed in the programme offer significant inputs to the long-term plans of SEs, for example in the form on completely new ideas or the refinement of existing ideas and translation into a structured and more actionable framework. Moreover, it is crucial that the strategizing results are anchored by concrete measures and processes within organisations instead of remaining as a relatively inconsequential reference-point. Finally, it is important that specific medium-term outcomes prepared or fully developed during the programme are followed through, finalized and implemented in consistency with the strategy, although not necessarily exactly as planned, preparing the ground for new aspects of the overall strategy and long-term outcomes.

In that context, at least two of the case studies have demonstrated that, despite the presence of important outputs and a few relevant steps toward medium-term outcomes, the uptake of strategies and follow up does not indicate that Dela has significantly contributed to medium- and (potential) long-term outcomes. For example, a SE from Dela I, which benefited greatly from broadening his perspective on systematic change as a result of participating in the Dela programme. More specifically, the strategy phase of the programme allowed for the exploration of valuable new approaches toward replicability in order to expand the impact of the SE. While this has been reported by the SE to hold important potential, the actual implementation of the systematic change in the strategy of the SE remains to be completed. The reasons for this include the fact the organisation already had a well-established and successful approach to rely on and shortcomings in the support offered (see Box 7). On the one hand, this limits the tangible outcomes of its participation in the Dela programme. On the other, the limited follow up makes it highly unfeasible that any results eventually achieved the organisation can be attributed to the programme.

In conclusion, the above reasoning suggests that the programme has been partially effective in contributing to medium- and long-term outcomes across SEs. In half of the cases, we observe a clear path for impact going from strategizing to medium-term outcomes and, potentially, long-term ones. For the other half, we observe an interrupted trajectory across the programme and its impact pathways that limited the programme outputs and/or reduced its contribution.

3.4 To what extent have IKEA co-workers understanding of systems change and social entrepreneurship improved? To what extent IKEA co-workers perceive the programme can provide insights to their work and life?¹⁰

The engagement of IKEA co-workers has taken place across the various phases of the programme. In essence, the co-workers have performed three functions in Dela: Strategy Advisors, Implementation/Experimentation Partners and Experimentation Experts. As Strategy Advisors, they were expected to support fellows in the development of their systems change strategies, including assistance in mapping and identifying systemic issues connected to SE's areas of activity. As Experimentation & Scoping (Implementation) Partners, their focus changes to a more concrete scoping, breakdown and road mapping of the strategy aspects, as well as to support in initial implementation. As Experimentation Experts, IKEA co-workers are selected based on specific knowledge they possess to fill skill gaps identified by SEs and their team for implementation.

In general, co-workers received official support from IKEA's management structure and had a number of hours allocated weekly specifically to work on the programme. Their motivation to participate in Dela ranges from experience and interest in coaching or in social entrepreneurship, supporting socially responsible initiatives, supporting IKEA programmes, obtaining a better understanding of different realities or, to a much lesser extent, identifying suppliers and developing IKEA's value chains. As a rule, IKEA co-workers demonstrated a high level of dedication and commitment to the programme and the fellows to which they were assigned.

Box 9: Focus Group Discussion findings

The number of Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) initially planned for the study had to be reduced and partially replaced by one-on-one interviews due to a lower-than-expected engagement from co-workers. Nonetheless, two separate FGDs were conducted and provided relevant insights to assess the design of the programme and the experience of co-workers. Some of the key insights were the following:

- It is important to have continuity of teams during the programme since the process of knowing and understanding the ideas of SEs can be lengthy.

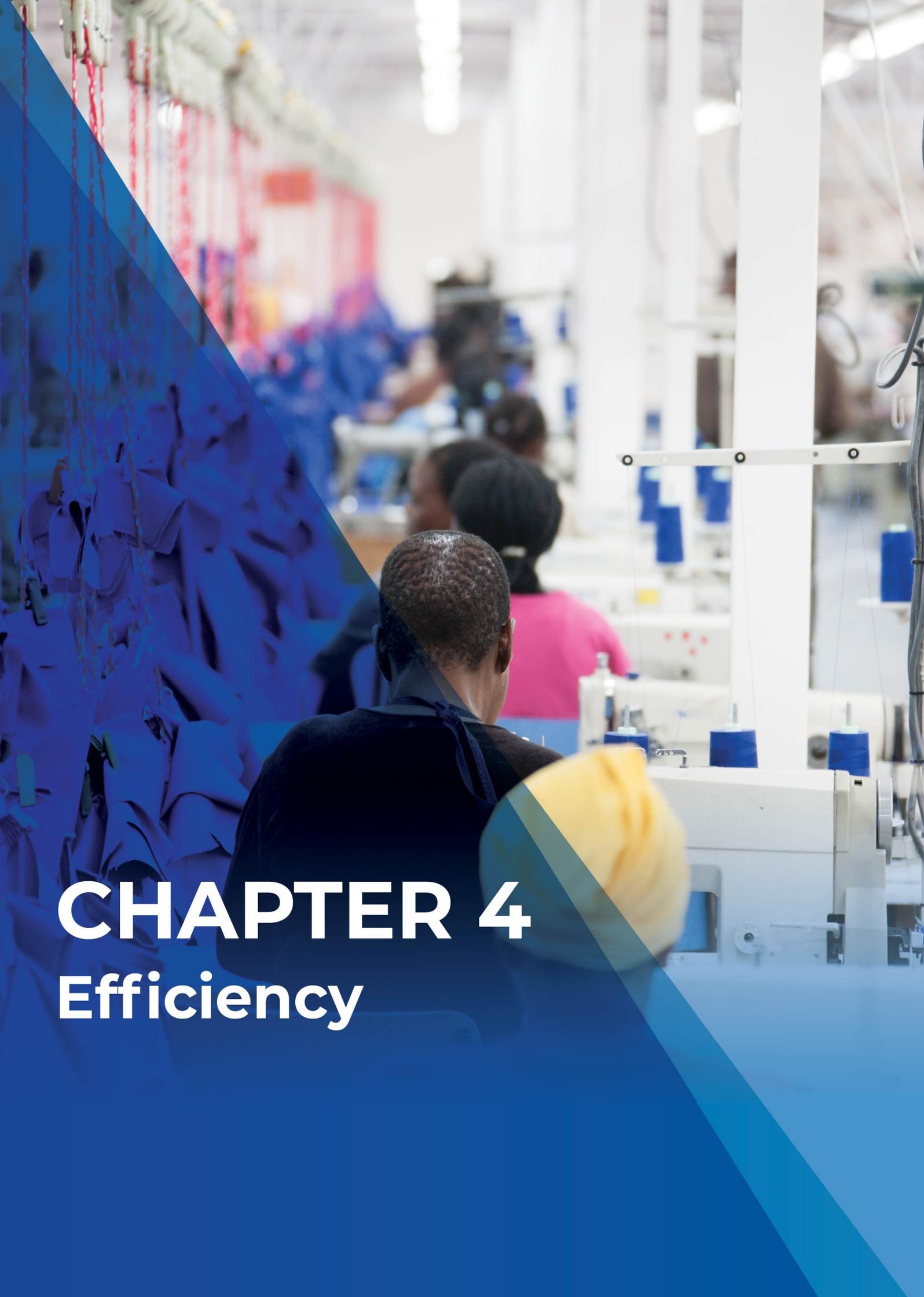
¹⁰ This section also covers the related sub-question "Has the programme promoted significant actions by co-workers to promote impact amongst colleagues and IKEA's strategy?"

- The impact of Dela on co-workers happens mostly at the personal level. The consulted IKEA co-workers have reported that no effects, seen or expected, in IKEA's work processes.
- Dela promotes a better understanding of populations in need, as well as more clarity on the capabilities and needs of social entrepreneurs.
- The support provided by the Dela team was highly satisfactory, although onboarding was not always easy.

It is important to highlight that not all functions performed by co-workers are intrinsically related to strategizing on systems change. As Experimentation Partners and Experts, IKEA co-workers tend to focus on practical implementation aspects and receive the strategies elaborated previously largely completed, although in need of more or less further refining depending in the case. Nonetheless, co-workers that participated in the strategy phase tend to de-emphasize systems change as a guideline for their activities and focus on practical approaches that allow them to work together with SEs, reflecting, focusing and elaborating new strategies. Two co-workers have reported using alternative tools or complementing activities with other methods for strategizing. Naturally, this fact does not indicate that systems change is irrelevant for the strategy phase. Instead, it suggests that the focus on systems change during the strategy phase comes largely from the Dela team and the programme's design and tools, and not from co-workers.

Overall, IKEA co-workers – in particular Strategy Advisors and Experimentation Partners – were able to benefit from the programme at the personal level and, to some extent, at the level of soft professional skills. For example, some participants interviewed for this study indicated a deeper understanding of the realities and needs of populations across the world, coupled with an increased sense of satisfaction with their work and employment at IKEA. One interviewee appreciated the challenge posed by the programme and reported an increased sense of accomplishment and confidence from working at Dela. In Focus Group Discussions, all co-workers agreed that the programme provided them with a better understanding of the operation, challenges, and needs of smaller businesses in general and SEs in particular. One participant indicated that this could be helpful in improving the way of relating to smaller suppliers.

Nonetheless, across the board, co-workers indicated that the programme does not promote concrete changes in the way of working at IKEA, its strategy or other concrete aspects, such as the development of value chains. Only one co-worker interviewed was able to provide a small example of concrete changes in IKEA's way of working that was a consequence of the programme, although other outcomes have been mapped out by the Dela team in for example, the Journey Maps. We see at least two important reasons for this perception. Firstly, Dela does not promote significant activities to disseminate the learnings of the programme beyond and after the participation of co-workers. Dissemination is not considered in the selection of co-workers or pursued with emphasis after the programme, despite the fact several participants occupy strategic positions in the company. Secondly, it remains unclear how and to what extent Dela can provide concrete and applicable learnings to IKEA's way of working. This is true both at a higher level, i.e. in Dela's design and Theory of Change, and at a lower level, in the understanding and perception of co-workers. In fact, IKEA co-workers do not seem to consider that supporting IKEA's strategy is an important objective of the programme.



CHAPTER 4

Efficiency

4 Efficiency

In this section, four key questions and seven sub-questions are addressed. These are grouped under four key issues:

- Value for money (VfM) - focuses on the relation between inputs and outputs
- Stakeholder management
- Partnership, coupled with the evolution of the phases of the programme
- Support functions of the programme (including monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) and communication

Key findings for “Efficiency”

- The programme is reasonably efficient, as resources have been well used to produce outputs of reasonable quality. However, basic information to measure VfM is missing, especially in relation to the overall costs of the programme and investments per SE. With the present reporting system, it will be impossible for the programme to report in a verifiable way on VfM and assess the relation between inputs and outputs.
- The partnership between the two organisations works well. The management team of Dela shows comrade, team spirit and commitment, and the partnership brings complementary skills.
- There is room for strengthening further areas of efficiency gains – the IKEA team and co-workers, in particular, bring a high degree of practical, simplified approaches which could be further adopted by the Ashoka team to address the concerns related to efficiency, simplicity of thinking and implementation.
- Dela does have a clear comparative advantage as a programme given its knowledge of international best practices and its ability to engage with a large number of SEs, thought leaders and IKEA co-workers. Nevertheless, the programme costs, without IKEA's time and resource contribution, which are substantial, the programme cost appear to be relatively high, particularly given the relatively small number of SEs and levels of support.
- Some examples of a good economy can be found in the use of thought partners – making use of a pool of highly qualified experts with tools, resources and insights without cost is already a strong sign of the value of money. This aspect of efficiency could be built upon by engaging these partners with more clarity in roles and strategic support in the operation of the programme.
- Stakeholder management has paid due attention to various stakeholders, and engagement modalities, including the process of engagement with each party. The thought partners have been managed well. However, they have not been engaged fully within the programme to ensure sufficient learning, i.e. they have not been provided with the needed feedback and follow-up.
- The engagement with co-workers has been broadly successful. With the evolution of the programme, the co-workers were provided with appropriate briefing and guidance. All co-workers showed extraordinary commitment and support, although the majority felt the process, templates and set-up was complex. A number of co-workers also outlined the need for support structures and clarity which would have allowed them to be more effective.
- The programme design (theory of change and monitoring mechanism) shows some flaws, in particular the lack of clearly articulated pathways of change from (lower-level) output indicators to outcome and impact indicators. In addition, the definitions of output, outcome and impact level are not always clear, especially when it relates to the contribution of the program. An additional challenge is that the design of the programme is rather flexible, which on the one hand, offers learning and continuous improvement and evolution, but on the other, combined with a lack of clear outcomes (i.e. the contribution of the program) reduces focus and increases the risk for the programme to be not impactful for the participating SEs due, for example, to the inability to address the specific needs and characteristics of the participating SEs.
- The MEL structure lacks a more careful triangulation process of the inputs collected from the programme participants, especially for impact monitoring. This aspect is all the more important given that the information collected by the programme is perception-based and subjective by nature. In this regard, output indicators and

Key findings for “Efficiency”

impact indicators are found to be potential valuable data sources for the collection of objective information which can be triangulated across different stakeholders. Interestingly, this is already done to some extent for performance management, whose framework inquiries about different SEs, co-workers, and other participants across similar topics. This fact partially explains the higher success of Dela in extracting important learnings for its design improvements.

4.1 To what extent is the programme providing value for money?

The programme has a robust overview of documents. These include:

- The Financial commitment from IKEA Social Entrepreneurship to the Partner (Ashoka): Grant Agreement
- The detailed budget – costs elements, objectives, inputs (days), salaries and other external costs
- The intermediary report provides a detailed report with clear costs structures
- The application form for each SE provides a clear overview of cost structures
- Progress reports during various phases of the programme, including a first, second, final and a one year later report (Dela I)

Whilst the budget and expenditures information on the partnership is clear, the overall information on Dela programme cost (including time and costs for IKEA staff) is limited. In addition, dedicated resources allocation of budget – cost elements from Ashoka as implementing partners could not be found in the comprehensive documentation of cost structures and overall programme design. Given the relatively limited information on overall resource investment from both stakeholders and input days and costs as a whole, it is difficult to assess the relation between input and outputs.

The following observations on VFM - taken into account all limitations regarding scarcity of available information:

- The programme is reasonably efficient, as resources have been well used to produce outputs of decent quality. However, basic information to measure VFM is missing, especially in relation to the overall costs and investments per SE. With the present reporting system, it will be impossible for the programme to report in a verifiable way on VFM and assess the relation between inputs and outputs. While the overall cost structure is well documented covering specific activities and the type of costs, this information is not available for the specific SEs.
- Dela does have a clear comparative advantage as implementing party, given its knowledge of international best practices and its ability to engage with a number of SEs, thought leaders and highly professional IKEA co-workers. Nevertheless, the programme costs, without IKEA's time and resource contribution, which is substantial appear to be relatively high¹¹, given the relatively small number of SEs and levels of support.
- Some examples of a good economy can be found in the use of thought partners – making use of a pool of highly qualified experts with tools, resources and insights without cost is already a strong sign of the value of money. This aspect of efficiency could be built upon by engaging these partners with more clarity in roles and strategic support in the operation of the programme.
- The assessment of interventions and support reveals the need for simplicity, continuity of specific resources and deeper engagement. This could offer lessons towards efficiency gains in some stages of the programme (e.g. strategy), and continuity by ensuring focused resources across all phases. More specifically, the various shifts of Strategy Partners and Experimentation Partners was found to adversely impact the momentum of the programme and thus its efficiency. This aspect has been reported to be addressed to a great extent in Dela III where, the strategy phase team was offered the chance to become Experimentation Partners to increase the continuity of the support.

¹¹ Given that the full analysis of VFM is not being carried out, we have refrained from quoting the grant agreement budget and financial report summaries

- The assessment of the programme LRPs is presented in the next sections of this report. Given the analysis and findings, one important lesson could be to spend more time and resources on support functions to ensure robust contribution analysis and efficiency gains.

4.2 To what extent were the different stakeholders well managed, and does this vary by type of stakeholder?

The Dela programme consists of a range of internal and external stakeholders. The table below provides an overview of key stakeholders who are directly involved in the programme. The key internal stakeholders for the programme are IKEA co-workers. Due to the focus and aim of the programme, Dela has placed SEs at the heart of its operation. Finally, thought partners and experimentation experts remain key drivers within the implementation of the programme.

Table 2: Stakeholders¹²

Stakeholders	Dela I	Dela II	Dela III	Type
SEs	12	12	12	External
Thought partners	~24	35	31	External
Experimentation Experts ¹³	N/A	15	20	Internal (CWs) and External
Co-workers	27	31	13	Internal

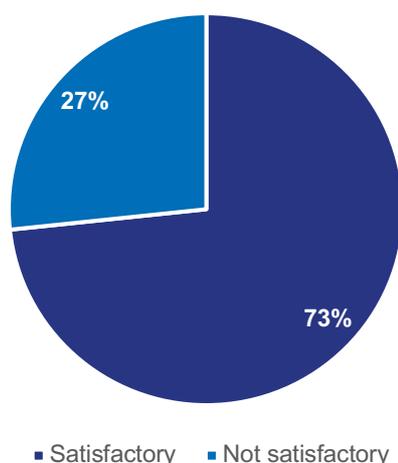
"The Dela team is a highly professional group of individuals. I must say it was a really humbling experience to interact with the co-workers who really spent the time to find tools and methods to support me." Dela I SE

When looking at the key stakeholder, i.e. SEs, broadly, management of SEs has been effective. The Dela team has shown a high degree of excellence in their responsiveness, time management and overall engagement with the SEs. This is evidenced by the fact that 73% of the SEs reported having had a satisfactory process of engagement. Nevertheless, this element of engagement with SEs could be further improved by addressing the challenges related to effectiveness.

¹² Important to mention that these numbers indicate the number of stakeholders at the start of the Dela programme as it fluctuates as the programme progresses

¹³ The role of experimentation experts did not exist in Dela I and was introduced to give SEs the possibility of receiving different specialized support from either IKEA or Microsoft at different stages of their projects.

Figure 15: Share of SE which has reported to have experienced the process of engagement as satisfactory



Note: own elaboration. Assessment of the study team based on interviews with 15 SEs.

In summary, the following observations can be made on stakeholder management:

- Stakeholder management has paid due attention to various stakeholders, and engagement modalities, including to the process of engagement with each party. As outlined already, Dela has been extremely successful in leveraging its network and engaging highly experienced thought partners, with the exception of Dela I, where specific organisations were engaged and desired outcomes could not be achieved.
- The thought partners have been managed well. However, they have not been engaged fully within the programme to ensure sufficient learning. This, in a way, is a missed opportunity for the programme. Given their technical knowledge, the thought partners could play an instrumental role in the evolution and design of the programme.
- The engagement with co-workers has been broadly successful. With the evolution of the programme, the co-workers were provided with appropriate briefing and guidance. The learning circles were a source of excellent learning and sharing opportunities. All co-workers showed extraordinary commitment and support, although the majority felt the process, templates, and set-up were complex. A number of co-workers also outlined the need for support structures and clarity which would have allowed them to be more effective.

“Excellent team and committed group. If Dela wants to step forward and succeed as one of the top accelerators, it can, but it would require stronger engagement and feedback loops. The starting point for this would be to offer all stakeholders feedback and open the floor for regular exchange and lessons. Second, clarity is key – where are we heading? What are our goal posts? For experts like me, it is great to work with SEs and I regularly set goals in this programme, I am happy to support but my support could be much more meaningful if I know where I would head and if I am given feedback because feedback is the only way I can improve.” Thought partner, Dela II and III

4.3 Are Ashoka and ISEBV the right fit for each other in terms of the strategies, priorities and values of the respective organisations? The partnership of IKEA and Ashoka

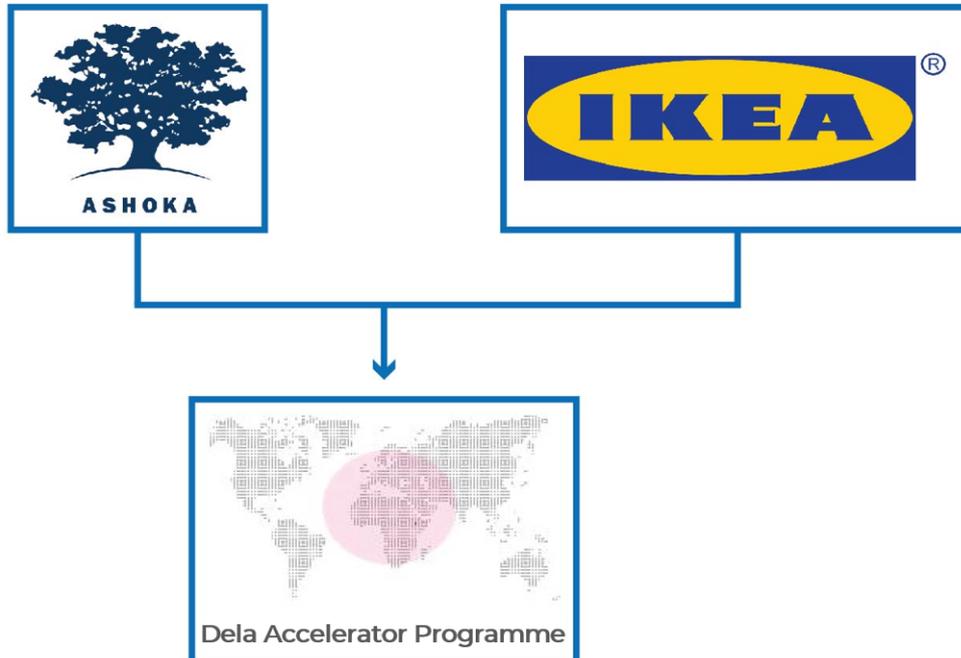
As outlined already, the programme is a collaboration between IKEA Social Entrepreneurship BV (ISEBV) and Ashoka to provide capacity building and mentoring to cohorts of SEs. ISEBV was established by the Inter IKEA Group in 2019 to provide financial and non-financial support to SEs within and outside the IKEA business. Overall, the combined forces of IKEA and Ashoka bring strong comparative advantages, as outlined below.

The review team has the following observations on the partnership:

- The partnership between the two organisations works well. The management team of Dela shows comradeship, team spirit and commitment;
- While the programme team made a conscious choice to have a wide scope, and there are differences in focus, sector, and expertise, the overall operation and the partnership reflects a common vision;
- The partnership brings complementary skills. IKEA team brings a corporate outlook, strong understanding of businesses and professionalisation skills. Ashoka team brings a wide network of high potential SEs. It is also able to leverage a wide network of thought partners and experts, which is a strong aspect of the programme.
- There is room for strengthening further areas of efficiency gains – the IKEA team and co-workers, in particular, bring a high degree of practical, simplified approaches which could be further adopted by the Ashoka team to address the concerns related to efficiency, simplicity of thinking and implementation.
- IKEA, due to its operation, experience and commercial know-how, could further support the programme in reaching efficiency gains, particularly related to inputs vs outputs and providing more clarity around clear goals.

Ashoka has access to a pool of large high potential SEs. The thought partners are found to have brought extensive knowledge and commitment towards supporting the SEs to embrace systems change

IKEA brings extensive knowledge, skills and capacities and business operations. IKEA co-workers and external experts have demonstrated outstanding adaptability, knowledge and engagement in meeting the various needs of SEs



4.4 Are the programme support functions (e.g. LRP, MEL) appropriate for the execution and assessment of the programme?

4.4.1 The MEL framework

Dela's M&E framework is aimed at gathering qualitative and quantitative information on two key areas: (i) Dela's expected impact (outputs and outcomes), organized around indicators that connect to the programme's Theory of Change (ToC); (ii) performance management, through the collection of feedback on the programme design and execution. This structure is organized around a series of surveys taking place after each key phase of the programme and one year after its conclusion. The surveys are applied to SEs, IKEA co-workers, and other programme participants and are comprised of both open-ended and multiple-choice questions. This framework mirrors the M&E approach used more broadly by Ashoka in its other programmes.

The survey-based M&E structure is complemented by qualitative data collected during specific activities. For example, "peer learning circles" happen to share experiences. Cohort calls also collect qualitative evidence through storytelling. At the end of the experimentation phase, there is a debrief call, and a memory journey is made, where fellows are asked to describe/recall their journey in the programme. Finally, the tools developed by SEs (e.g. the Strategy Deck and implementation tool) offer evidence of their journey in the programme.

Collection of information on programme design

The feedback-focused questions offer the Dela team key insights for the (re-)design and evaluation of the programme structure, tools and activities. The programme has been collecting the opinions of participants on several aspects, which include:

- Satisfaction with the programme, each of the phases, and members of the team;
- Satisfaction with the outcomes of programme;
- Opinion on the design of the programme and its several phases;
- Opinion on the tools and activities used in each phase;
- Perception of workload;
- Suggestions for improvement.

The feedback is usually collected through rating-based multiple-choice questions and complemented with open-ended questions where respondents are invited to justify the ratings they have provided.

Collection of information on ToC indicators

The Impact Stories and qualitative assessments collected throughout the programme offer a deeper qualitative understanding regarding the influence of the programme on its participants. Nonetheless, the ToC indicators collected with the surveys are the central tool used by Dela, and more broadly by Ashoka, for monitoring and comparing the impact of the programme or proxying its expected effects beyond the execution timeline of the accelerator.

The indicators collected and used by Dela – organised along the logic of the programme's ToC (discussed in the coming chapter) – are shown in Table 3:

Table 3: Main M&E indicators

Type	Participant	ToC assumption	Indicator
Output	SEs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SE receive support from Ashoka and IKEA co-workers and networks on system change strategy and implementation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Likelihood to recommend Dela Accelerator to peers
Output	Co-workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IKEA co-workers engaged 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluation of the experience in the programme Likelihood to recommend the programme
Short-run Outcome	SEs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SE shift way of thinking about impacting scaling and ambition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intensity of strategy shift after the Strategy Phase Impact re-focusing from Direct to Systemic after the Accelerator
Short-run Outcome	Co-workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IKEA co-workers gain insights into social entrepreneurship and changemaking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insights gained by co-workers on Systems Change and Social Entrepreneurship, among others, in the programme
Mid-run outcome	SEs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SE strengthened to scale up towards a systemic level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intensity of readiness to scale impact towards systemic level Change in readiness to scale towards systemic impact
Mid-run outcome	Co-workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IKEA co-workers apply learnings of social impact in work and society 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Motivation to engage colleagues, create positive impact at work, and solve social problems, among others after the Strategy Phase
Long-run outcome	SEs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SE increase their impact in improving lives of vulnerable and marginalised people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of lives SEs expect to impact in with their long-term goals

The one-year-later survey revisits many of these indicators a year after the conclusion of the programme, collecting information both on indicators and qualitative evidence on the development and impact of SEs and IKEA co-workers, with a focus on mid-run and long-run outcomes. The indicators collected from SEs are the following:

- Importance of Dela for strategy change;
- Importance of Dela for developing a systemic strategy;
- Change in strategic impact focus;
- (Current) success in the implementation of the strategy.

For the IKEA co-workers, the survey follows up on the following main indicators:

- Influence of Dela on the way of working;
- Influence of Dela on actions for IKEA's People & Planet Positive (PPP) Strategy;
- Influence of Dela on initiatives to create impact outside of work.

Assessment of the MEL framework

Dela's MEL framework of Dela is broad and general. It is designed to promote the continuous monitoring of the programme's performance along all its key building blocks. On the performance management side, it covers the overall design, activities, end-products, team members, and tools used to support the programme fellows. On the impact monitoring side, it attempts to carefully assess the outputs and outcomes envisioned by the programme's ToC framework along each step of its logical structure.

The Dela team has chosen to collect information on both aspects through a single data collection framework. The results achieved by this structure, however, have been heterogenous across the two dimensions. Regarding

performance management, Dela has been successful in collecting rich information about the perceptions of the programme participants on the design and tools used throughout their journeys. This information has been useful, as it is attested by the constant evolution and redesign of Dela's processes and tools along its three editions, which have unambiguously promoted improvements across several dimensions of the programme. Moreover, performance management is heavily impacted by clear monitoring of outputs and contributions of Dela, which is closely linked to the MEL framework.

One of the issues is that the programme design (Theory of Change and monitoring mechanism) shows some flaws, in particular the lack of clearly articulated pathways of change from (lower-level) output indicators to outcome and impact indicators. In addition, the definitions of output, outcome and impact level are not always clear, especially when it relates to the contribution of the programme. The lack of setting clear goalposts at early stages of the programme complicates the objective assessment of the additional impact the SE obtains from its participation in the Dela programme.

An additional challenge is that the design of the programme is rather flexible. This, on the one hand, offers learning and continuous improvement and evolution but, on the other, combined with a lack of clear outcomes (i.e. the contribution of the programme), presents the risk for the programme being unable to capture impact for the participating SEs. In our assessment, it would be useful to develop the pathways that allow for the measurement of the programme support function and consequent outcomes for the SE. As the desired or envisaged outcomes may not occur instantaneously after or during the Dela programme, the essential value of such pathways is offering an approach to reduce the uncertainty about the contribution of the programme.

Given the broadness in the scope of Dela and the variety of possible outputs, outcomes, and pathways for systems change across SEs (See Figure 13 in Section 3.3), the preparation of logframes¹⁴ for each SE, correlating activities, outputs, and outcomes among each other and with corresponding KPIs, measurement tools and assumptions, *even in a simplified manner*, could go a long way in addressing the issues mentioned above. For example, the preparation of these tools could be integrated to the Strategy Phase, followed up and updated during scoping and experimentation phases and verified after the conclusion of the programme.

The limitations mentioned above lead to discrepancies found between the perception of SEs regarding their journeys in the programme and those reported in programme reports. Similarly, it is also evident from the varying perceptions of SEs, co-workers, and strategy partners when inquired about several of the fellows' journeys. For example, in several cases, we observed that the assessment made by the SEs regarding the end-products of the partnerships tended to be significantly more positive than that of the IKEA co-workers.

We see two other root causes for these discrepancies besides the absence of a more structure monitoring framework for the programme explored above. Firstly, the MEL structure lacks a more careful triangulation process of the inputs collected from the programme participants, especially for impact monitoring. This aspect is all the more important given that the information collected by the programme is perception-based and subjective by nature. Interestingly, this is already done to some extent for performance management, whose framework inquires different SEs, co-workers, and other participants across similar topics. This fact partially explains the higher success of Dela in extracting important learnings for its constant design improvements.

Secondly, the absence of anonymous data collection limits the incentive for participants to provide direct and honest feedback, especially when this might be considered negative or go against the expectation of the Dela programme team. It is important to note that the Dela fellows remain within the Ashoka network after Dela and, thus, are

¹⁴ "Logical Framework", or 'logframe', describes both a general approach to project or programme planning, monitoring and evaluation, and – in the form of a 'logframe matrix' – a discrete planning and monitoring tool for projects and programmes. Logframe matrices are developed during project/programme design and appraisal stages, and are subsequently updated throughout implementation while remaining an essential resource for *ex-post* evaluation". See <https://www.betterevaluation.org/en/evaluation-options/logframe>

naturally inclined to refrain from any actions that they might be perceived as jeopardizing their access to future opportunities. The importance of anonymity was observed by several participants interviewed in this study, notably SEs, when providing information on their journeys. Equally, the importance of joint feedback where, stakeholders are given the opportunity to discuss their progression along the phases of the Dela programme and ways on how to potentially further improve their collaboration for the remainder of the programme (between SEs, co-workers and Thought Partners), lessons and learning (similar to the learning circle) was cited as a limitation to offer more room for improvement.

4.4.2 Assessment of other support functions

Besides the MEL structure, the Dela team offers support to SEs and co-workers in several areas throughout their journeys. Some of these functions are covered in other areas of this study, for example, the selection and matching of Thought Partners and Experimentation Experts. We focus this section in three key support functions provided by the Dela team: Lead Responsible Person (LRP), onboarding support, and general support functions.

The LRP is a member of the Ashoka Globalizer team with knowledge of systems change, who is matched with SE team during the Strategy Phase. They work as facilitators and tend to lead the process as a coach/consultant during this phase, especially during Part 1. The support and leadership provided by the LRP, especially at the very beginning of the programme, has been key for the understanding and assimilation of the programme's structure and objectives by all participants, especially for SEs and co-workers participating for the first time in Dela.

The onboarding process has evolved continuously throughout the programme's several editions. Approximately half of the SEs and co-workers that have been explored in the case studies reported an insufficient and, at times, absent onboarding preparation process when entering the programme in the Strategy and Scoping/Experimentation (Implementation) Phases. This included a lack of clarity on the functions of team members, the structure of the programme, and the objectives of activities. This feedback has been especially noticeable for Dela I and the post-Summit phases of the programme. Throughout Dela II and III, the onboarding process has become increasingly well-structured and consistent. This has been observed, in particular, by co-workers that continued in the programme for its subsequent editions and are attested by the recent adjustments made by the Dela team for Dela III¹⁵. It is unclear whether these improvements have been sufficient to achieve the level of support expected by stakeholders. Thus, it is crucial to monitor the recent changes and continuously follow up on feedback from participants.

Finally, we refer to the general support functions of the programme as the overall assistance offered to participants throughout the programme, such as the organization of events, general availability, and provision of timely information. Across the board, the support offered by the Dela team has been assessed positively by all participants, despite varying perceptions regarding other aspects of the programme. In general, the program's team is seen as highly committed, professional and engaged. Participants can continuously rely on the programme management team to provide information and support throughout the process. Nevertheless, many stakeholders outlined the relatively weak awareness and visibility of the Dela programme and wider engagement with other initiatives relevant to their specific area of operation in addressing key societal challenges or social entrepreneurial development. Given the number of issues and processes to be addressed, this is relatively minor but could be considered for future.

¹⁵ Ashoka Dela III Programme Progress Report January 2021 – May 2022.

4.5 What changes were made to the Dela model, and were these evidence-based?

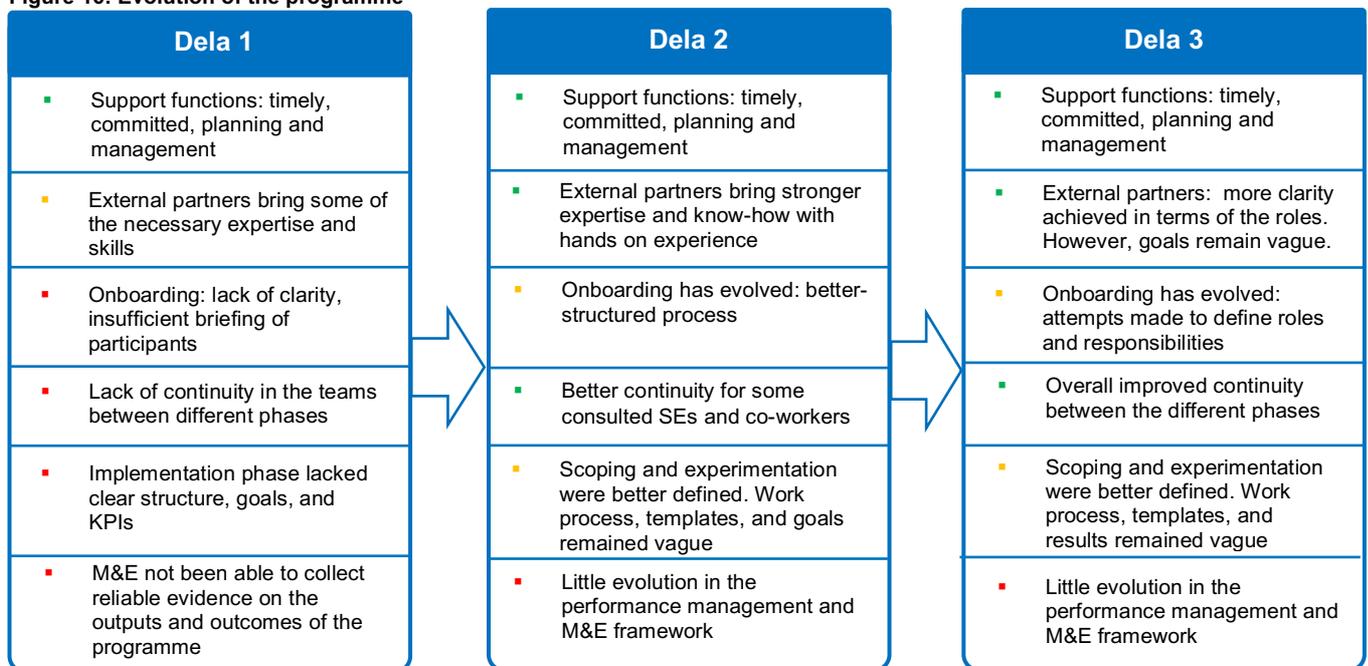
Dela has been subject to an intensive co-creation process with the ISEBV team that resulted in important modifications to the programme, both in relation to both the standard Globalizer approach and throughout its three editions.

The evolution of the programme design

The Dela Accelerator is part of the Globalizer programme, which is Ashoka's long-standing and widely applied accelerator programme for social entrepreneurship. Dela I, the first iteration, was comprised of three main phases. The first two phases (Strategy Phase and Summit) corresponded to the standard Globalizer approach, whereas the third phase (Implementation Phase) is a co-creation of the Dela team. For Dela II and Dela III, the Implementation Phase evolved into two new phases – scoping and experimentation.

The Dela programme has been reasonable efficient in its evolution in the sense that, it has appropriately addressed various identified adjustment needs to improve the programme. The evolution and adaptation of the programme are outlined below:

Figure 16: Evolution of the programme



Note: red: needs attention; yellow: moderate; green: satisfactory

The key changes in the programme between Dela I and Dela II are presented in the figure above. Dela III has maintained essentially the same overall programme structure, with a few adjustments, which include¹⁶:

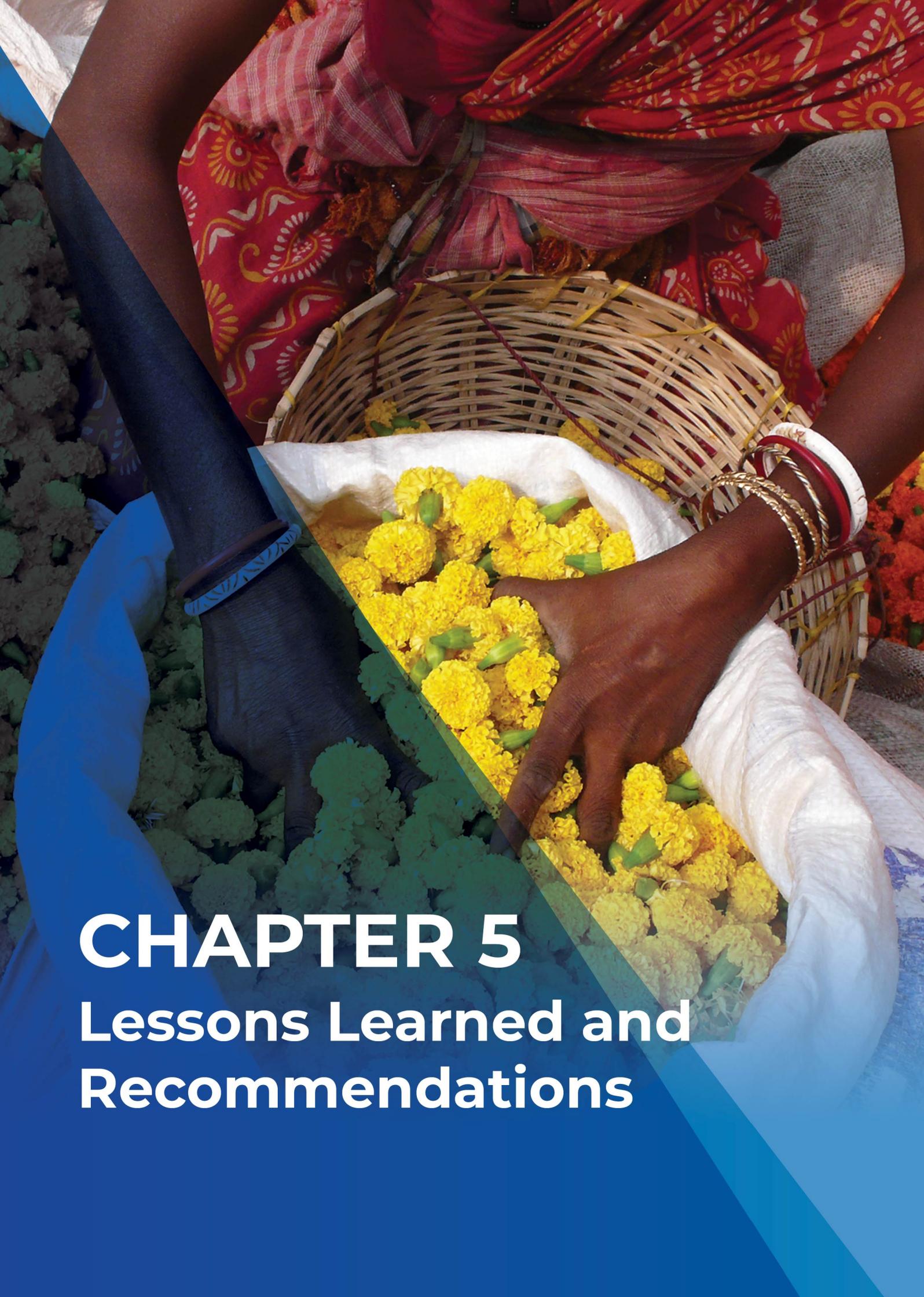
- The replacement of Microsoft by Accenture during experimentation, which is expected to have a more active day-to-day participation in the projects;
- Small adjustments in the Fellow selection process, co-worker recruitment, onboarding of Partners, Summit and the Strategy Phase, to build on learnings from Dela II and increase efficiency;
- The continuity of strategy partners to experimentation phase was further emphasized. A second experimentation partner was included for the experimentation phase.
- The scoping and experimentation phases were redesigned in cooperation with Accenture. The scoping tool and programme materials were redeveloped.

¹⁶ Ashoka Dela III Programme Progress Report January 2021 – May 2022.

Overall, the programme team indicated that Dela's overall processes have become more efficient, especially with regard to onboarding and the preparation of the work at the start of the scoping and experimentation phases. The Dela team has more clarity on the next steps and can provide better guidance based on the learnings from previous editions.

Assessment of changes

The evolving structure of the programme's design attests to the usefulness of Dela's MEL framework with regard to performance management and ample dedication to further improving the programme. Although many challenges remain unaddressed, as shown in Figure 16 for example, Dela has been successful in collecting feedback, identifying important shortcomings in its processes and implementing solutions to addressing them in a continuous manner. These included a complete overhaul of the problematic Implementation Phase in Dela I, improved continuity in teams, the inclusion of experts and partners with new capabilities, redesign and simplification of tools, and improvements to the onboarding process, among others. Moreover, the implemented solutions, even if at times insufficient to address the issues completely, have consistently had a positive impact on the programme.



CHAPTER 5

Lessons Learned and Recommendations

5 Lessons learned and recommendations

5.1 Main findings and conclusions

This section summarises the key findings and conclusions of the evaluation team.

The Dela programme is based on a clear rationale and is addressing very relevant SE issues in line with the needs across the world. The programme's overarching philosophy is to achieve systematic change at a high level. This process allows SEs to express their values and examine the "big picture". In addition, the programme puts more emphasis on establishing a practical strategy toward achieving several smaller goals or "targeted systems change". In the context of the needs, the overarching landscape of social entrepreneurship support and challenges, broadly, the objective and aim of the programme are highly relevant.

The programme focuses on Ashoka fellows, who offer a range of specialised, high-performing SEs. All Ashoka fellows are "change makers", focusing on complex social challenges with innovative ways of transforming society's systems. Dela has been successful in selecting SEs capable/suitable for promoting systems change. While the pool of SEs is sufficiently large, Dela focuses on a relatively small number of entrepreneurs. As Dela expands, it is worth reflecting on the pool of SEs and stages of entrepreneurship where Dela would have added value.

Broadly, the strategy phase of the programme has provided relevant support. The majority of the SEs found the support highly relevant with increased clarity on their systems thinking and focus. Despite this, expectation management and clarity on goals have been difficult.

In the case of scoping/implementation stages, the relevance of the support has been impacted due to a lack of attention to the contextual needs and stages of development of the SEs (See section 2.2.3).

Broadly, the programme has been successful in matching co-workers with SEs. The IKEA co-workers have demonstrated high degrees of commitment, professionalism and know-how. These elements have been identified as key attributions toward maximizing the support the Dela programme can offer to SEs.

The IKEA co-workers were provided with the relevant support. However, there was a lack of clarity in roles, responsibilities and expected milestones. In the evolution of the three editions of the programme, this was improved, albeit with the need for further improvement.

Effectiveness of Dela varies across the two phases and stages of interventions. The strategy phase indicates some degree of effectiveness in stimulating clarity in directions. However, reflections are needed on the depth and timeline. Scoping and implementation show varying degrees of effectiveness - in some cases, there is clear evidence of outcome and contribution to the reported outputs while, in others, evidence on the contribution of Dela is limited.

- **The overall design of Dela's Strategy Phase and, in particular, the templates used during this phase have been classified by a variety of SEs and co-workers as "tedious", "excessively complicated", and, at times, "academic".** For some entrepreneurs, particularly those in the developed stages of their operation, the exercise was found to be repetitive.
- **As exemplified by cases, there are some cases of significant changes, and there were two key drivers behind the outputs and short-term outcomes of the programme - the incentive to strategic**

clarity and setting out a vision; and the focus of Dela on the scaling of impact and solutions. This underlines the fact that the programme presents the potential for impact within this space. Despite shortcomings in the programme design, these factors were instrumental in promoting significant instances of change at the strategic level for a large section of the SEs. Nonetheless, it is important to highlight that these results attest to the effectiveness of the programme in the strategy phase but have not always translated into equal success during Implementation/Experimentation or promoted impact at the level of beneficiaries.

In all, the Dela programme has been perceived to have provided a significant contribution to the vast majority of participating SEs in working towards achieving systematic change. However, the programme's contribution to the implementation of strategies is difficult to trace in many cases. This is in part due to the inherent characteristics of systems change which requires, in most cases, extended periods of time and largely due to the MEL framework of the programme, which lacks a clear pathway to trace the contribution of the programme.

In general, the outcomes of Dela at a higher level have so far been limited. Beyond the obvious importance of allowing enough time for the effects of a complex intervention to fully play out and reach its target audience, the review of the Dela programme strongly suggests that impacts at the beneficiary level are more likely to occur when the development of new strategies is followed through in the subsequent implementation-focused phases. This follow-up promotes the concrete testing of these strategies, which can translate into the refinement of the more abstract ideas developed during the first phase of the programme into concrete, applicable, and actionable steps for social enterprises. Moreover, when fully successful, it can provide the necessary organizational and skills support, as well as the required commitment for SEs to implement some of the new strategies envisioned during the early stages of the programme.

The programme is reasonably efficient, as resources have been well used to produce outputs of decent quality. However, basic information to measure VfM is missing, especially in relation to the overall costs of the programme and investments per SE. With the present reporting system, it will be impossible for the programme to report in a verifiable way on VfM and assess the relation between inputs and outputs.

The partnership between the two organizations works well. The partnership brings complementary skills. The IKEA team brings a corporate outlook, strong understanding of businesses and professionalisation skills. Ashoka team brings a wide network of high potential SEs. It is also able to leverage a wide network of Thought Partners and experts, which is a strong aspect of the programme. There is room for strengthening further areas of efficiency gains – the IKEA team and co-workers, in particular, bring a high degree of practical, simplified approaches that could be further adopted by the Ashoka team to address the concerns related to efficiency, simplicity of thinking and implementation.

Dela does have a clear comparative advantage as implementing party, given its knowledge of international best practices and its ability to engage with a large number of SEs, thought leaders and highly professional IKEA co-workers. Nevertheless, the programme costs, without IKEA's time and resource contribution, which is substantial, appear to be relatively high, particularly given the relatively small number of SEs and levels of support.

Some examples of a good economy can be found in the use of “thought partners” – making use of a pool of highly qualified experts with tools, resources and insights without cost is already a strong sign of efficiency gains. This aspect of efficiency could be built upon by engaging these partners with more clarity in roles and strategic support in the operation of the programme.

Stakeholder management has paid due attention to various stakeholders and engagement modalities. Due attention has been paid to the process of engagement with each party. The thought partners have been managed

well. However, they have not been engaged fully within the programme to ensure sufficient learning. This, in a way, is a missed opportunity for the programme, given their technical knowledge, as they could play an instrumental role in the evolution and design of the programme.

The engagement with co-workers has been broadly successful. With the evolution of the programme, the co-workers were provided with more appropriate briefing and guidance. The learning circles were a source of excellent learning and sharing opportunities. All co-workers showed extraordinary commitment and support, although the majority felt the process, templates, and set-up were complex. A number of co-workers also outlined the need for support structures (see box below) and clarity which would have allowed them to be more effective.

One of the issues is that the programme design (Theory of Change and monitoring mechanism) shows some flaws, in particular the lack of clearly articulated pathways of change from (lower-level) output indicators to outcome and impact indicators. In addition, the definitions of output, outcome and impact level are not always clear, especially when it relates to the contribution of the programme. An additional challenge is that the design of the programme is rather flexible, which on the one hand, offers learning and continuous improvement and evolution, but on the other, combined with a lack of clear outcomes (i.e. the contribution of the programme), reduces focus and increases the risk for the programme to be not impactful for the participating SEs due, for example, to the inability to address the specific needs and characteristics of the participating SEs.

The MEL structure lacks a more careful triangulation process of the inputs collected from the programme participants, especially for impact monitoring. This aspect is all the more important given that the information collected by the programme is perception-based and subjective by nature.

5.2 Recommendations

The recommendations are based on the main findings and conclusions presented above. The recommendations have been formulated based on the assumption that the programme will consider some adjustments in its third edition and continue thereafter.

1. Design of the programme: Re-examine key elements of the programme

The Dela programme has evolved through various learnings and stages. Based on this evolution, it would be key to establish a robust design with a focus on results and the direct contribution of the Dela programme.

This relates set-up of the programme.

- **Strategy phase:** Consider shortening the strategy phase and focusing on milestones and clear action plans; In cases where SEs are already well developed in strategy development, consider providing a “fast-track” process or tailor-made approach to remain relevant.
- **Implementation/Scoping/Experimentation:** Extend the timeline for implementation with a focus on concrete support and clear deliverables and reporting. This can allow for more tangible outcomes.
- **Follow-up:** Dela III already enables a follow-up through grants. It is recommended that this follow-up includes clarity in terms of “who will qualify for a follow-up?” to manage expectations from the outset. This could include (i) SEs who showcase already capacity to scale, (ii) mid-way progress and outcome review to arrive at a decision and (iii) follow-up focused on scale-up opportunities by leveraging additional funding/expertise etc.

2. Design of the programme: Revise the modality of implementation and process

Dela programme could consider revision of modality of its implementation to allow for it to address the priority needs of the entrepreneurs and facilitate deeper engagement and support. This relates to:

- **Selection process:** The call for application could already ask for a simplified business plan outlining the key challenge, need, idea, and measurable targets envisaged. This can form a strong basis for the strategy phase to define and fine-tune this plan once selected.
- **Matching:** bring clarity to selection criteria and take on a business-oriented approach. Important factors of considerations that have come forward in our assessment for a potential fruitful matching has been the context, commercial aspects, content, and added value in co-workers and “thought partners” who can facilitate the progress of the needed targets SEs aim to achieve.
- **Efficiency:** In order to improve efficiency, reflect on the support team for the SEs – one co-worker, two thought partners + a coordinator should be enough to ensure continuity while avoiding extreme cases, e.g. one-on-one support or very large teams in which members contribute little. Ensure that there is clarity on expectations for ALL stakeholders – this means being clear on the roadmap and outputs/monitoring.
- **Joint reporting mechanism:** In order to avoid surprises, allow for a joint reporting mechanism led by the SE on a bi-monthly/quarterly basis along with co-workers and thought partners. This could be a one-page update on achievements, challenges and additional needs. This will allow for the programme to meet expectations and be more impactful in its support to address the needs.
- **Learning circles**– introduce monthly/bi-monthly learning circles amongst all stakeholders where each member (SE, co-workers, Thought Partners and management team) have the opportunity to share a safe and open space to share experiences, lessons, and ideas in a concrete manner.

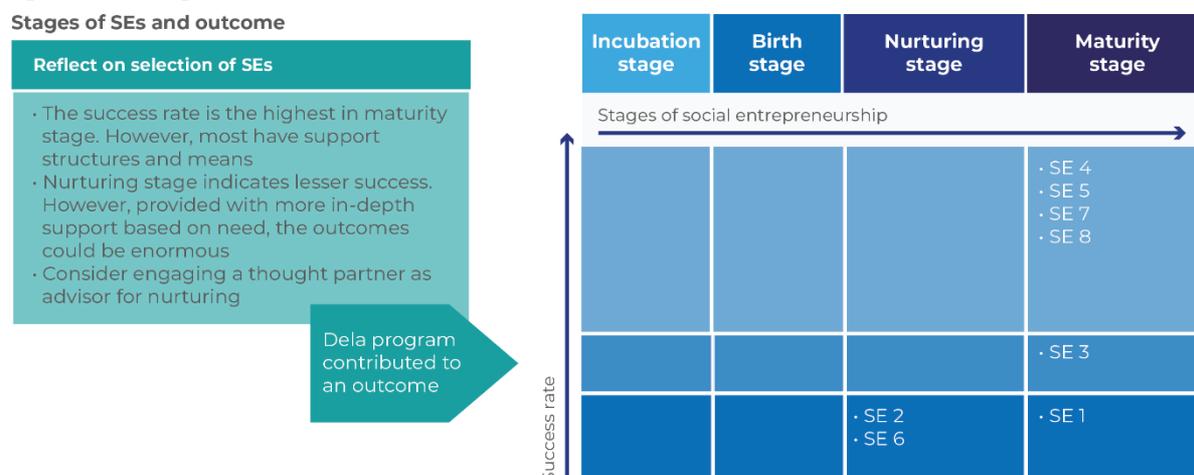
3. Review the efficiency of the programme

The programme could review its overall programme costs and investments per SE and seek to report in a verifiable way on VfM and assess the relation between inputs and outputs. Here it is important to note that VfM is not synonymous with either economy (i.e. reducing the cost of inputs) or efficiency. The philosophy of VfM is about finding the right balance between economy, efficiency and effectiveness and cannot be assessed through only one of these dimensions in isolation. Therefore, the starting point for leveraging efficiency gains would be to establish how the programme wishes to assess its own efficiency, i.e. inputs (days, resources and investment) vs outputs (contribution to SEs progress in strategies and skills). Additional efficiency gains could be reflected by reshuffling the programme resource investments, e.g. the time spent on templates vs time spent on providing deeper support, leveraging the skills and knowledge of co-workers and Thought Partners to allow for more simplicity.

4. Consider reprioritizing the selection of SEs and tailoring the support

As Dela matures through its evolution, a key element will be to deepen its approach and focus on gaining more traction. Based on our review, it is evident that the number of selected SEs has been highest, as well as the success rate – in terms of the perceived and reported contribution of participating in the Dela Programme to scale up towards systematic impact by the SEs – in the maturity stage. At the same time, SEs at mature stages of development are likely to have different expectations, as evidenced in some of the case studies, and broader overall access and networks to leverage support. We believe that there is potential for more meaningful support across SEs at earlier development stages and recommend considering a focused approach, particularly for “nurture-stage” SEs. It is likely that providing more in-depth support to these enterprises based on their needs could lead to significantly stronger outcomes in this group and across the programme.

Figure 17: SE stages and Dela's contribution to outcomes



5. Further strengthen stakeholder engagement and management

Dela team already pays considerable attention to stakeholder management. This can be further strengthened by:

- Placing the specific and contextual needs of the SEs at the heart of its operation and design to focus on demand-driven, need-based approaches (see recommendation 1 and 2)
- In order to strengthen its effectiveness in approaching each SE, it would be recommended to place a Dela Alumni/thought partner within its selection committee and regular review process. This will not only increase the possibility of being need driven but also allow for greater buy-in and ownership.
- Engage thought partners by including them in learning circles but also call on them for technical advisory support and independent feedback. Thought partners can provide particularly relevant insights, ensuring that high-quality recommendations and key insights can be gathered to improve the programme.
- Empower co-workers by offering them this opportunity as part of their professional development plans¹⁷ and, if possible, leadership pathway.

6. Revise the Theory of Change (ToC) and programme logframe approach based on clear pathways of change, including cross-cutting issues and synergies and revise the indicators in line with reprioritization and set realistic targets.

This revision should be based on more detailed pathways of change, including cross-cutting issues and synergies. This should be supported by evidence and analysis to explain the underlying logic of the programme and how changes will lead to the desired results at various levels. This requires clear articulation of the causal links between programme interventions, outputs, outcomes and impacts. Once the revised Theory of Change has been established, the indicators can be revised in line with the reprioritization, and realistic targets should be set. Merging too many different intervention areas within the two tracks as in the current ToC, while understandable, reduces clarity on the actual contribution of Dela. It does not allow the tracing of clear pathways of change or contribution of the programme. The use of logframes specific to each social enterprise can provide an approach to “unpack” the current ToC.

¹⁷ We note that different organisations use varied terms for performance reviews/KPIs – this means that their annual reviews should consider their contribution to this programme as a key KPI

7. Revise M&E while paying specific attention to contribution analysis in line with the revised Theory of Change and logframe.

The revised Theory of Change and logframe approach with SMART indicators should form a solid basis for M&E during the remaining programme period. This also links to the need for a contribution analysis in line with Theory-Based evaluation building on clear pathways of change. For example, in the endline survey, it should be clearly determined what the expected contribution of the programme has been to the specific inputs and outputs and the corresponding indicators.

In addition, perceptions of stakeholders (including SEs and Thought Partners) on the specific role of Dela can be included. For any systems change program, it is imperative to feed the outcome stories with perception surveys to understand and track beneficiary perceptions on changes or reforms adopted and implemented.

Annex 1: Overview of Dela

Overview of the Dela Programme

ISEBV accelerator programmes

It is important to highlight that the Dela programme is now inserted in a broader context of accelerator programmes managed and supported by ISEBV. Since the start of the Dela programme in 2019, ISEBV has expanded its portfolio of accelerators for social entrepreneurship with five additional initiatives undertaken with four different partners (Acumen, NESsT, New Ventures, and Instellar)¹⁸. While Dela maintains a global reach and a generalist approach to Systems Change across sectors and countries, the new accelerator programmes have a narrower focus, acting on single countries (or country groups) and, in most cases, more limited sectors/topics. Therefore, there is a mix between more and less target programmes at the level of ISEBV's portfolio.

Table 4 presents the portfolio of ISEBV accelerators that were either already running or in preparation for 2021.

Table 4 Overview of ISEBV accelerator programmes

Programme	Geography	Timing	Programme participants	Short description
Ashoka Dela	Global	1 year 2020– 2021	12 SEs, 1 new Ashoka Fellow	Co-created global accelerator programme to select, strengthen and scale systems changing innovations through a combination of interventions including IKEA co-worker coaching support.
Acumen East Africa	Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Uganda	6 months 2021	15 social enterprises	Co-created regional accelerator programme to strengthen social innovations across East Africa through online learning and IKEA co-worker coaching support. Focus on two sectors critical to helping low-income people out of poverty, namely agriculture and energy.
NESsT Latin America	Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Peru	3 years 2020– 2023	15 social enterprises	Tailor-made accelerator programme to scale social enterprises and increase their impact. Programme co-created with IKEA Chile that supports with IKEA co-worker support and potential marketplace. Focus on social enterprises that create jobs in growing industries for those most in need, and are committed to the environment and fair-trade practices
New Ventures Mexico	Mexico	2 years 2020– 2022	10+10 (2 cohorts) social enterprises	Tailor-made accelerator programme to scale social enterprises and increase their impact. Programme co-created with IKEA Mexico that supports with IKEA co-worker support and potential marketplace. Focus in an array of topics including: labor inclusion, housing, agriculture and environmental challenges.
NESsT East Europe	Poland, Rumania	3 years 2021– 2024	10 social enterprises	Tailor-made accelerator programme to scale social enterprises and increase their impact. Programme co-created with local IKEA organisations that support IKEA co-worker support and potential marketplace. Focus on social enterprises that connect these potential workers with training and jobs in growth industries like technology, business process outsourcing and health care.

¹⁸ ISEBV Annual Review FY21. Available at: <https://qbl-sc9u2-prd-cdn.azureedge.net/-/media/ikeasocialentrepreneurship/ise-annual-review-fy21.pdf?rev=d33cd2d164e343db8dff633567eccf1e2>.

Programme	Geography	Timing	Programme participants	Short description
				Focus on social enterprises that create jobs for those most in need, including rural populations, people with disabilities, ethnic minorities and young people who face higher unemployment rates. This includes connecting potential workers with training and jobs.
Instellar Indonesia	Indonesia	2 years 2021– 2023	10 social enterprises	Tailor-made accelerator programme to scale social enterprises and increase their impact. Programme co-created with local IKEA organisations that support IKEA co-worker support and potential marketplace. Accelerator with various areas of focus including: education, employment, health and environmental issues.

Overview of the Dela participants: SEs

In the course of the three editions, the Dela Accelerator has supported or is supporting 36 SEs worldwide, although not all have concluded the programme. These members are spread across the globe, encompassing several themes and stages of development. All SEs are lifelong Ashoka Fellows that have been selected by Ashoka to participate in the accelerator programme. According to the Dela team, the key selection criteria for the accelerator participants were impact potential, openness to collaborate, capability, financial sustainability, relevance and suitability for the programme – e.g. interest in strengthening their systems change strategy as opposed, for example, to the ambition of participating in a traditional business accelerator model.

Dela participants are located in Europe, Latin America, South Asia, Southeast Asia, Africa and North America, across 20 countries. In terms of topics, we can also observe that SEs are dispersed across a large variety of areas. In fact, although we make an effort to classify projects along in nine categories, Table 5 below, which presents the list of 34 SEs currently engaged or that have at least concluded the Summit Phase of programme, shows that the majority of them have a transversal approach, touching upon various topics. Gender equality and digital solutions, for example, are common themes across many of the projects, while entrepreneurship is also addressed by several social enterprises in the context of migration and informality. Moreover, the operational model of these projects tends to vary immensely – e.g. some projects, have a more localised ambition while others follow highly scalable digital models that allow impacts over millions of lives.

Table 5: Summary SEs in the Dela Accelerator

Name	Dela	Country	Summary Topic	Subject
Liisa Smits	I	Ghana	Agriculture	Small farmers productivity
Daniel Kerber	I	Germany	Migration	Refugee integration
Nani Zulminarni	I	Indonesia	Gender	Women rights
Neelkanth Mishra	I	India	Fishing	Fish and water plant farming
Scott Stiles	I	Hong Kong	Employment	Forced labor in Asia
Allison Silva	I	Bolivia	Informality	Informal entrepreneurs
John	I	India	Agriculture	Small scale tea farmers

Name	Dela	Country	Summary Topic	Subject
Suraiya Haque	I	Bangladesh	Social Protection	Day care centers
Fernando Assad	I	Brazil	Housing	Safer housing for the poor
Wietse van der Werf	I	Netherlands	Sustainability	Unemployed youths and veterans for sea conservation
Dan Driscoll	I	Morocco	Informality	Artisan-led and owned cooperative
Sofia Appelgren	II	Sweden	Migration	Immigrants and labour market integration
Arbind Singh	II	India	Informality	Informality and cooperatives
Frédéric Bardeau	II	France	Employment	Coding skills for at-risk populations
Adriana Marina	II	Argentina	Informality	Access to markets for rural clothes producers
Vincent Lagacé	II	Mexico	Agriculture	Fair value chains for small farmers
Jane Leu	II	US	Migration	Immigrants and labour market integration
Salamatu Garba	II	Nigeria	Agriculture	Empowerment of women farmers
Andreas Eke	II	Germany	Sustainability	Reforestation degraded tropical lands
Alice Freitas	II	Brazil	Informality	Informal women artisans access to markets
Chid Liberty	II	Liberia	Employment	Ethical manufacturing and exports
Stacey Epperson	II	US	Housing	Affordable housing solutions
Albert Mollah	II	Bangladesh	Social Protection	Inclusion of persons with disabilities
B.S. Nagesh	III	India	Employment	Training and upskilling of marginalised groups
Dominika Szacitto	III	Poland	Sustainability	Waste management
Francesco Piazzesi	III	Mexico	Housing	Affordable housing

Name	Dela	Country	Summary Topic	Subject
Hugo Menino Aguiar	III	Portugal	Migration	Social inclusion of immigrants
Maria Almazan	III	Spain	Sustainability	Sustainable and fair manufacturing
Said Hammouche	III	France	Employment	Diversity and discrimination in the workplace
Sazzad Hossain	III	Singapore	Migration	Skill formation for immigrants
Ahsan Rony	III	Bangladesh	Sustainability	Urban gardening
Melissa Malzkuhn	III	US	Social Protection	Education of deaf children and all visual learners
Silvia R. Ziller	III	Brazil	Sustainability	Environmental conservation
Nicola Gryczka	III	Brazil	Cross-sector collaboration	Gastronomy to enable social change

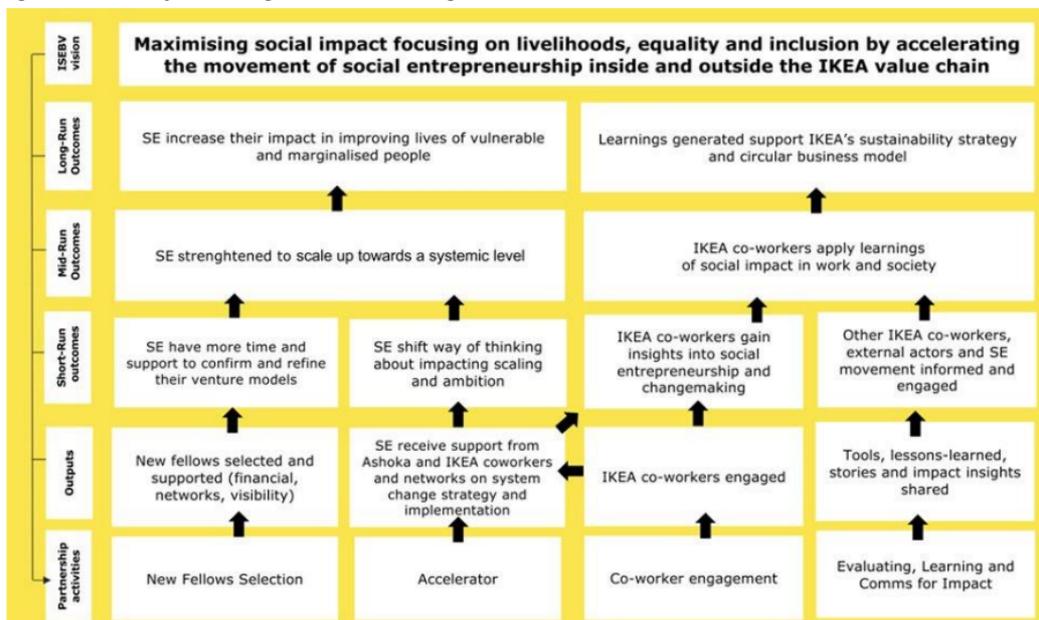
Note: the Estimated Impact column contains the number of directly and indirectly impacted individuals. The Estimated Impact values for Dela I projects are calculated based on number supplied by the Dela teams for the year 2019. Values for Dela II projects are calculated using 2019 numbers due to a general lack of numbers for 2020, whilst values for Dela III projects are calculated using numbers from 2021.

Annex 2: Methodological annexes

The programme's Theory of Change

The theory of Change (ToC) is conceived at various levels showing the pathways of how the programme is connected with its various envisaged outcomes and impacts, as presented below. The two long term outcomes – impact in improving the lives of vulnerable and marginalised people and learnings generated support IKEA's sustainability strategy and circular business model – are connected through causality links between the support provided by the programme and the expected outputs.

Figure 18: Theory of Change of the Dela Programme



The Evaluation Matrix

Table 6: Evaluation Matrix

Evaluation question	Evaluation sub-questions	Indicators	Data collection tools	Sources
RELEVANCE- is the intervention doing the right things?				
<p>1. To what extent is the programme design and support appropriate to assist the SEs working towards systems change, specifically to support needs marginalized and vulnerable people)?</p> <p>2. To what extent is the programme design and support appropriate to foster engagement, support and (application of) learning of IKEA co-workers?</p>	<p>1a. Has the programme been successful selecting SEs/ venture models capable/ suitable of (potentially) promoting systems change? Is the pool of SEs sufficiently large or should it be expanded?</p> <p>1b. Does the programme provide the appropriate support needed to the selected SEs?</p> <p>2a. Has the programme been successful in selecting IKEA co-workers that can (potentially) support SEs?</p> <p>2b. Does the programme provide the appropriate support to the selected IKEA co-workers</p> <p>2c. To what extent has feedback on the programme design, in relation to the needs of SEs and IKEA co-workers been taken into account?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent to which selected SEs/ venture models are capable/ suitable to achieve system changes specifically for marginalized and vulnerable people • Degree to which SEs perceive and demonstrate that the programme objectives and activities correspond to their needs • Degree to which IKEA co-workers perceive and demonstrate engagement to the programme objectives • Extent to which, in the perception of both, IKEA co-workers have able to contribute to SEs ideas and project • Extent to which the programme has obtained feedback and adapted to the inputs received 	<p>Desk study, key informant interviews</p> <p>Interviews with SEs, FGDs with co-workers</p>	<p>Programme documents, including information on selection of Ashoka fellows, Ashoka and ISEBV staff, SEs and IKEA co-workers</p>
EFFECTIVENESS- is the intervention achieving its objectives?				
<p>3. Have the expected outputs and short-run outcomes of the programme for SEs and IKEA co-workers been achieved?</p>	<p>3a. Have the SEs set out new strategies to promote systems change and implement their ideas?</p> <p>3b. To what extent have the new strategies been taken up by SEs in practice in their organisations?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MEL indicators and insights from stories (see Table 3) • Degree to which SEs perceive new strategies as useful and applicable 	<p>Desk study, FGDs co-workers, interviews SEs, Key informant interview</p>	<p>MEL data and reports, Ashoka and ISEBV staff, SEs, IKEA co-workers</p>

Evaluation question	Evaluation sub-questions	Indicators	Data collection tools	Sources
	<p>3c. To what extent have IKEA co-workers understanding of systems change and social entrepreneurship improved?</p> <p>3d. To what extent IKEA co-workers perceive the programme can provide insights to their work and life?</p> <p>3e. What aspects of the programme were key in the achievement of outputs and short-term outcomes?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Degree to which SEs demonstrate effective organisational and/or strategy changes in their projects Degree to which co-workers perceive new insights obtained are applicable to their work at IKEA or outside 		
EFFICIENCY- how well are resources being used?				
<p>4. To what extent is the programme providing value for money?</p> <p>5. How is the involvement of different stakeholders managed and benefiting the programme?</p> <p>6. To what extent are the support functions of the programme (including MEL and communication) appropriate?</p> <p>7. In what way has Dela improved its model along the last three editions, and what evidence did it rely on?</p>	<p>4a. What is the relation between inputs on the one hand and outputs on the other?</p> <p>4b. To what extent does the relation mentioned under 4a. vary by topic or region.</p> <p>5a. To what extent were the different stakeholders (external partners, SE, Co-workers) well managed and does this vary by type of stakeholder?</p> <p>5b. Are Ashoka and ISEBV the right fit for each other in terms of the strategies, priorities and values of the respective organisations?</p> <p>5c. To what extent are/were the external partners the right fit for the programme?</p> <p>6b. Are the programme support functions (e.g. LRP, MEL)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Qualitative assessment of the level of return on investment (per topic and region) Level of appreciation of management by stakeholders Planning and organisation of the programme's execution Added value of the involvement of the different partners Added value of support functions Quality and success of programme feedback collection and use in re(design) 	<p>Desk study,</p> <p>Key informant interviews (incl. in case studies),</p> <p>interviews SEs</p> <p>FGDs Co-workers</p>	<p>MEL data and reports,</p> <p>Ashoka and ISEBV staff,</p> <p>selected SEs and related stakeholders</p>

Evaluation question	Evaluation sub-questions	Indicators	Data collection tools	Sources
	appropriate for the execution and assessment of the programme? 7a. What changes were made to the Dela model and were these evidence-based?			
IMPACT- what difference does the intervention make?				
8. To what extent is the programme contributing to positive change on social systems and people who are vulnerable? 9. To what extent is the programme contributing to IKEA's strategy and way of working, and to co-workers activities within and outside work?	8a. What are the outcomes of the programme at higher levels (mid-term and long-term)? Has it had an impact on the lives of vulnerable people? 8b. Has the programme helped SEs in contributing to systemic change (e.g. replication or adoption of solutions, policy changes, etc.)? 8c. Has the programme promoted significant actions by SEs to achieve impact? 9a. Has the programme promoted significant actions by co-workers to promote impact amongst colleagues and IKEA's strategy?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MEL indicators and insights from stories (see Table 3) Evidence on outcomes from the interviews and case studies Evidence of impact on lives of vulnerable people that can be attributed to the relevant social entrepreneur/Dela programme Evidence of impact on change pathways that can be contributed to the relevant social entrepreneur/Dela programme Evidence of actions by SEs to address systems change and its pathways Evidence of actions at work in IKEA or outside by co-workers that can be attributed to Dela. 	Desk study, interviews SE, FGDS co-workers, case studies	MEL data, Ashoka and ISEBV staff, selected SEs and co-workers
Cross-cutting				
10. Is programme participation and design inclusive in terms of gender, ethnicity, race, age, geography, etc?	10a. To what extent do the SEs and external stakeholders selected (and stakeholders involved) reflect diversity in gender, ethnicity, race, age, geography, etc? 10b. Are their elements in the selection process of the	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share of SEs by gender, ethnicity, race, age, geography Share of programme stakeholders by gender, ethnicity, race, age, geography 	Desk study, key informant interviews, FGDs, case studies	Programme documents, MEL data, Ashoka and ISEBV staff, selected SEs

Evaluation question	Evaluation sub-questions	Indicators	Data collection tools	Sources
	programme that support or limit this variety?			

About Ecorys

Ecorys is a leading international research and consultancy company, addressing society's key challenges. With world-class research-based consultancy, we help public and private clients make and implement informed decisions leading to positive impact on society. We support our clients with sound analysis and inspiring ideas, practical solutions and delivery of projects for complex market, policy and management issues.

In 1929, businessmen from what is now Erasmus University Rotterdam founded the Netherlands Economic Institute (NEI). Its goal was to bridge the opposing worlds of economic research and business – in 2000, this much respected Institute became Ecorys.

Throughout the years, Ecorys expanded across the globe, with offices in Europe, Africa, the Middle East and Asia. Our staff originates from many different cultural backgrounds and areas of expertise because we believe in the power that different perspectives bring to our organisation and our clients.

Ecorys excels in seven areas of expertise:

- Economic growth;
- Social policy;
- Natural resources;
- Regions & Cities;
- Transport & Infrastructure;
- Public sector reform;
- Security & Justice.

Ecorys offers a clear set of products and services:

- preparation and formulation of policies;
- programme management;
- communications;
- capacity building;
- monitoring and evaluation.

We value our independence, our integrity and our partners. We care about the environment in which we work and live. We have an active Corporate Social Responsibility policy, which aims to create shared value that benefits society and business. We are ISO 14001 certified, supported by all our staff.

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