Glossary of Terms

Term	Definition
Activities	What the program does with its resources. Activities are the actions that are an intentional part of the program implementation. These interventions are used to bring about the intended program changes or results
Constituent treatment group	Those individuals who were targeted to receive certain product or services and whose results are compared to others who did not receive similar products or services
Control group	Those individuals who did not receive the certain products or services and who are compared to constituents who did
Cost of remediation	The costs associated with addressing negative social outcomes after they have happened (e.g., the costs of emergency room access for the chronically homeless)
Data collection methods	Mechanisms to collect data from a variety of sources
Data	Information that can be captured - data is 'quantitative' if it is in numerical form and 'qualitative' if it is not
Due diligence	Research and analysis of a company or organization done in preparation for a business transaction
Evidence-based programs	Programs comprised of a set of coordinated services/activities that have demonstrated effectiveness based on research
External assessment	Evaluation of a program by a group unrelated to those implementing the program
Financial modeling	The process of constructing a mathematical model that represents or predicts the performance of a given program or scenario and its financial implications
Impact assessment	An evaluation that determines the effects of a program or intervention
Impact	Long term sustainable change attributable to a specific intervention

Intervention	An effort taken to influence or alter a situation in order to achieve a desired result; a mode of working to affect social change. McKinsey has defined the range of interventions in the social sector to be knowledge development, service/product development and delivery, capacity enhancement and skills development, behavior change programs, enabling systems and infrastructure development, policy development and implementation
Knowledge development	Discovering, developing, interpreting, or sharing knowledge to solve existing or expected problems
Managing to outcomes	An approach to performance management in the social sector that focuses on setting outcome targets and ensuring those are achieved
Measurable	A measurable indicator is specific, unambiguous, observable, unique and time-bound
Method	An approach or framework for evaluation that suggests methodological guidelines and process steps
Metric	A unit of measurement or indicator used to track progress; is measurable, feasible, meaningful, relevant, and affordable
Mission	Broad aspirations that are rooted in an organization's values; begins to define a focus and priorities for the organization's work
Organizational effectiveness	Assesses the health, functionality, and efficiency of the project or institution. Focuses on financial, human resource, technology and other elements of a well-run business. Does not focus on social impact
Outcome	Changes that occur over time following an intervention, such as number of people employed within six months of training
Output	The direct and tangible products from the activity, such as number of people trained
Performance-based government contract	Government contracts which award funding only if agreed upon performance targets are achieved
Preventive programs	Social service programs that focus on avoiding negative social outcomes (e.g., alternatives to incarceration, permanent supportive housing for the chronically homeless)
Program data collection	The on-going collection of metrics related to a program's implementation (e.g., operational outputs, near-term outcomes tracking)
Quality assurance	The processes and systems put in place to ensure that a program is being executed in such a way that it will deliver projected outcomes
Relevance	How important and applicable the assessment result from a given program will be to the overall priorities of a foundation or set of stakeholders

Remedial programs	Government programs that address negative social outcomes after they have occurred (e.g., incarceration for criminals, emergency room access for the chronically homeless)
Replicate	To repeat, duplicate, or reproduce conditions, especially for experimental purposes
Rigor	Degree of internal validity of an evaluation design such that one can assess causality
Root cause	An initiator in a causal chain; the antecedent source of a defect such that if the source is addressed or removed, the defect will be eliminated
Scale	Expanding and replicating programs to reach more constituents; can take multiple forms such as reaching more constituents through additional sites, extending impact through changes in public policy, or setting best practice for addressing a social problem that other actors adopt
Sector	A sociological, economic, or political subdivision of society; for organizations pursuing social change work, common examples include health, education, and environment
Social impact	Assesses changes in economic, social, cultural, environmental, and / or political conditions due to specific actions and behavioral changes by individuals and families, communities, and organizations, and / or society and systems
Social investor	An investor seeking social impact as well as financial return
Stakeholder consultation	A deliberative effort by an evaluator to ensure that the preferences, interests, and perspectives of different stakeholders are given systematic consideration in the evaluation
Stakeholders	The key social actors that are involved – explicitly and implicitly – in an organization's work, and that give shape to ecology around the organization
Strategy	Long-term action plan for achieving a goal
Sustain	To maintain the success and effectiveness of a social change initiative on an ongoing, perhaps indefinite, basis
Tailored	Customized or highly-suitable to the requirements
Target population	The population that is primarily affected by the social problem or is the focus of program intended to address the social problem
Taxpayer benefits	The benefits of a program or intervention that accrue to taxpayers, including reductions in current government spending (e.g., less prison food expenditure in the short-term, closing current prison facility in the long-term), avoidance of future spending (e.g., not building a new prison facility) and increases in tax revenue (e.g., increased earnings of program participants)