

Pro Bono Sector Impact Toolkit

A PRACTICAL GUIDE FOR MEASURING THE IMPACT
OF YOUR ORGANISATION'S LEGAL PRO BONO WORK

THE **NATIONAL**
PROBONO CENTRE

NCVO



Case studies

Organisations which work with individual clients can use case studies to gather richer qualitative evidence about outcomes, alongside some of the tools such as the core survey and case records we covered in Model 1 elsewhere in this toolkit.

In this resource, we provide example interview questions and a short write-up template for individual client case studies.

Some points to reflect on

- Consider co-writing the case study with the person. For example, interview them, draft the case study based on their words, then share it back with them to check, edit, or remove anything they wish. You may choose to present the case study in the first person (e.g., “When I first came to Organisation X...”).
- Use your standard GDPR/privacy introduction. Case studies often include more detailed personal experiences, so be clear about how information will be used and stored, and what choices the person has.
- **Suggested privacy wording (adapt to your organisation):**
 - ▶ “Your case study will be written up in a way that removes names and any details that directly identify you.”
 - ▶ “You will have the opportunity to review your case study before it is published or shared, and you can request changes or ask for parts to be removed.”
 - ▶ “We may use the case study write-up and/or anonymised quotes in reports, presentations, or communications.”
 - ▶ “We will never publish anything without taking steps to protect your privacy.”

▶ Take a trauma-informed approach.

Avoid pressuring the person to share sensitive details. Where relevant, offer “if you feel comfortable to share” options, remind them they can skip questions, and signpost to support if the conversation brings up difficult experiences.

Interview questions

Remember that all of these are optional!

Exploring the support you have received and what you thought of it

Can you describe what support you have received from Organisation X, and when?

(Prompt: You can list the types of support on offer. They do not need to comment on all items – only the ones relevant to them.)

What was happening in your life when you first connected with Organisation X? How did you feel when you first approached Organisation X?

(If comfortable to share)

What did you think of this support? How did the Organisation X pro bono volunteer make you feel during this process?

Was there anything you found less helpful, or that you would change?

Exploring any changes in your life or barriers to change

What was the outcome of your case (or its current status if it is still ongoing)?

How did you feel about that outcome? (For example, did it feel fair, like progress, or something else?)

Did Organisation X support help you build any new skills, abilities, or confidence? If so, which ones? Or if not, could you share what your experience was and what made change difficult?

(Prompts: you can list relevant outcomes from your Theory of Change and ask which feel most true for them, i.e., access to legal support which meets their needs, improved knowledge of their rights, the legal system, improved wellbeing, etc.); **anything else not listed here?**

Did you face any challenges or setbacks? How did you resolve these (if you were able to)? Were there any key turning points, moments, or conversations that stand out to you?

Moving forwards

What's next for you?

How else could Organisation X support you moving forward?

Presenting the case study

Template

- Your case study should be no more than one page.
- Consider co-writing and presenting the case study in first-person – include short direct quotes wherever possible.
- Use a light narrative arc: (1) their situation at the start, (2) support, (3) change, any setbacks and how they were overcome, (4) what's next.
- Make the 'distance travelled' clear, even if it's small or ongoing.
- Keep sentences short and human – case studies should read like stories, not reports.

Paragraph 1: Introduction

- Briefly explain the purpose of the case study.
- Position the person's voice (e.g. "This story is co-written with X to reflect their experience in their own words").
- Establish anonymity (e.g. "Names and identifying details have been removed or changed").

Paragraph 2: Background/challenge

- Describe the beneficiary's situation before receiving support – with care! Outline the specific challenges they were facing.
- Add a short quote that captures how they felt at the start.

Paragraph 3: Intervention/support provided

- Briefly describe how the support was delivered (frequency, type of contact, approach).
- Include what the person thought of the support.

Paragraphs 4 and 5: Outcomes/impact

- Consider organising into short, medium and emerging long-term outcomes.
- Add a sub-section like "What this meant for them" where you weave in one or two strong quotes.
- You might also add "unexpected or unintended positive changes" – these often make great stories.

Final paragraph: Conclusion/future outlook

- Summarise the key takeaways from this case.
- Discuss any ongoing support or plans for the beneficiary.
- Add a final quote.
- Optionally, include a short message from your organisation.

Further reading

Storytelling tips: [6 Rules of Great Storytelling \(As Told by Pixar\) | by Brian G. Peters | Medium](#)

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