

SROI:

Translating CSI into business language

Some R6.8bn was spent on Corporate Social Investment (CSI) in 2012*. What was the return on that investment?

IAOS
A subsidiary of IQ Business

How could it have been more effectively spent and what could be done differently to ensure future impact is optimised are questions that all responsible business leaders should ask as they seek to optimise their CSI investment, says Stephen Smith, CEO of IAOS, a company specialising in the optimisation of CSI and enterprise development spend.

Apart from delivering real impact to the beneficiaries, recent evidence demonstrates that strategic CSI has the potential to create positive and meaningful impact through improved employee engagement, enhancement of the image of the company, meaningful change in the communities in which companies operate and an alignment with the national priorities – all of these are critical to ensure long-term sustainable impact.

With the greater need for transparency, the impact of CSI needs to be reported on such that the impact is translated into business language. Social Return on Investment (SROI) is one of the most credible vehicles to achieve this.

By undertaking an SROI assessment on a CSI investment, key stakeholders are able to understand, measure and report on the value that is created by an organisation, activity or service. This is done by examining the impact across three possible areas: social, economic and environmental. A value is attributed to each outcome using common accounting investment appraisal methods, stakeholder engagement and research. This robust approach delivers reliable, quantifiable data around which sound decisions can be made.



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ABOUT IAOS

IAOS is a subsidiary of IQ Business, the leading, independent management consulting firm in South Africa. With membership of the global SROI organisation, a team of accredited practitioners and quality reviewers, IAOS is one of the few companies in South Africa equipped to conduct the SROI methodology.

* Source: Trialogue – CSI Handbook. 15th Edition 2013

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