INTRODUCTORY

ASL

TOOLKIT SERIES

Local Needs Analysis Template

Embedding local needs considerations to drive social value benefit realisation for First Nations and local communities

Version 1, October 2025

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The ASL Social Value Toolkit tools and guidance are structured across three levels to support the gradual development of social value capability and maturity.

INTRODUCTORY

Builds foundational understanding and capability in social value practice.

INTERMEDIATE

Builds on foundational capability to support more developed social value practice.

ADVANCED

Supports established capability and more mature social value practice.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose

This guide offers a practical template for conducting a Local Needs Analysis (LNA). Although standardised, the template and examples contained within are indicative and should be adapted to the unique context, scale, and objectives of each project.

An LNA enables project teams to identify community needs, social risks, and opportunities, ensuring alignment with local, state, and national policies. Integrating local priorities into project planning not only supports social value but also delivers tangible benefits to communities.

By assessing economic, social, and environmental factors, the LNA provides a comprehensive community profile and highlights it's current and potential future needs.

This process is an essential first step in developing a targeted, evidence-based approach that maximises social value and delivers lasting, meaningful outcomes.

1.2 Project Overview

This section should provide a brief overview of the project including:

1. Project name	
2. Proponent/develope	
3. Project address	
4. Project region and Local Government Area (LGA)	
5. Key Contact Name	
6. Email	
7. Phone	
8. Date Local Needs Analysis completed	

2. Methodology

The LNA uses a structured methodology that integrates policy analysis and socio-economic statistical analysis. This approach ensures an evidence-based, community-focused framework to support the generation of social value. The methodology consists of four key steps:

2.1 Policy Analysis

- Identify local, state, and federal policies relevant to the project, e.g. Employment, social procurement, First Nations participation, etc.
- Conduct an analysis of how these policies align with community needs and project commitments and/or requirements.
- Consider how policy priorities or regulatory requirements may shape strategic directions and influence social value delivery for your project.

2.2 Partnership and Collaboration

- Identify local or regional partnerships with councils, First Nations organisations, local businesses, education and training providers, and community groups.
- Leverage existing programs and create collaborative opportunities to strengthen project outcomes.

2.3 Socio-economic and community baseline analysis

- Collect and analyse demographic, social, and economic data from reliable sources, such as the Australian Bureau of Statistics, local government reports, and industry data.
- Identify key trends and emerging needs, including employment rates, education levels, and income.
- Benchmark local data against state and national averages to highlight disparities and opportunities.

2.4 Local Needs Analysis

- Organise findings into an LNA table, focusing on key themes relevant to the community and the project's social value requirements.
- Clearly identify local needs, emerging issues, and how proposed social value commitments will address these needs.

3. Social Value Purpose

The social value purpose statement should be clear, concise, forward-looking, and aspirational, while being tailored to the specific project or location.

Develop this statement using insights from community engagement, local priorities, and social research to ensure it accurately reflects the intended social value outcomes of your project.

Project Social Value Purpose Statement
Describe the intended outcomes and goals of the project, focusing on how it will support social and economic opportunities and uplift for local and First Nations communities.

4. Policy Considerations

Identify all relevant local, state, and federal policies to ensure your project's social value approach aligns with broader priorities in the renewable energy sector.

Conducting a policy analysis ensures that project commitments are consistent with applicable policies, regulatory requirements, and strategic government objectives. This process helps align your project's social value commitments with broader policy goals.

4.1 Key considerations

- **Identify Relevant Policies**

Review local, state, and federal policies that may impact the project. These policies may include economic development and employment, First Nations participation, social inclusion, procurement, and industry participation requirements.

- **Analyse Policy Objective and Key Commitments**

For each policy, identify its key objectives, target groups (e.g., First Nations communities, local businesses), and the commitments it supports. Consider how your project can incorporate these policy considerations into its social value priorities.

- **Assess Policy Implications**

Determine how policies may support or require specific project commitments. Identify opportunities to integrate policy-aligned initiatives into your project's social value approach.

4.2 Example Policy Analysis

Example Policy Analysis

Example Policies	Overview	Project Considerations
Australian Skills Guarantee	A Commonwealth initiative requiring large infrastructure projects to identify and meet the apprenticeship and trainees' targets, with the intention of supporting workforce develop and skills growth across Australia.	Ensure project workforce planning includes apprenticeships, traineeships, and pathways for underrepresented groups to meet mandated targets.
Infrastructure Skills Legacy Program	An NSW program that sets workforce participation targets for priority groups, including apprentices, women in construction, and Indigenous workers, to boost industry skills.	Align project hiring and training initiatives with program targets, ensuring opportunities for priority groups in construction and operational phases.
Local Community Strategic Plan	A long-term vision document developed by local councils to outline community priorities, including economic development, sustainability, and social wellbeing.	Ensure project commitments align with local community goals, particularly in areas such as job creation, environmental stewardship, and social infrastructure.
First Nations Clean Energy Strategy	A federal strategy aimed at increasing First Nations participation in the clean energy transition through economic opportunities, community partnerships, and self-determination.	Incorporate First Nations engagement, partnership, and benefit-sharing models to support economic participation and energy equity for Indigenous communities.
NSW First Nations Engagement Guidelines	Guidelines providing best practices for engaging with First Nations communities in NSW, ensuring meaningful consultation, cultural respect, and long-term benefits.	Follow best-practice engagement principles, establish genuine partnerships, and co-design benefits that align with First Nations aspirations and priorities.

5. Socio-economic and community baseline analysis

5.1 Socio-economic and community baseline analysis

A Socio-economic and Community Baseline Analysis establishes a data-driven foundation for the Local Needs Analysis by identifying key statistics and data points that inform the development of social value commitments and priorities.

Using credible data sources, including government and industry datasets, ensures that project decisions are based on accurate and up-to-date evidence.

This section should outline the approach to socio-economic and community baseline analysis and explain how these findings will inform project planning and social value initiatives and commitments.

5.2 Key considerations

- **Define the geographical area and scope of the project**

Determine the relevant local, regional, and state areas for the project, including the broader catchment area where the project may have social or economic impacts.

- **Identify relevant data sources**

Use sources such as the Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census data, Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas, Labour Force data, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander statistics, and sector-specific reports.

For a example list of indicators refer to **Appendix A1 and A2**.

- **Identify key themes**

Compare local data with state and national benchmarks to highlight strengths and challenges. Identify disparities, such as higher unemployment or underrepresentation in certain industries.

- **Translate data into actionable insights**

Use the analysis to identify priority local needs that may require social value interventions. Apply these insights to inform social value initiatives and engagement plans.

5.3 Example Community Baseline Analysis table

Please note, this should be updated and adjusted based on the specific location, and overarching social value priorities of the project.

Example Data Sets	Project LGA	State	National
Population E.g., demographics, age, gender, ethnicity, migration, etc			
Labour Force E.g., Employment rates, unemployment levels, underemployment, participation rates, industry sectors, etc			
Social Statistics E.g., Education levels, income, housing affordability, crime rates, etc			
Industry Statistics E.g., Employment in specific industries, local business, local economy etc			
Health Statistics E.g., Life expectancy, mortality rates, etc			
Index of Relative Socio-economic Advantage and Disadvantage (IRSAD)			

6. Local Need Analysis

A structured table is recommended to analyse community needs, ensuring that key themes and emerging issues are clearly identified and addressed through targeted social value commitments.

6.1 Key considerations

- **Analyse Data and Identify Key Themes**

Review socio-economic data within the policy context to identify recurring challenges, opportunities, and overarching themes that social value commitments can address.

- **Define Local Needs and Issues**

Use evidence from the community baseline analysis, and from previous or ongoing engagement activities, to highlight gaps or risks, supporting a robust social value approach for the project.

E.g. For example, indicators that show lower levels of young people completing year 12 could indicate additional training and school-based initiatives could support local young people.

- **Determine Potential Social Value Commitments**

Develop initiatives that address identified needs, aligning commitments with community expectations, project goals, regulatory requirements, and local priorities.

E.g. in a project LGA where unemployment is higher than national average there could be increased focus on employability-based initiatives and commitments to address the identified need.

- **Establish Measures of Success and Outcomes**

Define metrics to track impact, considering both short- and long-term outcomes to demonstrate social value throughout project delivery. Indicators, measures and outcomes should be holistically tailored to the project community.

Conducting a Theory of Change exercise (bold text) may assist in mapping out desired social vale outcomes, in addition or instead of indicators, and measures.

- **Prioritise Actions**

Assign priority levels (e.g., high, medium, low) based on urgency, impact, and feasibility, considering stakeholder feedback and policy alignment.

6.2 Considerations when completing Local Needs Analysis

Theme/ Category	Identify broad themes based on data analysis, such as employment, education, health, infrastructure, environment, or social cohesion. Themes may vary by project and community.
Local Needs and Issues	Summarise key community needs, gaps, and challenges within the theme. Reference socio-economic trends, demographic data, and policy considerations. *Example: High youth unemployment due to lack of local training opportunities.*
Potential Social Value commitments	Outline commitments that could address the identified needs. These should align with project objectives, social value principles, and community expectations. *Example: Partnering with local training providers to create apprenticeships.*
Measuring Success and Outcomes	Measuring social value outcomes should be tailored to the unique needs of the community and project. Utilise both qualitative and quantitative measures, selecting indicators (where required) and outcomes that are informed by local priorities, community input, and the specific context of the project.
Priority	Assign a priority level (e.g., high, medium, low) based on urgency, feasibility, and stakeholder expectations. Provide a rationale where necessary.

6.3 Example local needs analysis table

Project: Project A
Location: Location A
Date LNA conducted: 00/00/0000

Theme/Category	Local Need and Issues	Social Value Commitments	Measurement - quantitative and qualitative	Priority
Employment, Skills & Workforce Development	• Above average unemployment rates, and elevated levels of youth unemployment. • Lower than average enrolment in training courses.	Industry specific training and support programs Scholarships, Mentorships and Internships	• Number of participants enrolled in project-specific training programs • % of trainees transitioning into industry employment • Number of new qualifications obtained through training support • Number of scholarships awarded and % used • Number of internships or mentorships facilitated • % of scholarship recipients progressing into industry jobs or further study • Improved wellbeing of local employees working in renewable energy	e.g. Low, Medium, High
		Local Employment Program	• % of project workforce hired from the local community • Number of local job placements created • Retention rates of locally hired employees after 6–12 months	
		Job Readiness and Capacity Building Program	• Number of participants in CV writing and interview workshops • % of participants securing employment post-training • Participant satisfaction and feedback scores	
		Ring – fenced Local Jobs	• Number of jobs allocated specifically for residents • % of total workforce comprised of local employees • Compliance with local hiring targets set in contracts • Residents feel they have more access to local jobs and opportunities	
		Co – designed training program with local industry and training providers	• Number of new training programs developed in partnership with TAFE/RTOs • Enrolment and completion rates for courses • % of graduates securing employment in related industries	
		Renewable Energy Micro Course	• Number of scholarships awarded and % used • Number of internships or mentorships facilitated • % of scholarship recipients progressing into industry jobs or further study	
		STEM School Engagement and Outreach	• Number of schools and students engaged • % increase in students enrolling in STEM-related subjects • Number of students participating in renewable energy site visits or industry events	

Theme/Category	Local Need and Issues	Social Value Commitments	Measurement - quantitative and qualitative	Priority
Economic Development	• Limited local market diversity • Low supply chain capacity and resilience • Low levels of supply chain partnerships and collaboration	Local Supplier Engagement and Capacity Building Program	• Number of local businesses participating in training programs. • Percentage of trained suppliers successfully bidding for contracts. • Supplier satisfaction and feedback scores. • Increased supplier readiness and ability to meet procurement standards. • Higher success rate of local suppliers securing contracts.	e.g. Low, Medium, High
		Local Content and Market Diversity Commitments	• Percentage of total procurement spend allocated to local and diverse suppliers. • Number of contracts awarded to Indigenous, women-led, and social enterprises. • Year-on-year increase in participation of diverse suppliers. • More inclusive and diversified supply chain. • Stronger economic participation of historically underrepresented businesses.	
		Supplier Collaboration Network	• Number of B2B networking events and supplier forums held. • Number of partnerships, joint ventures, or consortia formed between local suppliers. • Increase in supplier-to-supplier collaborations. • Strengthened relationships between suppliers and major buyers. • Enhanced competitiveness and capacity of local SMEs.	
First Nations Participation	• Identified need for increased First Nations employment and procurement opportunities. • Limited access to culturally appropriate education and training opportunities. • Increasing First Nations educational and skills attainment levels.	First Nations Employment and Procurement	• Percentage of project workforce hired from First Nations communities. • Total value and percentage of contracts awarded to Indigenous businesses. • Number of Indigenous businesses engaged in supply chain opportunities. • Greater economic participation of First Nations workers and businesses. • Sustainable employment pathways and business growth for Indigenous enterprises.	

Theme/Category	Local Need and Issues	Social Value Commitments	Measurement - quantitative and qualitative	Priority
First Nations Participation		Culturally Appropriate Education and Training Program	• Number of culturally tailored training programs developed with First Nations input. • Participation and completion rates of First Nations trainees. • Stakeholder satisfaction and feedback from First Nations communities. • Improved engagement and retention of First Nations participants in training. • Stronger alignment of education programs with cultural values and community priorities.	e.g. Low, Medium, High
		First Nations Educational and Skills Attainment Levels	• Increase in First Nations student enrolment and completion rates for vocational and higher education. • Number of scholarships, apprenticeships, and mentorships awarded to First Nations individuals. • Percentage of graduates securing employment in relevant industries. • Higher educational attainment and career progression for First Nations people. • Strengthened workforce participation and skill development in key industries.	
		Long Term First Nations Career Pathways	• Number of trainees transitioning from education into full-time employment. • Retention rates of First Nations employees in long-term roles. • Number of leadership and upskilling opportunities provided. • Sustainable career development for First Nations workers. • Increased representation of First Nations professionals in leadership roles.	
		Cultural Competency Training	• Percentage of project staff completing cultural competency training. • Inclusion of First Nations perspectives in workplace policies and procurement frameworks. • Number of partnerships with Indigenous organisations to support workplace inclusion. • More inclusive, culturally aware workplaces. • Greater retention and satisfaction of First Nations employees.	

7. Partnerships and Collaboration

To effectively implement social value commitments, identify and leverage existing partnerships, funding mechanisms, and collaborative opportunities.

Develop your partnership approach based on engagement activities, a deep understanding of local community priorities, and relevant social research. This ensures your project's social value purpose is both meaningful and achievable.

7.1 Key considerations

- **Map Out Existing Partnerships and Initiatives**

Identify local organisations, businesses, government programs, and community groups already active in the project area. Review current social, economic, and environmental initiatives that align with identified local needs and could help build collective social value.

- **Assess Existing Funding or Investment Opportunities**

Explore local, state, and federal government grants, as well as industry investment programs, to identify potential co-funding or support mechanisms for your project's social value objectives.

- **Engage with Key Stakeholders**

Establish relationships with local councils' aboriginal organisations training providers business chambers and social enterprises that can support or enhance your projects commitments.

- **Align Partnerships with Overarching Social Value Objectives**

Ensure any partnerships contribute to building local capacity, employment pathways, social outcomes and prioritise those which enhance community trust and provide long term benefits.

7.2 Example partnerships and collaboration overview

Example Partnership Initiative	Local Need	Organisations (s) Involved	Collaboration Opportunities
Local Employment and Skills Program	Supports local employment and skills development for community members	• Local TAFE • Employment Services • Business Chambers • Training Providers	• Co-fund apprenticeship program • Co-design work placement and STEM outreach initiatives • Develop Industry Placement Rotation
Aboriginal Business Network	Improve and enhance First Nations participation, employment and procurement	• Aboriginal Business Council • Supply Nation • Local Aboriginal Land Councils • Local Councils	• Identify potential local suppliers for goods and services! • Deliver co-designed supplier 'Meet the Buyer' engagement program. • Develop series of capacity building and supply chain resilience sessions

8. Accountability and governance

This section should detail the qualifications and experience of the individuals responsible for delivering, monitoring, and continuously improving your project's social value commitments.

Table 4. Overview of key accountable person/s

	Name and Qualifications	Job Role E.g. Social Value Lead, First Nations Participation Lead.	Key Responsibilities
1			•
2			•
3			•
4			•
5			•

A1. Sample First Nations baseline indicators

Indicators	Project LGA	State/Jurisdiction	National
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander population total			
Aboriginal (%)			
Torres Strait Islander (%)			
Both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (%)			
Median age			
0-4 years (%)			
5-14 years (%)			
15-24 years (%)			
25-34 years (%)			
35-44 years (%)			
45-54 years (%)			
55-64 years (%)			
65 years and over (%)			
Year 10 highest year of schooling (%)			
Year 12 highest year of schooling (%)			
Bachelor degree (%)			
Proportion of the labour force employed full-time (%)			
Proportion of the labour force employed parttime (%)			
Proportion of the labour force who are unemployed (%)			

A2. Sample community baseline indicators

Indicators	Project LGA	State/Jurisdiction	National
Population size			
Proportion of Indigenous Population			
Median Age			
Year 10 highest year of schooling (%)			
Year 12 highest year of schooling (%)			
Bachelor degree (%)			
Certificate (%)			
Proportion of population with a different address 1 year ago (%)			
Proportion of population with a different address 5 year ago (%)			
Proportion of population aged 15+ who volunteer (%)			
Proportion of population born overseas (%)			
Proportion of single parent families (%)			
Proportion of family households (%)			
Proportion of group households (%)			
Proportion of lone person households (%)			
Proportion of the labour force employed full-time (%)			
Proportion of the labour force employed parttime (%)			

Indicators	Project LGA	State/Jurisdiction	National
Proportion of the labour force who are unemployed (%)			
Median household income ($/week)			
Median mortgage repayment ($/month)			
Median rent ($/week)			
Proportion of occupied private dwellings that are fully owned (%)			
Proportion of occupied private dwellings that are being purchased/ owned by a mortgage (%)			
Proportion of occupied private dwellings that are being rented (%)			
Proportion of households in mortgage stress (%)			
Proportion of households in rental stress (%)			

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