

# The situatedness of Social Impact

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## ABSTRACT

The need for social impact assessment has grown over the last years, which is accompanied by the need for suitable tools to support this assessment process. So far, social impact and social impact assessment tools have been mostly researched in isolation. This ethnographic research analysed social impact in context, in order to explore the situatedness of social impact. Two organisations that develop social impact assessment tools in a different context, Nuqat (Kuwait) and Zet (the Netherlands), were inquired to gain an understanding of the meaning, creation and measurement of social impact in the respective contexts. Through multiple semi-structured interviews, literature review, co-reflection and a Delphi Research, it was concluded that social impact is a concept based on situatedness. In this research, accompanying constructs were found that put social impact in perspective, which are presented in a preliminary framework that embraces the situatedness of social impact.

## Author Keywords

Social Impact, Impact Assessment, Local Context Analysis, Delphi Method, Situatedness

## INTRODUCTION

More and more organisations are willing to measure their social impact, whether it is to steer their process, to most effectively contribute to society or to account for investments [16]. Projects evolved around social impact, frequently work with grants or funding from Funds or other (governmental) organisations. Accountability for these investments has been common practice for a long time, but the definition of accountability has changed over time. Where it used to be sufficient to communicate how many hours were spent on a project, or how many people were reached in numbers, it is now more relevant to know how these hours were spent and what the impact of this investment has been. Social impact assessment therefore responds to a question coming from different levels of the society, which is accompanied by the need for suitable tools that support this assessment process.

One of the organisations that is currently developing a social impact assessment tool, is Nuqat; a non-profit organisation which focuses on developing and spreading creative problem-solving skills in the Arab world [14]. As part of their mission they host Exploration Sessions throughout the Middle East: Nuqat on Tour. By discussing topics like Design, Education, Urbanism and Funding they try to identify and understand topics that could contribute to a Creative Economy, which is described as the intersection between “culture, business and technology” [11]. During one of these discussions about ‘Funding Creative and Cultural Industries’ (Kuwait, November 2016), the idea was raised to develop a Social Impact Index suited to the business and social environment in Kuwait.

Research has been conducted with Nuqat to further develop their Social Impact Index. However, it was hard for the Dutch researchers involved to understand how this Index reflected social impact. The Dutch society is in many ways opposite to Kuwait. The Netherlands are known for their directness, efficiency and their socialistic character: it is governed as a participatory society. Kuwait on the other hand is an extremely wealthy oil-state with a conservative character. In their daily practices, Kuwait is best described by the word ‘*inshallah*’: when God wants it [9]. According to the cultural dimensions of Hofstede [5], the Netherlands and Arabic countries are contrary on every dimension.

The confusion of the Dutch researchers about how the Kuwaiti Social Impact Index reflected social impact, led to the hypothesis that social impact is a situated concept. Situatedness is described by the Oxford Dictionary of Media and Communication as “*the dependence of meaning (and/or identity) on the specifics of particular sociohistorical, geographical, and cultural contexts, social and power relations, and philosophical and ideological frameworks, within which the multiple perspectives of social actors are dynamically constructed, negotiated, and contested.*”

We commenced an ethnographic research to research the situatedness of social impact. We aimed to gain an understanding of why the Index was developed as it was: how do culture and society influence the understanding of social impact, the way to create it and the way to measure it? This research explains how Western dominated literature describes social impact and what tools are currently in practice to assess this impact. Then it is described how research towards social impact was conducted in Kuwait, a non-Western country, and how this led the researchers to believe that Social impact is a concept based on situatedness. Subsequently, a preliminary framework is suggested that embraces this situatedness and in conclusion it is discussed how this knowledge contributes to the field of design.

### **THEORETICAL BACKGROUND**

Social Impact Assessment (SIA) is described by Vanclay [18] as *“the processes that SIA professionals follow in order to assess the social impacts of planned interventions or events, and to develop strategies for the ongoing monitoring and management of those impacts.”* Social impact is in this definition understood as *“an umbrella or overarching framework that embodies the evaluation of all impacts on humans and on all the ways in which people and communities interact with their socio-cultural, economic and biophysical surroundings.”* Dr Bronwen Dalton [16] describes Social Impact as *“the sum effect of any intervention or program that we make to address social disadvantage or perhaps an environmental issue”*.

Definitions like these leave a lot of room for interpretation. This might be the crux of the situation: Can Social impact be interpreted in multiple ways, because there is no rigid definition? Or is there no rigid definition, because social impact can be interpreted in multiple ways? Although it can be acceptable to work with a definition as broad as described by Vanclay, a difference in interpretation starts to clash when bringing social impact into practice - especially when this practice differs from the context that the definition is framed in. This research explores several examples that show how Social impact mainly ‘makes sense’ when it is placed in the perspective of the respective context.

### **RELATED WORK**

The University of Technology Sydney (UTS) [16] set several key challenges regarding social impact assessment. The first one is about resourcing measuring impact: many organisations are only funded for the service they deliver, in which impact

measurement is not always embedded. The second challenge is a standardized methodology and validated tools, to make the results accurate and defensible. UTS proposes the use of a Theory of Change and a Logic Model [7]. These tools help to steer processes of projects and initiatives. Other tools that are currently in use to assess Social impact are for example a Cost Benefit Analysis, Social Accounting, Social Return on Investment or a Basic Efficiency Resource Analysis [10]. Most of these methods try to express Social impact in numbers, considering the language of numbers is one we all share.

However, we consider that comparing numbers is a tricky thing to do, especially when it is desired to compare the calculated impact between multiple contexts. Hence, different numbers cannot be compared, if their metrics are unknown. For various values we are aware of different metrics in different contexts, and there are manners to convert one into another, like distance (kilometre, mile, etc) or money (Euro, Dollar, etc). But the values of social impact are considered to be rather ‘soft’, which makes them difficult to quantify and measure [19]. Mulgan [10] refers to social value as a *“non-financial impacts of programmes, organisations and interventions, including the wellbeing of individuals and communities, social capital and the environment.”* Still, we see that there is hardly any attention for incorporating ‘context’ in the tools that are currently in use, even though ‘soft’ values are context related. This research therefore argues for developers of social impact assessment tools, to develop metrics that are valid for the context they work in.

### **METHOD**

In order to research the situatedness of social impact, various literature about Social Impact and Social Impact Assessment was consulted, as well as an online course about Social Impact Measurement by the UTS [16].

Throughout multiple semi-structured interviews we inquired the (business) culture of Kuwait. The interviews were held with employees of Nuqat, in order to get a grip on the development of the Social Impact Index, the local processes and background of Nuqat. To broaden this perspective, other business in the region were consulted via semi-structured interviews and in a group discussion about ‘Funding the Creative Economy’ in Kuwait. This discussion was held with 18 different stakeholders that are active in the region.

To put all gathered information in perspective, the Dutch situation was used as a base. By means of

regular Skype meetings between various researchers in Kuwait and the Netherlands, patterns started to appear between the two societies in a co-reflective manner. For this research, Zet was used as a Dutch alternative to mirror the practices of Nuqat. Zet is a Dutch organisation concerned with social inclusion and participation [20], who is also developing social impact assessment tools in-house. The different tools of Zet and Nuqat have been analysed and compared in relation to their respective contexts and local processes.

Additionally, a Delphi Research was set up amongst two different panels, one with employees of Nuqat and one with employees of Zet. The Delphi Method facilitates a panel discussion amongst different experts on a certain topic [3]. It seeks for a mutual agreement by conducting multiple rounds of feedback for further discussion. Important part of this method is the anonymity of the panel members, which therefore not demands the physical presence of every member at the same time, but also cancels out the social dynamics that a normal discussion would have. This means for example that panellists do not have to worry about repercussions for the opinions they share.

The basic structure for a Delphi research consists out of 3 steps. Step 2 and 3 can be repeated until consensus is reached:

***In step 1***, the facilitator asks questions to a panel of experts.

***In step 2***, the panellists share their opinion on the topic(s).

***In step 3***, the facilitator summarizes all responses and sends a revised version back to the panel.

The questionnaire that was sent out to both panels, included questions about the definition, creation and measurement of social impact in the respective places. These questions were posed to research constructs that can possibly be related to the situatedness of social impact. The findings of this research, are based on the level of consensus that was reached amongst each panel, after one round of questioning and two rounds of feedback.

## **FINDINGS**

In this section, the main findings of this research towards the situatedness of social impact are presented. First, several anecdotes are shared that illustrate how the context and local processes of Kuwait are related to social impact in Kuwait. Then, a short description of the researched social impact assessment tools is provided. To conclude, the

results of the Delphi Research towards the definition, creation and measurement of social impact at Zet and Nuqat, are summarized.

### **Context research in Kuwait**

Out of all collected data, the main stories were selected that assist in putting social impact in Kuwait in perspective. These are presented in an anecdotic manner in the following paragraphs.

#### ***Kuwaiti society in the perspective of history***

Kuwait is an Arabic country in the Gulf region, which used to be known for its trading character [4]. In the past century Kuwait transformed from a poor country to an extremely wealthy one, due to the discovery of oil in 1938. However, mainly Kuwaiti benefit from this wealth: they get supported in e.g. their health, education, housing and work. It is stated by law that a Kuwaiti is entitled to a job at the government, which means that if they work there, they can never be fired. To put this situation in perspective: only 20% of the population is Kuwaiti from origin, the rest are expats. Because of all these privileges, many Kuwaiti children grow up without a sense of fulfilment [17]. However, since their education is supported, many of them study abroad and come back to Kuwait with new perspectives. Additionally, the recent rise of Social Media enlarged the perspective of many locals. Developments like these lead to progressive movements in a rather conservative society: Nuqat is one of the pioneers in this movement.

#### ***Interference with local processes***

The business culture of Kuwait is dominated by its Collectivistic mindset. Collectivistic business practices are known for their personal relationships. In an Individualistic culture, business is done with a company; in a Collectivistic culture, it is done with a familiar person one trusts [5]. A 'wasta' is therefore essential in Kuwait, which is translated as a 'connector' or 'mediator', someone who is trusted by both parties.

LOYAC, a Non-Profit Organisation that tries to empower the youth of Kuwait into highly effective humane citizens [8], broke with this tradition by opening up their programs for all youth. The 'wasta' is deliberately eliminated from the application process, which means anyone can subscribe now and will be equally treated in their application process.

In other parts of their business, LOYAC is limited in their process. The government doesn't allow other organisations to interfere with the public education. Hence, LOYAC is restricted to promote or develop their programs with public schools. Since 90% of the youth is in these public schools, it has been very hard

to reach the local youth. The recent rise of Social Media had a big impact, in the sense that it offered an alternative for LOYAC to get in touch with the local youth.

**‘Arguments only hold in that context’**

Farah Al Adsani, Kuwaiti researcher at Nuqat, described in a conversation about social impact her perception of social responsibility: *“I remember reading Friedman’s writing about the social responsibility of companies. He believes that their social responsibility is purely to increase its profits. It’s important to note that his ideas and arguments against a conscious of ‘social impact’ are done in the backdrop of American capitalism, so his arguments only hold in that context. I think in Kuwait, or other countries with an extremely large welfare state, the private sector has to be more innovative to ensure their sustainability and growth. Profit does not have to be as sought after as it does in other countries, I think that’s a luxury that we can afford.”* Al Adsani herewith illustrates the influence of context on the perception of concepts like social impact and social responsibility. Moreover, she even argues that without the presence of context, the perception doesn’t hold, which indicates that ‘context’ is a relevant construct to use in order to indicate the situatedness of social impact.

**Wealth killing creativity**

At one of the Exploration Sessions, the consequences of the welfare of Kuwait were discussed [11]. One of the participants described how the regulations of the Kuwaiti society, which is an indicator of the construct ‘context’, influence the mindset and behaviour of locals: *“Through the easy access to all basic necessities and more via means of subsidies or cash hand-outs, the majority of the population is insulated from everyday difficulties and disengaged from reality. The process of shielding and solving problems done by the government has the unintended consequences of killing any kind of awareness of a problem. As was stressed throughout the discussion: “You need problems to find solutions”. Additionally, the extensive welfare state system forces out competition from daily life which has the consequence of generating an unproductive community as there is no incentive to be creative or innovative.”*

**Social Impact Assessment tools**

Both Nuqat and Zet are developing social impact assessment tools in-house. The (usage of the) tools are described in the following paragraphs.

**Nuqat (Kuwait) - Social Impact Index**

Nuqat is developing a Social Impact Index, which intentionally works as follows: The Index is an online platform, where companies can ‘check’ their social impact. The respondents answer several questions in four domains: Employees, Environment, Suppliers and Community [1]. By filling in their data, they receive a score at the end, once their data is checked by an independent controller. This score can be used to see where improvement is still possible, for which Nuqat is setting up a consultancy service that can help these companies in doing so. Additionally, the score is accompanied by a ‘label’ (figure 1), which can be used by the company to show their social impact to the outside world (e.g. This label shows that this company creates ‘Green Social Impact’, which matches a score of 75-100 on the Nuqat Social Impact Index). Nuqat tries to meet the needs of their users (e.g. competitive advantage, improved brand reputation, increased profits), whilst bringing in a fresh mindset (e.g. healthier working environment for its staff, impactful supply chain, innovative products/services, enabling environment) [13].

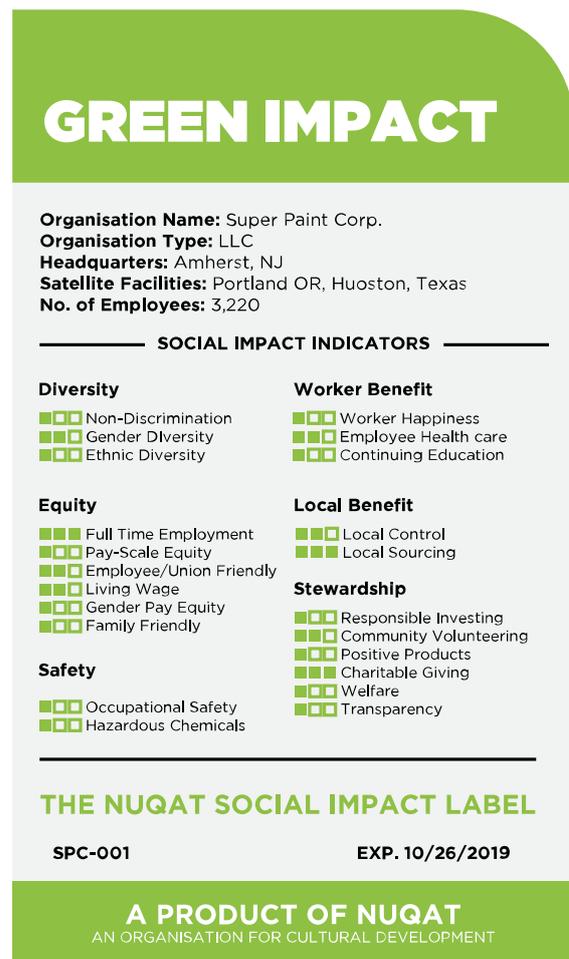


Figure 1 Mock-up of the ‘Green Label’ of the Social Impact Index of Nuqat. Visual retrieved from Nuqat [13]

### **Zet (Netherlands)- Playing with Impact & Social Impact Monitor**

Zet developed a tool that is very much in line with the Logic Model [7] that is used by the UTS. It namely works with the terms Desired Impact, Input, Approach, Output, Outcome and Impact [48]. First, a physical game is played with the stakeholders, to get a feeling for the meaning of these terms (figure 2). Then, a strategy for the project is formed, in which these terms are used to structure the process. The stakeholders develop this strategy with guidance of Zet. Zet makes use of a Monitor (figure 3), to determine the current and desired values that the project is aiming for. Stakeholders are incorporated in this assessment process, by making use of questionnaires and interviews about related values. At the end of the project, the values are assessed again, to see the realized set of values. Visualizing all this information helps to show the realized impact of the project.



Figure 2. *Playing with Impact*. Visual retrieved from [www.wijzijnzet.nl](http://www.wijzijnzet.nl) [20]

### **Interaction represents cultural dimensions**

The interaction of the different tools shows the influence of the different contexts on the respective tools. Zet makes use of a physical game to discuss social impact. By moving around physical elements, stakeholders can express their thoughts, share their opinions and start a discussion. This interaction illustrates something about the Dutch culture: it is accepted to differ in opinion and debate about this. Doctoral research at the Eindhoven University of Technology about the role of design in multi-stakeholder collaborations [6], also shows how interaction through a physical mediating tool fits the polder model that is applied in the Netherlands. This form of interaction can be related to the cultural dimensions of Hofstede: The Netherlands is known for its Low Power Distance and is prevalently Uncertainty Accepting [5]. This is in contrast with Arabic countries, which are characterized by a High Power Distance and are relatively Uncertainty Avoiding [5]. These respective dimensions are



Figure 3. *Social Impact Monitor*. Visual retrieved from [www.wijzijnzet.nl](http://www.wijzijnzet.nl) [21]

translated in the Index of Nuqat; an online tool one can use in private to assess one's own impact. It is presumed that people might not be transparent about their data or sugar-coat reality. Being aware of this phenomenon, Nuqat plans to integrate a controller as a safeguard to verify the data.

### **Definition, creation and measurement of social impact**

A summary of the Delphi Research is provided in table 1 (next page). The left column summarizes the consensus reached by the panel of Zet (Netherlands), the right column summarizes the consensus reached by the panel of Nuqat (Kuwait). The bold parts of the text are marked and used by the researchers as relevant indicators that characterize social impact in the respective context.

When comparing the definitions of social impact of Zet and Nuqat (section 1 in table 1), these definitions seem to align quite well with both each other and with literature. The linguistic nuance is to be studied on a detailed level. However, the further these definitions are put in practice (section 2 and 3 in table 1), the more they start to diverge. It can even be questioned whether we should still speak about 'nuance' when we compare the embodied practices of social impact. Hence, these findings show that researching the linguistic definition of social impact in isolation, conceals a lot of information that is incorporated in the embodiment of social impact.

<p>1a. Zet’s definition of Social Impact</p> <p><i>Social Impact is <b>societal change</b> due to your* <b>actions</b>. *your can refer to a person, an organization, programme or project. Social Impact can be <b>positive</b> and <b>negative</b> as well as <b>intentional</b> as <b>unintentional</b>. Social Impact is the/a (strong) <b>effect</b> for (a group of) <b>people</b> in their <b>contextual/environmental circumstances</b> within their <b>community</b>. An important aspect is that the change has happened because of your actions, <b>minus what would have happened</b> <b>anyways</b>.</i></p>	<p>1b. Nuqat’s definition of Social Impact</p> <p><i>Social Impact is the result of an <b>action</b> triggered by an individual or an entity (whether private, governmental or NGO) and that has <b>transformed</b> multiple individuals in a recognizable manner. The impact can be <b>positive</b> or <b>negative</b>. Social impact can be understood in two forms: It can be <b>intentional</b> [=social/community/environmental wellbeing is directly related to the operations of the organisation] or an <b>externality</b> [=the organisation is not based on a mandate that is to promote social wellbeing] of an organisation. Social Impact can be the result of sets of goals defined by the entity itself.</i></p>
<p>2a. How Zet creates Social Impact</p> <p><i>All our projects aim to reach a <b>benefit for society</b>. Our projects look at <b>inclusion</b> in the broadest sense of the word. We <b>help others</b> to define and increase their social impact. We <b>support</b> and <b>facilitate</b> people or organisations to <b>intervene</b> in a social context to achieve goals or to solve/avoid <b>social</b> <b>problems</b>. e.g. by helping them constructing a Theory of Change; doing an impact-evaluation; stimulating <b>bottom-up initiatives</b>; putting people from <b>scratch into action, ownership</b> and <b>responsibility</b>. If there is no perceived or expected impact of the project we should not take the challenge of participating in the project.</i></p>	<p>2b. How Nuqat creates Social Impact</p> <p><i>Nuqat organizes and develops workshops, seminars and cultural events throughout the year to <b>nurture curiosity</b> in kids, adults and professionals. Nuqat creates social impact because it’s based fundamentally on bettering and developing programs to <b>serve its community</b>.</i></p> <p><i>Once a year, Nuqat’s flagship conference attracts thousands of participants from all over the world to discuss different topics . Being a <b>platform</b> that provides content for social development, Nuqat <b>connected</b> them together to develop a community that thrive for <b>cultural shift</b> and <b>better performances</b>.</i></p> <p><i><b>Sharing</b> of information and knowledge is a vital part. Archiving conversations and opinions throughout history is so important for any future research or just reference – this is something that is (until recently) lacking in not only Kuwait, but the wider Gulf region.</i></p> <p><i>The potential for social impact is much larger and there is a chance to bridge the workings of Nuqat with larger, wide-reaching policy changes, however <b>the political/social environment is not conducive</b> to that.</i></p>
<p>3a. How Zet measures Social Impact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>By construing a <b>Theory of Change</b>, putting in the <b>assumptions</b> and proposing how to measure the concept underlying the assumption. In a pilot with the Province of Brabant we learn how to make those TOC’s in an explicit way with the goal to define <b>measuring priorities</b> to test whether there outcomes or assumptions are correct and consistent.</i></li> <li>▪ <i>We use our <b>societal impact monitoring tool</b>. With this tool we can measure social impact in a <b>straightforward</b> not too scientific and easy applicable manner. With various steps like intended impact, approach, activities, outcome, output and Impact we can build on an implicit Theory of Change (TOC). With our tool we can explain also the <b>road to impact</b>, not only the impact itself.</i></li> <li>▪ <i>We make use of <b>low-profile survey tools</b> to check the experience of customers and profit groups.</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Zet helps people to intervene and act in the wanted direction in their processes. At every chosen or wanted moment in the process, Zet can <b>interview</b> the (needed) stakeholders and can <b>analyse the answers</b> to describe the experienced social impact.</i></li> <li>▪ <i><b>Now we do this poorly</b>. There is an <b>increasing realization</b> that measuring and showing our social impact is <b>essential</b> for the <b>future existence</b> of Zet.</i></li> </ul>	<p>4a. How Nuqat measures Social Impact</p> <p><i>Since Nuqat started, we’ve been struggling in capturing the social impact of the organisation on the community. We’ve heard of so many <b>testimonials</b> and <b>feedback</b> from different stakeholders, however there were <b>no tools</b> used to actually measure our social impact. This had an impact as well on getting funders since there was no actual data showing the SROI and the benefits of the services that Nuqat is providing.</i></p> <p><i>In an oversimplified way it could be stated that measuring Nuqat’s own impact is done by <b>listening</b> and <b>taking notes</b>. Nuqat measures social impact through <b>individual reports</b> and <b>assessments</b> of specific programs, such as the report from the children’s education program. Social impact in terms of <b>‘market reach’</b> is done with the conferences as we see how many people come, how many speakers we get, levels of engagement on social media and so on.</i></p>

Table 1: summary of Delphi Research about the definition, creation and measurement of social impact

**DISCUSSION**

Through this research, the situatedness of social impact is demonstrated. The *processes* of creating social impact are tailored to both the *definition* of social impact and the *context* they take place in. All of this is also reflected in the *tools* that are used to assess the social impact.

For example, the Netherlands has a highly Individualistic culture (*context*). An Individualistic society is characterized by universalism: the same standards are supposed to apply to everyone and everyone should be able to participate as much as possible in normal life [5]. This is reflected in the practices of Zet, that focus on participation and social inclusion (*processes*). Social impact for them is put in this participatory perspective (*definition*): they assess together with their stakeholders what the desired values are and whether they are reached, to determine the social impact (*tools*).

For Nuqat, social impact tells something about your social footprint (*definition*). What do you do to society? How well do you treat the ones you are surrounded with? What is your position in the supply chain? This reflects the Collectivistic mindset of Arabic countries [5] (*context*). Social impact is in this context focused on creating and spreading a

mindset [15]. This is also reflected in the practices of Nuqat, in which their main activity is organizing a yearly conference to share their knowledge and spread their mindset (*processes*). The Index that they are developing, functions as a method to check how well their desired mindset is incorporated within other companies (*tools*).

These cases show how two practices, that started with a similar definition of social impact, differ a lot in the creation and assessment of social impact. Whereas participation and inclusion are the core of social impact in the Netherlands, this aspect is hardly to be found in Kuwait. On the other hand, Kuwait uses indicators to assess social impact, that would be used in the Netherlands to assess Corporate Social Responsibility [2]. Using the Kuwaiti Index in a Dutch context would therefore not meet the expectations of the Dutch society.

Based on this research, we propose a preliminary framework that shows the situatedness of social impact, which entails the following constructs: the definition of social impact, processes to create social impact, the context in which social impact is created and social impact assessment tools (figure 4).

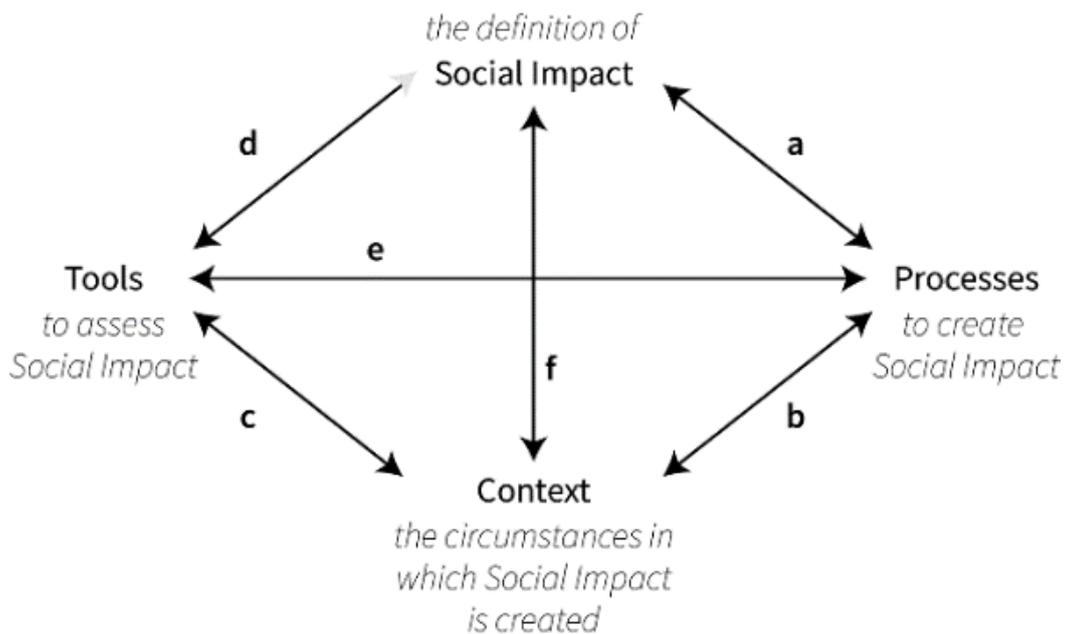


Figure 4. Proposed preliminary framework of the situatedness of Social Impact

**Arrow a:** The definition of social impact ('goal') can influence the way to create it ('means'). On the other hand, local processes can influence the perception of social impact, especially when 'social impact' is introduced as a goal in an organisation that already has an established process.

*E.g. social impact is a yet to be established term in Kuwait. The influence of local processes on their perception of social impact is clearly visible. It mirrors the values but also value gaps of the Kuwaiti businesses.*

**Arrow b:** Business is very much determined by culture, which shows the influence of context on local processes. However, a disruptive change in process has the ability to change the context.

*E.g. the explored case of LOYAC, breaking with the 'wasta' tradition, is changing the mindset of a new generation that could potentially lead to a ripple effect in the future.*

**Arrow c:** Lots of projects are conducted (especially in the field of design) to explore how tools can influence a context. At the same time, context has a big influence on how to design the tools in such a way that they fit the local culture.

*E.g. the influence of context on the interaction and aesthetics of social impact assessment tools is described in the findings of this research.*

**Arrow d:** The definition of Social Impact is reflected in the tools that are used to assess this impact.

*NB: It is unknown whether an established tool, that is developed according to a certain definition of social impact, can influence the mindset on social impact in another context. By cross-researching different tools and contexts (e.g. testing out the Social Impact Index of Nuqat at Zet or the Playing with Impact tool and/or Social Impact Monitor of Zet at Nuqat) this relation could be researched in the future.*

**Arrow e:** Tools can be designed to assist in a process. Either established processes can have an influence on the design of the tool, or the designed tool can shape or alter the processes to create social impact.

*E.g. the Social Impact Index of Nuqat is meant to influence the practices of Kuwaiti organisations.*

**Arrow f:** The definition of social impact is in many ways defined by context. In the long run,

the definition of social impact can influence the context.

*E.g. many examples in this research demonstrate the relation between context and social impact, such as the influence of welfare- or having an Individualistic or Collectivistic society on the perception of social impact. Additionally, Nuqat is now in the process of changing the local mindset by sharing their perception of social impact.*

From a design perspective, this research contributes to the process of anyone that is interested in designing for the purpose of creating or assessing social impact. This research shows the situatedness of this concept, which requires an in-depth understanding of the local circumstances in order to successfully be able to design something that suits the local situation. The preliminary framework suggested in this research, provides leads in framing the research activities towards the named constructs (e.g. the definition of social impact, processes to create social impact, the context in which social impact is created and social impact assessment tools). Especially in the perspective of globalisation, future research towards what is needed for designers to quickly understand a new context, or how to best analyse these constructs, would be a valuable contribution to the field of design. The suggested framework opens up a wide variety of research possibilities towards the constructs and their relations, since the significance of the suggested constructs and the relations between them is yet to be proven.

Further research from different perspectives in multiple contexts would benefit the findings and is needed to refine the proposed framework. Even though regularly reflected with Kuwaiti, a more in depth cross-research would be interesting to further develop these findings (e.g. researcher from context X and researcher from context Y researching both context X and Y).

## CONCLUSION

The situatedness of social impact is demonstrated in this research. Among other things, this research shows that there is a difference in the linguistic and embodied definition of social impact. We found that the following constructs are needed to put social impact in perspective: the definition of social impact, processes to create social impact, the context in which social impact is created and social impact assessment tools. A preliminary framework is suggested that shows the relations between the named constructs. The significance of the constructs

and their relations is yet to be proven. Nevertheless, the proposed framework gives others that are interested in creating or assessing social impact, leads to steer their design and/or research process.

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