

SOCIAL RETURN ON INVESTMENT (SROI)

Irregular work in agriculture -Ghetto Out Casa
Sankara
(Italy)





1 The Social Return on Investment (SROI)

The research methodology employed in this case study is Social Return on Investment (SROI), which offers a comprehensive approach to evaluating the social, economic, and environmental impacts of investments in Social Innovation (SI) activities and expressing these outcomes in financial terms. This framework assists in allocating resources based on the assessment of the impact of social innovation activities on stakeholders. SROI includes two types of analysis: evaluative and forecasting. Evaluative SROI assesses social innovations that are already active, while forecasting SROI evaluates the social return on investment for activities that could potentially arise. The present case study employs an evaluative SROI approach to investigate the Casa Sankara social innovation.

The context of this case study is one in which migrants need a job, a house, and a residence permit in Italy.

The main questions were about what services Casa Sankara offers: does it offer housing? Does it offer the possibility of regularizing undocumented people? Does it offer regular work for migrants? Does it allow them to socialize with people in the same situation as them? Does it create a micro-society where well-being is greater than in other places? What social return does this bring?

The subsequent economic analysis examines the implications of these services for beneficiaries and other stakeholders such as the state, region, tomato chain, and local community. The analysis was conducted firstly theoretically and subsequently validated through the participatory groups and the site visit to Casa Sankara.

By linking financial proxies to outcomes, this approach aided in identifying how social innovation can produce a social return on investment.

1.1 Exploring change

The Journey of Change (JoC) functions as an SROI tool, illustrating the impacts resulting from the analyzed activities. It establishes the linkages between the resources utilized (inputs), the activities carried out (outputs), and the resulting outcomes for the stakeholders. The JoC proved to be an essential collaborative approach, which incorporated stakeholder engagement and information gathering in determining the concrete outcomes of the Casa Sankara social innovation.

The drafting of the JoC involved a collaborative approach that engaged stakeholders and required extensive information gathering. The first phase of the process involved desk research in identifying material outcomes for social innovation, which were then included in the outline of the JoC. Subsequently, during the first practice group meeting, participants were asked to identify material outcomes and add them to the JoC. This step was crucial, as the diverse backgrounds and expertise of the PG members uncovered previously unidentified outcomes





and confirmed which outcomes were truly material to Casa Sankara. The newly discovered information was then implemented, leading to the drafting of the final JoC, which was enriched by the suggestions provided by the practice group members.

The entire process of developing the JoC presented several challenges. One primary challenge was understanding the environment in which the social innovation acted to consider the relevant stakeholders. A careful explanation of the JoC exercise was necessary during the PG to ensure participants could interact and formulate their results effectively.

It is worth noting that the engagement of all stakeholders greatly facilitated the research team's work, as all stakeholders were enthusiastic about participating in this research. The process also highlighted the importance of a collaborative approach in developing SROI instruments, as it identifies material outcomes that may be overlooked if the process is not collaborative.

1.2 Evidencing change

The final measurable outcomes for this social innovation are 10, and they all address the beneficiaries of Casa Sankara.

These outcomes probe the migrants' relationship with work, seeking to comprehend the well-being generated by a regular job. Some outcomes investigate the migrants' present living conditions, encompassing their economic and health status, while others aim to understand their perceptions of their current social relationships and future lives. Data collection was done via a questionnaire, from which the final measurable outcomes were derived.

Initially, an online survey was proposed, intended to be accessible and flexible for all beneficiaries. However, the first questionnaire failed to consider the different languages spoken at Casa Sankara and failed to effectively communicate the purpose of the research. Moreover, it was deemed too lengthy and complicated for the beneficiaries. Consequently, the questionnaire was streamlined to 15 statements, where respondents used a Likert scale to express their agreement with each statement.

Data collection was performed in person, and the number of respondents totaled 40. Despite the difficulties encountered (language barriers) the quality of the collected data is high, providing encouraging prospects for the final calculation of the SROI.

1.3 Valuing change

The summative SROI Impact Map for the Ghetto Out Social Innovation is given in the table below. Over a period of five years (2017-2022), **impacts** of social innovation were **generated for 1,000 migrant workers**, a majority of whom were farm workers. **9 outcomes across 5 well-being impact pathways** were analyzed, with Personal Well-being and Social and Community Well-being outcomes contributing to around 80% of the total value generated.





The SROI model indicates that investment in the Ghetto Out (GO) **project generates a 619% return on the investment** of resources over the benefit period. The improvements in well-being have had a positive impact on various groups such as individuals (including migrant workers and farmers), local communities, and society as a whole. The model output reveals that **on average each Euro invested in the project since 2017 has generated up to 6.19 Euros of social value**. This return on investment appears to be high but can be accounted for by the high level of support provided within the Casa Sankara community itself, partly by regional government support (through, for example, provision of temporary accommodation, land to accommodate people and enable production of crops) and partly by the high number of migrant beneficiaries. The whole outcome values generated by the project have directly benefitted migrants to Italy (an estimated 1,000 migrants have spent time in the programme since 2017). This includes those engaged in farm work (e.g. producing tomatoes for processing) who have learned skills as well as reported improvements in their health, well-being, and sense of belonging.

Two impact pathways generate just over 80% of these benefits: Personal Well-being generates 41% of the outcome values, while **Social and Community Well-being** generates another 40%. The **high level of personal well-being** is not surprising given the initial situation of the migrants arriving in the country with few belongings or money, with no knowledge of the language, and having left their relatives and support networks behind. Almost two-thirds of the personal well-being values are generated by perceived **“Improvements in the quality of life, provision of accommodation, housing and transport services”** (around 24% of the total value generated). The other main source of value comes from **“Increased resilience and self-esteem”** through improved status and treatment. Rather than being migrants unable to get employment and at the mercy of exploitation through illegal work, they are provided with a place to live, language lessons, support and advice for gaining residence and working papers, and a community providing support.

The last, the outcome "Improved competence, engagement, and purpose through regular work and dignity" highlights the positive impact of Casa Sankara on migrants, who can enroll in Italian language courses, driver's license courses, and agricultural skill-building courses. These opportunities make it easier for them to integrate into the workforce with greater confidence and proficiency.

The benefits in terms of **Social and Community Well-being** are generated fairly equally from outcomes related to 'Reduced social isolation' and 'Increased community cohesion and integration between groups in the community'. A further 12% of outcome values can be attributed to benefits arising from 'Improved access to information and services'. One of the great benefits of the Ghetto Out project is **the large number of migrants living communally together in one place where they can support and help each other**. In addition, the policy of encouraging migrants not to stay more than two years encourages people to integrate into wider society more quickly than they might otherwise do, and move on having gained some language, skills in farm work (for some, but not all, of the migrants), and better knowledge of how to gain access to services.





Finally, it is worth noting that the **Economic Well-being impact pathway generates around 5% of outcome values** related to 'Improved economic well-being through provision of fair wages'. This is a relatively small proportion of the total outcome values, largely because only a few of the 1,000 beneficiaries actually receive a wage for the work they do within the project. The vast majority must find external work, although even here there are benefits from being able to access a fair wage rather than being exploited through irregular contracts.



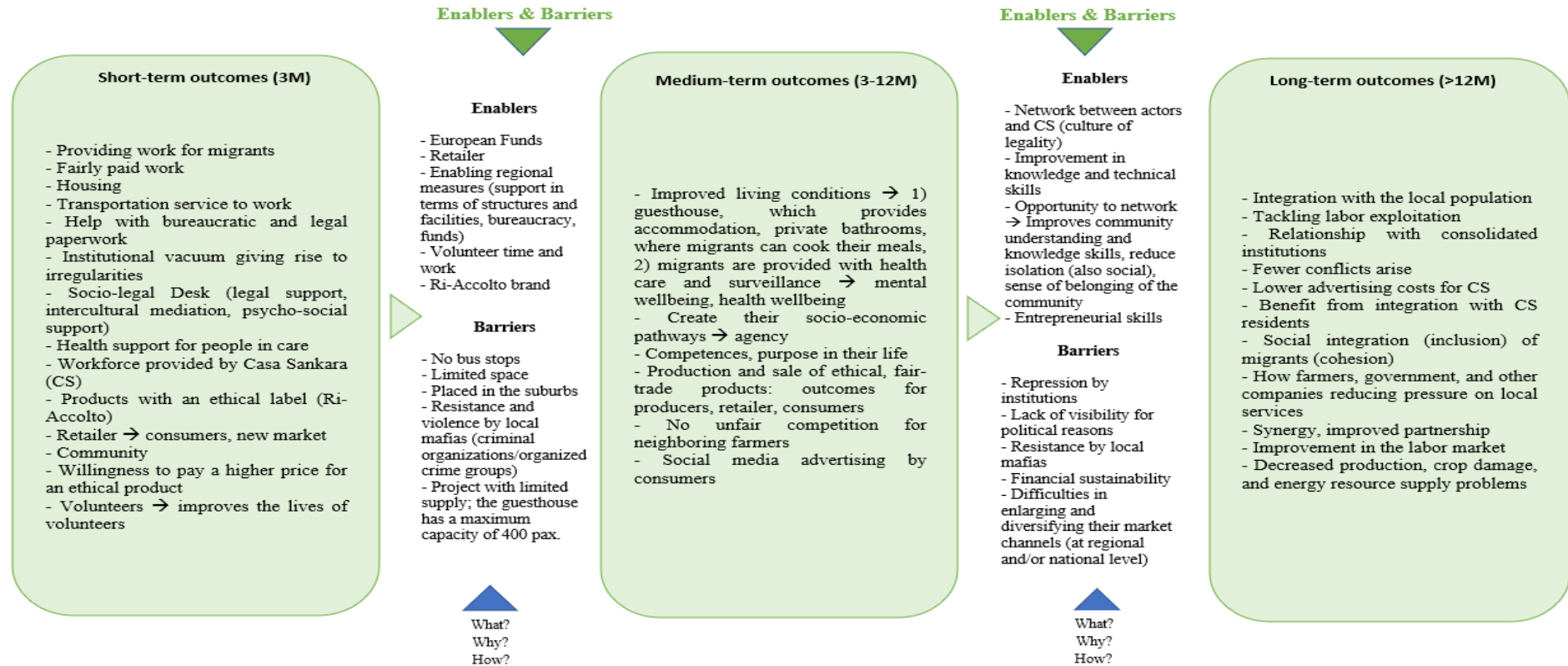


Table 1 – Casa Sankara JoC

Casa Sankara – Journey of Change

Challenge:
To bring people out of the ghetto and rescue them from labor and social degradation conditions.

Objective:
is to provide regular housing and work for migrants. It is also committed to providing stable and regular employment for each person by providing organizational, bureaucratic, legal, and medical support.



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Table: Italy Evaluative SROI Impact Map (SI: Ghetto Out)

Impact Pathway	Outcome	Beneficiaries (No.)	Indicator/s of Change	Outcome Change (%)	Financial proxy (Value €/Unit)	Present Value (€)	Present Value (%)
Personal Well-being	Improved quality of life and satisfaction through housing, accommodation, transport services	Migrant workers (1,000)	Extent to which worker feels satisfied with the life / generally happy	83%	Value of mental health component of Quality of Life Adjusted year (NICE recommend expenditure of QUALY is 30K) (€ 12,394 per person)	€ 5,260,890	41%
	Improved competence, engagement and purpose through regular work and dignity	Migrant workers (1,000)	Extent to which worker is able to learn new things	91%	Cost of employability skills training in regular sessions with counsellor/coach (€ 1,732 per person)	€ 810,762	
	Increased agency and self-determination (and awareness)	Migrant workers (1,000)	Extent to which worker has goals for the future	63%	Cost of BSY professional development course in self-awareness (€ 288 per person)	€ 93,363	
	Increased resilience and self-esteem through improved status and treatment	Migrant workers (1,000)	Extent to which worker feels positive / proud of who they are	92%	Cost of Cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) to build psychological resilience and self esteem (€ 1,473 per person p.a)	€ 2,673,122	
Social and Community Well-being	Reduced social isolation	Migrant workers (1,000)	Extent to which can trust people / has a problem my neighbours can help with	89%	Value to an individual (25-45) of feeling like they belong in their neighbourhood (€ 2,392 per person p.a)	€ 4,199,133	40%
	Increased community cohesion and integration between groups in the community	Migrant workers (1,000)	Extent to which worker feels accepted by people	62%	Average annual household spend on recreation and culture (€ 3,545 per person p.a)	€ 4,359,625	
Relational Well-being	Improved access to information and services	Migrant workers (1,000)	Extent to which worker can find help if needed / has easy access to health and social services	87%	Unit cost of approved social worker (ASW) for community social care	€ 2,691,279	12%





					(€ 1,569 per person p.a)			
Economic Well-being	Improved economic well-being through provision of fair wages	Migrant workers (1,000)	Extent to which worker's economic situation is OK/ feels optimistic about future	53%	Employment Incentive costs (€ 4,152 per person)	€ 1,121,381	5%	
Health and Well-being	Improved physical and mental health through housing, support, reduced labour exploitation and regular work	Migrant workers (1,000)	Extent to which worker feels healthy and has energy / feels positive	80%	Cost of reduced health care to maintain good physical health (€ 260 per person p.a)	€ 413,245	2%	
						Total Present Value of Benefits	€ 21,622,800	100%
						Total Investment	€ 3,490,615	
						Benefit-Investment Ratio (BIR)	€ 6.19	





While closely intertwined with the local territory and Italian society, the Casa Sankara social innovation addresses crucial issues such as irregular work in agriculture, migration, and social integration.

Notably, the success and social return on investment of a similar project may serve as a source of inspiration for other social and territorial contexts.

Furthermore, the positive outcomes generated by Casa Sankara have the potential to provide support and assistance to those individuals in need.





2 Implications for policy and farming support

2.1 The Challenge & Needs – What is the situation?

Casa Sankara faces numerous daily challenges and needs that require focused attention. There are multiple problems that affect a migrant in Italy, and the importance of Casa Sankara in addressing migrant issues is tangible.

The first challenge migrants face when they arrive in Italy is to have regular documents to live in Italy and Casa Sankara. In Italy, the bureaucracy is very heavy and long, so to reach the goal, it is necessary to have someone that deals with this issue. One solution to that problem would be to have a dedicated office for volunteering associations and NGOs or someone to speak with to fill out all the documents.

Often undocumented immigrants are forced to rely on makeshift solutions, especially when it comes to housing. These solutions, in most cases, are in ghettos, informal settlements, where it is easier for them to be pre-empted by caporali (corporals) to go to work off the books in the fields.

2.2 Support framework – What is needed?

Casa Sankara aims to combat this precariousness of housing by welcoming migrants, trying to integrate them within society with a job, and teaching them the Italian language. This has costs, however, and the social innovation needs to raise funds every year for the maintenance of the facilities, to pay people who work within the association, for the production of tomato sauce, to continue activities like Italian classes for migrants, driver's license courses, advanced courses in agricultural practices, and many others.

All these services turn out to be very important for the integration of migrants into the community in which they live. For example, having a car allows them to be able to move around and the knowledge of the language allows them to communicate with people, thus reducing risks of possible discrimination.

For these reasons, it is very important that institutions call for projects that can help to raise money. It would also be good to draw attention to the problem so that people can donate money to the social innovation.

2.3 Recommendations – What needs to be done to realise the support needed?

One of the most significant aspects at Casa Sankara is being able to provide regular work to the migrants. Thanks to the constant work of its managers, many of them manage to get regular work for most of the year. Unfortunately, this is not always possible for everyone, as it happens that the timelines for documents to be regularly hired are too long. Lengthy procedures lead





to a decrease in well-being for those who are unable to get a job. In this regard, it might be helpful to reduce the timelines for hiring on a short-term basis for workers from Casa Sankara (and the other NGOs). Also, a greater collaboration between Casa Sankara and local employment centres should be fostered.

Additionally, it would be important to increase the production of Riaccolto tomato sauce. This would have two main benefits: the first is to provide more revenue to Casa Sankara; the second one would be to bring attention to the reality of an ethical supply chain, contributing to draw potential solutions to the problem. To do this, there is a need for land, which could be provided by municipalities near Casa Sankara. In addition, it would be important for the region or some private entity to provide the association with technological means to increase efficiency in production.

