



## The Impact Model in Brief

The USAGM Impact Model serves as a framework for collecting data on our audiences and measuring the effectiveness of our programming. The Impact Model comprises over 35 indicators organized around the agency's mission: to inform, engage, and connect people around the world in support of freedom and democracy. The model looks beyond sheer audience size to assess the change that USAGM's network and entity programming has made in the lives of audience members, in the local media sector, and among governments.



USAGM's approach to impact evaluation is grounded in a logic framework that charts the conditions, inputs, and outputs necessary to achieve the stated mission, and a Theory of Change that lays out the causal chain of events leading to a desired impact, including immediate outcomes but also short-, medium-, and long-term change. Over time, that framework has evolved into the current Impact Model. The Impact Model is the basis of the annual Agency Performance Plan and Agency Performance Report, which USAGM produces to satisfy Congressional requirements to assess the agency's success in implementing its Strategic Plan, including program performance, financial accountability, and managerial effectiveness. In addition, each USAGM language service develops annual strategies that incorporate performance targets based on the indicators in the Impact Model.

## The sources of evidence that inform the Impact Model:



### SURVEY DATA

- USAGM Surveys
- Omnibus Surveys



### DIGITAL METRICS

- Website and App Analytics
- Social Media Analytics (aggregated and analyzed in the USAGM Data Portal)



### ANECDOTAL

- Evidence on guest appearances, impact stories, news pick-ups, co-productions with media partners, government reactions, etc.



### OTHER

- Databases (CRM, etc.)
- Internal Records

The ultimate goal of all USAGM programming is long-term and transformational: achieving freedom and democracy around the world. Although it would be impossible to attribute such transformations solely and directly to USAGM, the Impact Model provides a holistic tool to assess USAGM's contribution to that endeavor, defining milestones that suggest progress toward the agency's long-term objectives. The Impact Model includes over 35 indicators organized around the three pillars of USAGM's mission — **Inform, Engage/Connect, and Be Influential** — as well as more specific goals of **Reaching Target Audiences, Providing Value, Engaging Target Audiences, Engaging/Connecting Media Markets, Creating Loyalty, and Being Influential with People, Media, and Governments**. The model then operationalizes each of these goals by defining corresponding indicators to monitor the impact of USAGM networks' programming in each of these areas.

To assess programming performance, the Impact Model draws from a diverse set of evidence comprising quantitative, qualitative, and anecdotal data. Surveys serve as one of the key inputs, providing data on questions such as content use, perceived trustworthiness of the media brand, or the extent to which USAGM helps improve the understanding of domestic news or U.S. foreign policy over time. The survey data are augmented by digital metrics, using data from website, app, and social media analytics that help provide accurate and real-time measurement of the effectiveness of the agency's digital assets.

These quantifiable measures are complemented by structured anecdotal data that captures the impact of content produced by USAGM networks, such as pick-ups of their coverage by other major news media, reactions from government officials, or visible policy change. Internal databases — for example, the list of the agency's partner media organizations or collaborations with local media — as well as data, such as the number of times USAGM content was downloaded by media partners, provide additional inputs for the model. Taken together, this body of evidence provides the opportunity to measure the success of USAGM programming in specific markets, as well as worldwide.

USAGM continues to refine the model. The most recent version, updated in 2024, maintains the core structure and underlying theory of change, with additions and updates to indicators throughout to reflect changes in the environment and agency priorities. What follows are select examples of indicators from the model.

## IMPACT PILLARS AND SELECT INDICATORS

### Inform

#### Reach Audiences

Weekly Reach



Weekly Digital Visits



Weekly Reach of Target Segments



#### Provide Value



Awards, Recognition of Quality

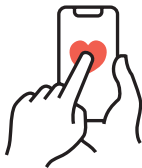


Audience Finds Information or Service Trustworthy/Credible

### Engage/Connect

#### Engage Audiences

Digital Engagement



Expanded Internet Access



CIRCUMVENTION AND ENCRYPTION

#### Engage Media

Number of affiliates

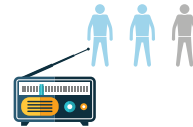


Content Co-creation with affiliates



#### Create Loyalty

Audience is likely to continue to use



Number of Network App Users



OTT & MOBILE APPS

### Be Influential

#### People

Increased audience understanding of current events



#### Media

Drive the news agenda/high profile news pickups



#### Government

Attention from government officials



#### KEY

Sources of evidence informing each of the sample indicators:

■ Survey Data ■ Digital Analytics ■ Anecdotal Data ■ Other