

Learning from place-based, system change initiatives to tackle child poverty



EQUALITY AND WELFARE

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Executive Summary

Background

There are a wide range of factors that influence levels of child poverty. The landscape of support services is complex and interconnected and we know that a combination of policies and support, working seamlessly together, is likely to help tackle child poverty.

Support for families living in poverty needs to be better integrated across a range of services, such as housing, education, employability and health. Support also needs to be part of a coherent package in order to ensure that it is working for families.

The 2nd Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan, [Best Start, Bright Futures](#), recognised this complexity in child poverty support systems, and the need to work differently to meet the 2030 child poverty targets. It committed to:

- Ensuring the design and delivery of services is based on the distinctive needs of individual communities through a place-based approach
- A holistic and person-centred approach to the provision of support that wraps around the needs of the individual
- Partnership working from across the public, third and/or private sectors and between local and national partners, with join-up in the range of support provided to help move people out of poverty
- A move away from crisis responses towards more preventative action

The Delivery Plan committed to a number of actions and initiatives focused on delivering this ‘system change’ and testing different approaches to providing person-centred solutions for families in poverty.

This report provides a first step in assessing the evidence we have so far on place-based, system change initiatives aimed at tackling child poverty.

System change initiatives are those which focus on making ‘structural and procedural changes to the organisations which support families, which in turn are intended to improve the services provided to families. This can include (but is not limited to) changes in:

- The types of services available
- The ways in which families are contacted and brought into the system
- The extent to which the right families are reached
- Methods of identifying and targeting families that need support
- The complexity and length of families’ journey through the system.’¹

¹ [Tackling child poverty pathfinders: evaluability assessment - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

There are eight initiatives in scope for this report. These are:

- Dundee Child Poverty Pathfinder
- Glasgow Child Poverty Pathfinder
- Child Poverty Practice Accelerator Fund
- Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy
- No One Left Behind
- School Age Childcare
- Social Innovation Partnership & Clackmannanshire Family Wellbeing Partnership
- Whole Family Wellbeing Funding

This report provides a first, baseline, report of our [approach to assessing progress towards system change in the context of child poverty](#).

Implementing place-based, system change initiatives

The findings to date show that for those initiatives at the implementation phase, there are encouraging and positive signs that they are laying the groundwork for longer term system change. This includes greater partnership working with a shared sense of purpose; regular and clear communication and strengthened relationships; and recognising and building on the knowledge and experiences of local communities.

Enablers

The key enablers to successfully implementing place-based, system change initiatives related to effective partnership working and effective place-based working.

Effective partnership working was seen to be crucial in driving forward system change. From increased partnership working arose a greater awareness among partners of the range of key stakeholders and other service/delivery partners locally, which minimised duplication of effort. Further, a shared and common sense of purpose, and building clear lines of communication, were seen to be crucial in aligning interests across partners in order to enable longer term and sustainable change. Taking time to develop these strong partnerships and relations from the outset was seen to be essential in enabling longer term, sustainable delivery of system change initiatives.

Effective place-based working, drawing upon local knowledge and experience in order to deliver the right services and support for local areas, was also viewed as critical, because this allowed partners to recognise the strength and uniqueness of local areas – and then to use this to provide support that meets the needs of local families in their local context.

Challenges

The key challenges that were identified to successfully implementing initiatives focused on the long-term nature of implementing system change. This meant it took time to see progress and embed structural change and this did not always align with funding timeframes. Another challenge concerned workforce investment, particularly relating to the recruitment and retention of staff, often due to the fixed-term nature of appointments as a result of the temporary nature of funding. A further challenge was the difficult socio-economic context in which initiatives were delivering their services (e.g. the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic and the ongoing cost of living crisis). This context is likely to be increasing the levels of need felt by people using these services.

Emerging impacts of place-based, system change initiatives

Most initiatives studied are at the early stages of design and implementation and, as noted, systems change is by its nature a long-term endeavour, so impacts would be expected to be limited at this stage. Nonetheless, it was evident from the early findings that there were emerging impacts for a range of stakeholders across the system, including service users, service providers, partners and policy stakeholders.

Individuals and families using services

For individuals and families accessing services, early findings suggest that the changes made were viewed positively, with people expressing satisfaction with the support they received. This was related to the holistic and personalised nature of the support, in particular the 'no wrong door' approach. This is based on the principle that regardless of where, how and why an individual or family engages in the system, that interaction then becomes a gateway to receiving holistic, consistent and comprehensive support.

Factors that appeared to be limiting the impact for families using the services included the time taken for system changes to take effect, alongside the stigma felt by some individuals when accessing support, due to previous negative experiences.

Engagement with beneficiaries

In terms of engaging with individuals or families who might need support, the learning so far suggests the value of a key worker, or one single point of contact for individuals accessing services. This key worker can be crucial in not only initial engagement with individuals and families, but also in sustaining engagement.

Service providers need to be flexible and adaptable in order to ensure appropriate levels of engagement with different groups, for example, using a combination of methods to tailor their approaches to different groups. Ensuring maximum reach of the initiatives and accessibility for 'hard to reach' and minority groups were common issues. Particular issues

included: challenges in accessing data that could help to identify families for proactive targeted engagement; the effective promotion and advertisement of services, including through outreach; and reducing the stigma that some families felt in accessing statutory services.

Service providers

Early evidence suggests that service providers found multiple benefits in the closer, and more aligned, partnership working that developed as a result of these initiatives. In particular, providers welcomed closer partnership working, with the sharing of resources and the creation of new access routes for families seen to be important in supporting new ways of working. There was also a sense of increased job satisfaction, from seeing positive effects on the lives of families seeking support from their services, and this was seen to be a fundamental cornerstone to ensuring the longevity of the changes in ways of working.

However, building these close relationships did not come without struggle. For example, in some instances, not involving key local partners and stakeholders in the early stages of design and development of initiatives, led to duplication of effort. Therefore, it was seen to be important to take time to resolve issues, and ensure strong relationships between partners, before moving into the delivery phase of an initiative.

Policy stakeholders

For policy stakeholders, early findings suggest lessons that need to be considered in order for benefits to be fully realised. These include consideration of: the dissemination of good practice and learning across system change initiatives; ensuring alignment between national level strategic aims and the delivery of local services; and ways to ensure the sustainability of initiatives beyond time limited funding periods.

Assessing effective approaches to place-based, system change

Given that most initiatives are in the early stages, it is too early at this point to say which approaches to system change are the most effective or have resulted in positive outcomes. However, those initiatives that had started delivery had begun to put in place systems for assessing effectiveness, through monitoring and evaluation processes.

The emerging learning from these experiences identified two key challenges in monitoring and evaluating system change initiatives:

- Firstly, the capacity of local partners in implementing monitoring frameworks, for example, having the staff capacity to collect and analyse data.
- Secondly, how to effectively measure long-term system change. In particular, there was a challenge in collecting the 'softer' outcomes of system change (for example changes in culture or behaviour), as well as in collecting data across complex,

evolving and often loosely defined initiatives, often spanning multiple services and partner organisations.

None of the initiatives had experience yet of scaling up system change initiatives. However, early views were that it would be important to base scale-up endeavours on the principles and values behind the initiatives, rather than aiming for exact replicability, as this would be seen to be working against place-based and person-centred values.

Conclusions and next steps

The findings from this synthesis of the early evidence on system change initiatives show that there are early signs of positive developments and implementation, with those initiatives already delivering reporting positive signs of changing structures and cultures, which were seen to be creating the building blocks for longer-lasting system change.

However, it is clear from the learning so far that system change initiatives also take time to implement, and embed, which is likely to limit early impacts. It is also important to bear in mind the context in which these initiatives are being developed and implemented – against the socio-economic challenges arising from the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic and the ongoing cost of living crisis. This context is likely to be increasing the levels of need felt by people using these services.

The evidence so far highlights that alignment across local and national levels is important for the successful design and implementation of system change initiatives, and that partnership working, in particular collaboration and relationship building, takes time to embed. A key learning is the importance of taking the time to develop strong partnerships and relations from the outset in order to enable longer term, sustainable change.

Evidence on impacts at this stage was limited. However, families accessing support appeared to be satisfied with the holistic and personalised nature of support, while service providers spoke positively about the benefits of working in partnership, which resulted in less duplication of effort and enabled the development of new services to better meet the needs of local families.

It will be important for local and national partners, as they continue to implement and develop these initiatives, to further assess the outcomes for different groups in their communities, in order to provide greater understanding of the extent to which they are reaching and having positive impacts for families living in poverty and those most at risk of poverty. This should include consideration of the priority family groups and those facing multiple and intersecting disadvantages. This should enable ongoing improvements to delivery in order to enhance the impact on poverty reduction.

1. Introduction

There are a wide range of complex and interconnected factors that influence levels of child poverty – as shown in this [child poverty system map](#). Moreover, [evidence on what works to tackle child poverty](#) has highlighted that policies or initiatives that focus on a single barrier or challenge are unlikely to lead to sustainable change. Instead, a combination of policies targeted at different barriers, working effectively together, is likely to help reduce child poverty.

Evidence also suggests that supporting families living in poverty in a holistic and joined up way can be instrumental in helping to tackle child poverty.² Families can find the system of support relating to child poverty difficult to navigate, with many individuals unaware of, or unsure on how to access, appropriate support. Further, policies and initiatives, at local and national levels, are often disjointed with a need for greater alignment between and across support systems for families.

In the second Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan published in March 2022, [Best Start, Bright Futures](#) (BSBF), a range of policies were introduced that were more attuned to this complex and interconnected range of factors affecting child poverty. It committed to:

- ensuring that systems work for the people who need them and that the range of support that people need to move out of poverty is joined up;
- partnership working - with Scottish Government and Local Government working together with partners from across the public, third and private sectors;
- a place-based approach, with the design and delivery of services based in the distinctive needs of communities; and
- holistic and person-centred support, that wraps around the needs of the individual or family.

For example, this could mean employability, childcare and transport service providers working together in order to provide support that better meets the needs of families seeking employment. BSBF also outlined the need for us to better understand how well the current 'child poverty support system' is working for families and how it can be improved.

Given the range of place-based, systems change policies outlined in the Plan, there is a need to draw together learning and insight from across the separate initiatives in order to provide evidence and learning to inform local delivery approaches, transferability to other local areas, and lessons for national policy. System change initiatives are those which focus on making 'structural and procedural changes to the organisations which support families, which in turn are intended to improve the services provided to families. This can include (but is not limited to) changes in:

- The types of services available

² See the second Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan, [Best Start, Bright Futures](#).

- The ways in which families are contacted and brought into the system
- The extent to which the right families are reached
- Methods of identifying and targeting families that need support
- The complexity and length of families' journey through the system.³

This report is the first stage in our [system change evaluation approach](#)⁴ and seeks to collate and synthesise early evidence and learning from across the range of initiatives focused on place-based, system change to tackle child poverty. Chapter Two of the report sets out the initiatives which are in scope for this work.⁵ This is a first, baseline report, highlighting preliminary learning during a period in which many of the policies and initiatives in scope were in the early stages of design, development or implementation. As the initiatives are refined and further developed, and their individual evaluations progress further, these findings will be reviewed to ensure they are still relevant and that ongoing learning and evidence is captured.

Approach

The analysis in this report aims to collate key developments and findings relating to selected place-based, system change policies focused on child poverty reduction. The objectives for the system change evaluation are set out below and this report provides a first step in answering these questions.⁶

³ [Tackling child poverty pathfinders: evaluability assessment - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

⁴ We have also published a [logic model](#) which outlines our understanding of the range of approaches and steps needed in order to achieve positive change in local child poverty support systems.

⁵ Therefore, this work does not seek to cover all system change initiatives being undertaken by the Scottish Government. However, learnings from this synthesis analysis may be applicable to other policy contexts.

⁶ Due to the early stages of development, implementation and evaluation of the initiatives in scope, we do not have enough evidence, as of yet, to fully address all the research questions.

1. To identify and understand the range of approaches taken to system change and person-centred support in local child poverty systems through the initiatives committed to in [Best Start, Bright Futures](#) (as well as other relevant Scottish Government initiatives).
2. To provide an understanding of issues experienced in the implementation of system change initiatives and distil key lessons which can be applied to other areas and to wider policy development.
3. To understand how initiatives have impacted on system change and what the impacts have been for delivery organisations, individuals or families accessing services and wider partners and stakeholders.
4. To understand which types of system change approach are effective, for whom, and in what contexts.
5. To assess the extent to which the approaches examined can (and, where measured, do) contribute towards child poverty reduction and the mechanisms by which this may occur.

The analysis in this report is based on:

- Published evaluation evidence on place-based, system change initiatives from policy and analytical teams in Scottish Government, structured around key research questions.
- Interviews with relevant Scottish Government policy and analytical colleagues.⁷ In total, 13 interviews were completed, comprising multiple individuals from across 10 policy initiatives.

Report outline

In Chapter Two the report provides an overview of system change initiatives in the child poverty space, outlining the eight initiatives which are drawn on in the analysis, and setting out the approaches to place-based, system change across these initiatives.

Chapter Three considers the implementation of system change initiatives to date, exploring successes and enablers and barriers and challenges to implementation.

Chapter Four sets out emerging learning on the impacts of system change initiatives on key stakeholder groups, including: individuals or families accessing services, service providers and policy stakeholders.

Chapter Five considers how to assess the effectiveness of place-based and systems change initiatives, exploring experiences of monitoring and evaluation, as well as the scalability and replicability of system change initiatives.

⁷ See [Appendix A](#) for the guide which was used for these discussions.

Finally, in Chapter Six, preliminary conclusions are offered from the work so far, summarising the key themes and learning from the report findings, and next steps for the work are outlined.

2. Overview of system change approaches focused on tackling child poverty

Key messages

There are eight initiatives in scope for this baseline report which were selected as they seek to achieve the following objectives, in order to help reduce child poverty:

- Ensuring the design and delivery of services is based on the distinctive needs of individual communities through a place-based approach
- A holistic and person-centred approach to the provision of support that wraps around the needs of the individual
- Partnership working from across the public, third and/or private sectors and between local and national partners, with join-up in the range of support provided to help move people out of poverty
- A move away from crisis responses towards more preventative action

There is substantial overlap between the four objectives. For example, initiatives working to develop and enhance partnership working are most likely seeking to provide join-up across the child poverty support system too.

These objectives are frequently embedded in initiatives' delivery frameworks and plans. In some cases, these also link to wider policy objectives, for example, enhanced partnership working is further supported by work related to the Verity House Agreement between COSLA and the Scottish Government.

Many of the system change initiatives are also aligned to a wider policy agenda of moving from crisis to preventative action, consistent with the [Christie Commission principles](#) on the future of integrated public services in Scotland.

This section provides an overview of the initiatives in scope for this baseline report. As detailed in our overarching [logic model for place-based, system change approaches](#), all of these initiatives were originally selected because they seek to embed the following principles in order to help tackle child poverty:

- Ensuring the design and delivery of services is based on the distinctive needs of individual communities through a place-based approach
- A holistic and person-centred approach to the provision of support that wraps around the needs of the individual
- Partnership working from across the public, third and/or private sectors and between local and national partners, with join-up in the range of support provided to help move people out of poverty

- A move away from crisis responses towards more preventative action

The eight initiatives included in the report are:

- [Dundee Child Poverty Pathfinder](#) - a collaborative initiative between Dundee City Council, the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), the Scottish Government, Social Security Scotland and other partners, aiming to support parents to move out of poverty on a sustained basis, working across boundaries to provide holistic approaches centred around a family's specific needs.
- [Glasgow Child Poverty Pathfinder](#) - Glasgow City Council, the Scottish Government, Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) and the Improvement Service working together, using a 'No Wrong Door' approach, to achieve better outcomes for families by reforming systems and removing barriers (including siloes, data sharing and restrictive funding), to enable the delivery of holistic person-centred services.
- [Child Poverty Practice Accelerator Fund](#) (CPAF) – A Scottish Government fund to support small scale, local projects to test and innovate ways of working and generate evidence on what works to tackle child poverty.
- [Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy](#) - The key objective is for mental health considerations to be integrated into all policy. This will be achieved via a phased approach, prioritising areas where there is already joined-up links, such as employability and child poverty.
- [No One Left Behind](#) (NOLB) – an integrated approach to employability services, underpinned by a partnership approach to design and delivery between Scottish Government and local authorities. The programme aims to provide a flexible, user-centred system, that helps people to find, stay in and progress in sustainable work.
- [School Age Childcare](#) - building a system of school age childcare, offering care before and after school and during the holidays, by taking a person-centred and place-based approach and designing services collaboratively with families, childcare providers and the wider public sector, in order to meet individual and community needs.⁸ A test of change approach has been adopted to test ways to design and deliver an effective all year-round school age childcare offer for families in targeted areas. This includes funding services through the Access to Childcare fund and by funding local authorities for six communities across Scotland that are part of 'Early Adopter Communities' project.
- [Social Innovation Partnership](#) (SIP) - using a distinctive wellbeing and capabilities approach to tackling poverty and inequality, that supports people to live flourishing lives based on what matters to them, and testing and embedding this approach in service design and delivery across the public sector through the Clackmannanshire Family Wellbeing Partnership.
- [Whole Family Wellbeing Funding](#) (WFWF) - supporting 'whole system transformational change' in order to reduce the need for crisis intervention in families and shift investment towards prevention and early intervention, so that families have access to the range of services they need, when they need them, and for as long as they need, to help them flourish and thrive.

⁸ A key output drawn on in this analysis is the [evaluation report for the Access to Childcare Fund \(ACF\)](#) which was established to test and run new models of school age childcare as part of community tests of change.

Further contextual information on each initiative can be found in the overarching [logic model](#). This includes an overview of delivery, timescales and partners for each individual initiative, and explains how each initiative intends to contribute to system change and child poverty reduction.

Approaches to system change across initiatives

There are a range of approaches taken by the selected initiatives in order to achieve system change. This section outlines how the initiatives seek to embed the four principles referred to at the start of this chapter.

A place-based approach

In 2019 the Scottish Government and the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) agreed to adopt the [Place Principle](#) to help overcome organisational and sectoral boundaries, to encourage collaboration and community involvement, and improve the impact of combined energy, resources and investment. It is the overarching context for place-based working in Scotland. In particular, the Place Principle seeks to:

“...promote a shared understanding of place, and the need to take a more collaborative approach to a place’s services and assets to achieve better outcomes for people and communities. The principle encourages and enables local flexibility to respond to issues and circumstances in different places.”

[Place Principle](#)

Further, in the second Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan, [Best Start, Bright Futures](#), (BSBF), there was a commitment that ‘the design and delivery of holistic services needs to be based in the needs of the community’.

For all of the initiatives included in this report, there is a place-based element, with many explicitly underpinned by the Place Principle. Key to the place-based approach is the flexibility to provide services which meet local needs. However, what this looks like and what this means in theory and practice varies across initiatives.

All initiatives sought to be flexible and adaptable to the needs of local communities. For example, NOLB was viewed by local stakeholders as ‘an opportunity to tailor provision more closely to local needs and to focus more on partnership delivery at the local level’ ([NOLB implementation evaluation report](#)), while School Age Childcare seeks to ‘take a place-based approach, recognising that there is no one-size-fits-all solution to providing school age childcare within communities’. This is particularly evident in the work with Early Adopter Communities.

Early findings from many of the initiatives suggests that the place-based approach is viewed positively across all stakeholders. For example, one stakeholder from the Pathfinders noted it ‘...is about really truly understanding the needs of that community as a

whole' ([Pathfinders early implementation report](#)). This is highlighted in the approach adopted by School Age Childcare:

“By taking an approach which delivers the outcomes which are important to particular communities, we recognise that co-design may lead us to distinct school age childcare systems and services in different places.”

([School Age Childcare Delivery Framework](#)).

Holistic and person-centred support

A recent [publication exploring the use of person-centred approaches](#) to public service delivery in Scotland identified four key attributes essential to person-centred approaches:

- Holistic – starting from an understanding of the person and their needs, acknowledging the complexity and individuality of people’s lives
- Ethical – adhering to a set of strong ethical principles such as dignity, respect, the avoidance of stigma, integrity, compassion, empathy and honesty
- Assets-based - building on the strengths of the person and their informal networks, laying the foundations for co-production and community based working
- Relational – recognising the importance of building relationships and trust, while acknowledging these take time to develop and foster and the role of strong interpersonal skills within the public services workforce

The 2nd Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan, BSBF, committed to a holistic, person-centred package of family support as being key to ensuring that families receive ‘the right support at the right time, for as long as they need it, creating the conditions for families to navigate their way out of poverty’. This approach is also supported by a body of wider evidence, which emphasises the importance of providing personalised, holistic and whole-family support for addressing poverty⁹.

All of the initiatives included in this analysis have a person-centred approach as a key objective.

Commonly, across the initiatives, the aim was for families to receive the necessary support at the right time – in line with the policy ambition set out in BSBF. For example:

- The WFWF focuses on ‘holistic family support readily available to all families that need it...families are able to access the help they need, where and when they need it’ ([WFWF interim report](#)).
- NOLB seeks to provide ‘a flexible, user-centred employability system aimed at helping people to find, stay and progress in sustainable work’ ([NOLB implementation evaluation report](#)).

⁹ For example evidence from the UK Government’s [Supporting Families](#) programme.

- A key area of focus for the [Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy](#) is ensuring that services are responsive to individual needs which people are able to access ‘at the right time, in the right place and in the right way’.
- A key recommendation from the [Pathfinders early implementation report](#) notes that they ‘should continue to be built around and commit to providing person-centred support, providing the right level and type of support that each family needs at the right time’.
- The person-centred approach of School Age Childcare is centred on engaging and co-creating with local communities. This seeks to ensure that parents, carers, children and providers are involved in co-designing school age childcare services which best meet their needs ([School Age Childcare Delivery Framework](#)).
- The SIP’s approach aims to support people to live flourishing lives through more person-centred and holistic support.. It uses capabilities as a lens to focus on the outcomes valuable to individuals, while recognising the wider context and structural factors, such as material and economic circumstances, that influence whether these outcomes are achieved. This framing is used as a conceptual model for describing and articulating the approach that SIP partners adopt to support positive outcomes for the people they work with ([SIP learning programme final report](#)).

Partnership working and join-up across the system

BSBF also set out an ambition to enhance partnership working across the public, private and third sectors, and at all levels, in order to help deliver reductions in child poverty.

In June 2023, COSLA and the Scottish Government agreed a Partnership Agreement, the [Verity House Agreement](#), which sets out principles for working together, collaboratively, to deliver shared priorities, including tackling poverty. Therefore, steps are being taken to further develop partnership working across the Scottish policy system. However, partnership working is a first step, there also needs to be join-up across the system, with policy areas and partners working together in alignment, with shared aims, in order to improve lives for families.

These two objectives, partnership working and join-up across the system, are also key to all of the selected initiatives and as this report details, there are initial steps being taken to develop these ways of working and to develop a more aligned system.

The key delivery aim of NOLB provides a high-level understanding of how partnership working and join-up in the system should look – and work for families. In particular, it sets out the intention for Scottish Government and local government to work more collaboratively with the third and private sectors ‘to identify local needs and make informed, evidence-based decisions, flexing these to meet emerging labour market demands’. Through this collaborative approach it is intended that partnerships will ‘ensure a holistic, inclusive and universal approach’ to employability services in Scotland ([No One Left Behind implementation report](#)).

The WFWF interim report explains how an aligned and joined up service could provide maximum benefit for families, with a particular focus on building relationships of trust between families and services. This is to be developed through a joining-up of provision

for families, across a range of services provided by different organisations. The aim is that families will avoid engaging with a multitude of services and their needs will be met through holistic family support ([Whole Family Wellbeing Funding interim report](#)).

The Pathfinders also seek to develop ‘joined-up services, where families experiencing child poverty are no longer affected by disaggregated service provision’. In particular, both Pathfinders seek to embed a ‘no wrong door’ model, which means that no matter where, how and why an individual engages in the system, this interaction becomes a gateway to receiving comprehensive and holistic support. This is a collaborative approach involving several partners and stakeholders in order to ensure the right support and services are put in place for individuals and families.

The intention to work across policy areas, and across all levels of the system, is set out in many delivery plans. For example, the [Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy Delivery Plan](#) commits to cross-policy actions to address a wide range of social, economic and environmental factors which impact on an individual’s mental health and wellbeing, while in the [School Age Childcare Delivery Framework](#) there is a clear intention to work alongside other policies and partners to understand and maximise the benefits to the school age childcare offer.

A move from crisis to preventative action

The [2023 tackling child poverty progress report for BSBF](#) outlined the need to ‘continue to focus on long term prevention of child poverty as well as mitigating the impacts of the ongoing cost of living crisis’. This has been a longstanding ambition, first set out by the [Christie Commission](#) in 2011 and built upon as part of the [Covid Recovery Strategy](#) which sought a renewed focus on prevention – and in particular, early and preventative support for children and families.

This aim of moving from crisis support to prevention is embedded across a number of place-based, system change initiatives. In particular, [Whole Family Wellbeing Funding \(WFWF\)](#) seeks to focus on ‘the system changes required to shift investment towards early intervention and prevention activities, to ensure families can access support before they reach crisis point’. Similarly the Pathfinders aim to test approaches to putting the Christie principles into practice, by building individual and community capability and wellbeing to ensure the sustainability of services. [Early implementation findings from the Pathfinders](#) highlight that support has included crisis and preventative support, with the crisis support deemed essential in building relationships and trust from which preventative and longer-term support could be provided.

Across some initiatives, the potential economic benefits of a move from crisis to preventative action were noted. For example, while the key aim of all initiatives is to reduce child poverty, there is also an intention to use this approach as a way of spending money more cost-effectively in the longer term, reducing the cost of crisis responses, and several of the initiatives included in this report have an evaluation element assessing value for money. These findings will be available as evaluations progress. However, some of the early findings from evaluations suggest that there are a range of challenges associated with the shift to more preventative support. These will be explored in [Chapter Three](#).

3. The implementation of place-based, system change initiatives

Key messages

The findings to date show that for those initiatives at the implementation phase, there are encouraging and positive signs that they are laying the groundwork for longer term system change. This includes greater partnership working with a shared sense of purpose; regular and clear communication and strengthened relationships; and recognising and building on the knowledge and experiences of local communities.

Effective partnership working was seen to be crucial in driving forward system change. From increased partnership working arose a greater awareness among partners of the range of key stakeholders and other service/delivery partners locally, which minimised duplication of effort. Further, a shared and common sense of purpose, and building clear lines of communication, were seen to be crucial in aligning interests across partners in order to enable longer term and sustainable change. Taking time to develop these strong partnerships and relations from the outset was seen to be essential in enabling longer term, sustainable delivery of system change initiatives.

Effective place-based working, drawing upon local knowledge and experience in order to deliver the right services and support for local areas, was also viewed as critical, because this allowed partners to recognise the strength and uniqueness of local areas – and then to use this to provide support that meets the needs of local families in their local context.

The key challenges that were identified to successfully implementing initiatives focused on the long-term nature of implementing system change. This meant it took time to see progress and embed structural change and this did not always align with funding timeframes. Another challenge concerned workforce investment, particularly relating to the recruitment and retention of staff, often due to the fixed-term nature of appointments as a result of the temporary nature of funding. A further challenge was the difficult socio-economic context in which initiatives were delivering their services (e.g. the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic and the ongoing cost of living crisis). This context is likely to be increasing the levels of need felt by people using these services.

For those initiatives at the implementation phase, many are at a very early stage. However, it is clear from the outputs to date that there are encouraging and positive signs of initiatives laying the groundwork for longer-term system change. This chapter of the report will explore the successes, alongside the barriers and challenges of place-based,

system change initiatives to date. Further, it will consider early findings on effective methods in engaging with people using services, alongside the challenges of doing so.

Successes and enablers to implementing system change

This first section provides an overview of the enablers to implementing system change and what aspects have been found to be successful and good practice. Three themes are considered:

- the multiple benefits of partnership working
- setting the groundwork for long lasting cultural change
- drawing on local experience and knowledge.

The multiple benefits of partnership working

From the available evidence, it is clear that partners and stakeholders found multiple benefits in partnership working and this was seen to be key in driving forward system change. Of note, across the early implementation findings from evaluations, it is suggested that increased levels of awareness of other local partners was a key outcome of partnership working, while a shared sense of purpose and regular and clear communication were frequently reported as key to embedding relationships.

“Much of the systems change described by partners and stakeholders related to a growing awareness of other organisations, and the people working within them. Many partners and stakeholders felt that it was relationships between people that was contributing to systems change.”

[Pathfinders early implementation report](#)

In particular, the Pathfinders early implementation report highlights the levels of job satisfaction that arose from ‘proper partnership working’ and helping to improve the lives of families living in the local area. It is clear across other initiatives, such as NOLB, that supportive, motivated and empathetic staff were also key to delivering a positive service for individuals/families.

“Service users reported high levels of satisfaction with the support they received due to the holistic, tailored and person-centred nature of this and how open, supportive and encouraging the staff delivering the services were. Most service users agreed that the support was delivered by knowledgeable staff, tailored to their needs and recognised their existing experience and current situation.”

[No One Left Behind implementation report](#)

“I think now, with the introduction of No One Left Behind, we work a lot more closely with each other...it's about the individual and not about, 'Well,

that's your programme and we need to give you 12 people to fill it whether they're suitable or not.'...it's, 'What does this individual need?' And we're actually having those discussions..."

Quote from Local Authority Stakeholder, [No One Left Behind implementation report](#)

Having a strong and dedicated lead for the initiative was also identified as an essential enabler, in order to ensure coordination and successful implementation and to sustain the partnership working required.

"Many of the [Children's Services Planning Partnerships] CSPP strategic leads highlighted the importance of the role of a dedicated lead for driving forward the WFWF and leading on coordination across CSPP partners and the third sector. This was both in terms of having the capacity to dedicate to the design and implementation of WFWF activity and to keep CSPP and third sector partners engaged."

[Whole Family Wellbeing Funding interim report](#)

For many of the initiatives, partnership working is not new but about further embedding existing practices. For example, for some of the local authorities, the NOLB employability service did not represent a new or innovative approach, but was more a formalisation of existing practices and structures. However, the implementation evaluation of NOLB highlights how there have been multiple benefits from this enhancement and formalisation.

"It [NOLB] was said to have facilitated better partnership working between employability stakeholders at the local level, including bringing greater focus and purpose to existing partnership structures, and most agreed that it had contributed to further development and enhancement of services."

[No One Left Behind implementation report](#)

There is little evidence to date across the available reports that explores the role of Scottish Government as a partner in place-based, system change initiatives. This is discussed further in Chapter Four of the report.

Setting the groundwork for long lasting cultural change

For those initiatives that had assessed progress on new and innovative ways of working, there was a clear sense that there were early signs of improved practice and buy in from stakeholders across the system who could see the benefits from changes in previous ways of working. For example, the Pathfinders early implementation report noted that:

"...[partners and stakeholders] felt that working more closely with people from other organisations as colleagues and partners had led to new ways of working that over time, with support, could contribute to broader cultural changes within workplaces and organisations. Some partners and

stakeholders felt that now that they could see the benefits of working in this partnership-based way to share resources and create new access routes for people, they could not see themselves returning to previous ways of working.”

[Pathfinders early implementation report](#)

Findings from the Pathfinders also suggest that in overcoming and finding solutions to challenges faced by partners and stakeholders in design and early implementation, relationships and partnership working were strengthened. In particular was how taking the time to build and develop effective relationships was a fundamental initial step in ensuring effective system change.

“Developing those relationships [between services] was a core component of arriving at shared aims and achieving a shared vision, and so it is suggested that if future Pathfinders are considered, time should be allocated for the formation of effective relationships and partnerships. Where this time is available, it should be viewed as being part of creating the right conditions and foundations for change...”

[Pathfinders early implementation report](#)

Drawing on local experience and knowledge

A final enabler of effective system change implementation appears to be related to the place-based and person-centred nature of initiatives, in particular, recognising and building on the assets (the knowledge and experiences) of local communities. This involved providers and partners recognising the strengths and uniqueness of local areas – and using this to their advantage in order to provide support that met the needs of local families in their local context.

One example of this is the SIP, which has developed a distinctive model, providing new ways to involve people with lived experience in the policymaking process so that different forms of experience can inform policymaking and practice ([SIP learning programme report](#)).

There is also evidence across other initiatives that local partners saw value in using local knowledge, data and experience to inform their approaches:

“...many CSPPs have focussed on expanding existing successful activities which was felt to be an important factor in them being able to implement at pace. Building on existing services meant that CSPPs relied on an existing body of evidence and experience around what works for whom in their localities.”

[Whole Family Wellbeing Funding interim report](#)

“...most partners and stakeholders were of the view that the most important evidence to use to inform Pathfinder development was context-specific, and informed by local data, rather than empirical or academic evidence on what works more generally to address child poverty.

An overarching finding is that Pathfinders need to be shaped around principles of person-centred support, while having the flexibility to be delivered in ways that are appropriate to and reflect and respond to the local context.”

[Pathfinders early implementation report](#)

Further, there is evidence of the successful application of local data and knowledge across WFWF and the Pathfinders.

The [WFWF interim report](#) also shows the importance of tailored approaches to engagement. While all case study CSPP’s receiving WFWF funding undertook consultation with children, young people and families, the scale and extent of this varied. Those CSPP’s that undertook a tailored approach to engagement (rather than using existing service feedback forms or experience surveys), such as in-person engagement events and workshops with families, received greater insights which enabled them to feed this into various aspects of their WFWF design and planning, thus ensuring a service better suited to the needs of families.

Meanwhile, the [Pathfinders early implementation report](#) highlights the value to be found in using data to target families. Of particular note, was using council tax reduction data, held at the local authority level, in order to identify families who may have greatest need or may benefit from targeted offer of support.

Barriers and challenges to implementing system change

This section provides an overview of the challenges and barriers to implementing system change. Five themes are considered:

- the timeframe for implementing and seeing the benefits of system change;
- embedding structural change;
- sustainability and funding;
- challenges in recruitment and retention of staff;
- the socio-economic context

The timeframe for implementing and seeing the benefits of system change

A significant challenge and barrier to implementing system change initiatives was the issue of how long it can take to see any significant change. Across the initiatives where findings are available, there is a consensus that system change is necessarily a long-term outcome.

“Most partners and stakeholders suggested that while some change had happened, whole systems change at the scale required would take considerable time and should be viewed as a long-term project.”

[Pathfinders early implementation report](#)

In particular, while there were some clear signs of progress, with enhanced ways of working and strengthening partnerships and person-centred design and delivery, partners and stakeholders from across the Pathfinders felt full system change would take a number of years to achieve and to evidence.

“Some [partners and stakeholders] considered that change on the scale required would take 5 to 7 years to evidence. While monitoring the process of change, and early indicators of success will be important going forward, a suggested recommendation would be that consideration is given to the amount of time that it may take to fully embed systems change and tackle child poverty.”

[Pathfinders early implementation report](#)

The reasons for system change taking time to implement and evidence is due to the complexity of the system and multiple possible pathways to achieve change., This in turn requires long-term investment and commitment from multiple sectors: welfare, health, social services, financial advice, and the third sector, among others.

Embedding structural change

A considerable challenge across system change initiatives was the shift from design to implementation, that is, how theoretical and long term aims and objectives can be fully realised in practice. For example, the [evaluability assessment for the Pathfinders](#) reported that there was still work to be completed to ensure that system change is a core component of the delivery. In particular, ‘the activities, processes and structures needed to facilitate ‘system change’ had not yet been worked through’. The [early implementation report for the Pathfinders](#), (with data collection completed in November 2022 and February 2023), also highlighted how several partners found that there were often strategic discussions of what longer-term change would look like, but with shorter and more medium-term tasks and workstreams left undefined.

In the context of WFWF, Children’s Services Planning Partnerships (CSPPs) also raised the challenge of aligning activities and priorities across overarching CSPP strategies and aims, particularly as they were cross-cutting several service areas. There was an understanding that this had to be an area of ongoing focus in order to ensure alignment and join-up, but it was reported to be time-consuming.

“...we had to get a list of all of those agencies...so that we knew what each of us was offering and supporting at each of the tiered levels because there's not one place where you can see all of it together...And some of us use the same partner providers but in different ways, so it's making sure that we know who's using what for what purpose and how that all links together.”

Quote from Manager, [Whole Family Wellbeing Funding interim report](#)

There was some agreement across initiatives that putting in place the core elements of system change –including increased partnership working and reducing siloed working – would take time to enact due to partners often relying on previous ways of working.

“Multiple partners and stakeholders, in both sites, stated that the process of embedding change had been a difficult one so far, as there was a tendency for organisations and individuals to want to do versions of what they had always done.”

[Pathfinders early implementation report](#)

Across the two Pathfinders there was a sense of optimism and hope regarding progress in improving services and access routes for families. However, with the time needed to enact change and the reliance on the goodwill and motivation of individual staff – with limited capacities – there was also a concern around how sustainable such initiatives could be.

“In both Pathfinders, some of the early indicators of systems change, however, appeared to be reliant on the commitment of the individual staff involved and their relationship to the Pathfinder. Much of the change appeared to have been stimulated by the development of relationships between people. While this is positive, it raises some questions about sustainability, and points to a need to create formal processes at an operational level to support the new referral routes and working practices that are emerging.”

[Pathfinders early implementation report](#)

Further, while the keyworker approach is frequently praised by those accessing services, there is a potential risk in keyworkers being the main source of change, as this could potentially limit the scalability and sustainability of initiatives. It may also be difficult to assess if the success of an initiative is attributable to certain personal attributes of key workers or to the wider model of person-centred and place-based support.

Sustainability and Funding

This section considers the sustainability of initiatives beyond their funding period. In particular it considers the challenges faced by system change initiatives in managing

shorter term funding periods¹⁰ and monitoring expectations with longer term system change outcomes.

For the Pathfinders, partners and stakeholders, while positive about the current levels of staff and financial resource, expressed concern about the time limited funding and what would happen when the funding ended. This was due to the resource intensiveness of the new ways of working, in that it took time to engage and support people in their journey through a system to address multiple complex needs. Therefore, it was felt that there had to be a commitment to longer-term funding in order to ensure sustainability.

However, it was not just in the Pathfinders where these concerns were evident. For WWF, the interim report details how there was a desire for WWF activity 'to become business as usual' (rather than ending when the Scottish Government funding finishes in 2026).¹¹ Meanwhile, local authorities and employability staff implementing NOLB also felt that longer term funding would provide more certainty over future service delivery ([NOLB implementation report](#)).

[Findings from the SIP learning programme](#) also raise the need for longer term stability in terms of financial resource, with SIP partners suggesting that 'progressive policy aspirations are not always accompanied by the funding that would allow implementation of these policies on the ground'. Partners have also raised a concern about reductions in local government grant funding for core services and how this might impact on the aim of moving towards more preventative support.

Further findings from the SIP highlight how the economic climate and uncertainty, despite the intention of aiming for the provision of longer-term, preventative action, can mean that service providers need to continue providing crisis support.

“While senior leaders were clear about the need to pursue long-term goals such as addressing child poverty, they also described how the current climate is pushing the statutory sector into crisis response.”

[Social Innovation Partnership learning programme report](#)

Challenges in recruitment and retention of staff

Many initiatives faced barriers in recruiting and retaining staff and this is closely related to the above issues of sustainability and funding. Of note, the [NOLB implementation report](#) highlights how half of employability staff felt that employability services were understaffed. The reasons for struggles in recruiting and retaining staff was varied across initiatives. For example, the [WWF interim report](#) details the struggles in recruiting staff due to the fixed-term nature of appointments, arising from the temporary nature of funding. These

¹⁰ Many of the initiatives were dependent on Scottish Government grant funding which was time limited. This varied from a maximum of 18 months for CPAF projects to four years for WWF.

¹¹ Work is ongoing between Scottish Government and local stakeholders to ensure the outcomes, and systems, which are developed, and embedded, during the funded period are sustainable in the longer term.

contracts were said to be ‘less appealing’ (than permanent contracts) and this was felt to ‘negatively affect the quality of applicants’.

For the Access to Childcare Fund (ACF), it was the availability of specialised staff that was an ongoing challenge, as well as the challenges of recruitment in particular geographical areas of Scotland.

“While staff were critical to the delivery and impact of School Age Childcare, projects had experienced difficulties with recruitment which, for some projects, were ongoing. This was particularly relevant for recruiting staff to care for children with complex ASN [Additional Support Needs], which required staff with more specialised skills and expertise. There was a perception that staffing challenges were more acute in rural areas, due to a smaller workforce pool and the unique barriers presented by a lack of infrastructure.”

School Age Childcare ([ACF evaluation report](#))

Further, the ACF findings – in highlighting the strong value of the keyworker approach (as discussed in [Chapter Four](#)) – suggest a need for further systemic change with regards to the recruitment of staff.

“...investing in the school age childcare workforce is an important consideration for wider roll-out that could help overcome recruitment challenges as well as facilitate the formation of relationships. Factors to consider include: pay, conditions, training and development and job security, as well as making staff feel valued, supporting staff wellbeing and maintaining morale to avoid risk of burnout.”

School Age Childcare ([ACF evaluation report](#))

The concerns that have been raised by WFWF and the ACF have also been raised in the Delivery Plan for the Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

“The mental health and wellbeing system remains under significant pressure. This is having an impact on the workforce’s wellbeing and capacity to deliver support effectively and safely, as well as being able to attract, train and retain the workforce. These pressures also impact the ability of the whole system to engage with long-term strategic planning for their workforce.”

[Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy \(Delivery Plan\)](#)

The socio-economic context

The importance of the wider socio-economic context – for example, economic crises and increases in mental health issues - cannot be minimised when exploring the challenges

facing system change initiatives. This context adds an additional layer of challenge, and an increasing level of need, to a complex and logistically difficult task.

In the past four years, we have faced the COVID-19 pandemic and the cost of living crisis. These developments have created economic instability and uncertainty. Findings from ACF have also highlighted how different locales may face heightened struggles during periods of economic crisis.

“Rural areas were also seen as being more vulnerable to economic shocks such as the COVID-19 pandemic, for example one project lead pointed out that many childminders in the rural area that they operated in had closed during this time (and not reopened).”

School Age Childcare ([ACF evaluation report](#))

Further, during the pandemic and subsequent cost of living crisis, service providers have had to change their provision and their way of doing things, while also managing new pressures as a result of the challenges faced by individuals and their families. The [WFWF interim report](#) notes, for example, that the COVID-19 pandemic and the pressures arising from the cost of living crisis have resulted in an increased demand for Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, while the initiative has also had to contend with challenges around the recruitment and retention of staff in the children’s services sector.

4. The emerging impacts of system change initiatives

Key messages

While most initiatives are at the early stages of design and implementation, there are already emerging impacts felt for everyone across the system including families, service providers, partners and policy stakeholders.

For individuals and families accessing services, emerging evidence across several initiatives suggests that satisfaction was related to the holistic and personalised nature of support, in particular the 'no wrong door' approach. This is based on the principle that regardless of where, how and why an individual or family engages in the system, that interaction then becomes a gateway to receiving holistic, consistent and comprehensive support.

Factors that limited the impacts to date for individuals and families accessing services included the time taken for tangible change to be felt by people with multiple and complex support needs and the impact of the wider socio-economic context in limiting individuals' progress.

When engaging with families using services, evidence to date suggests the need for targeted engagement strategies for different groups, as well as a need to break down cultural stigma for some groups in accessing support, in order to ensure that all of those who need support feel able to access it.

Service providers across several initiatives experienced multiple benefits from closer, and more aligned, partnership working, in particular, they reported that this minimised duplication, enabled the development of new services and improved communication.

However, building these relationships did not come without challenge, and it was seen to be important to take time to resolve issues, and ensure strong relationships, before moving into the delivery phase of an initiative.

For policy stakeholders, early impacts include key learning from the initiatives around: the need for more dissemination of good practice and learning across the system change initiatives, greater alignment between national level strategic aims and the delivery of local services, and greater attention paid to the sustainability of initiatives beyond time limited funding periods.

Many of the initiatives considered in this analysis are large in scale and far reaching, with the intention of overhauling complex existing systems to provide a support system that works better for everyone in it. To date, with most of the initiatives in the early stages of design and implementation, the primary focus has often been concerned with the needs

of, and improved delivery for, services users and aligning the system at the local level (which supports users). However, changing complex child poverty support systems necessarily impacts everyone in the system, and this includes service providers and their partners, as well as policy stakeholders (at both local and national level). This chapter considers the range of impacts reported for key stakeholder groups to date.

Individuals and families accessing services

Despite most system change initiatives being in the early stages of design and implementation, there are already early signs of impacts for individuals and families accessing services from a number of the initiatives. The benefits of person-centred, holistic and joined-up support have been reported by people using the services, while challenges and barriers to impacts have also been reported. These include the length of time it can take for individuals to see tangible change from accessing support and the impact of the wider socio-economic context in limiting individuals' progress.

Benefits of person-centred, holistic and joined-up support

The implementation findings from both NOLB and the Pathfinders reported that the development of more streamlined and person-centred delivery allowed for easier to navigate systems, more supportive staff, and services that were more attuned to people's needs.

For example, the [NOLB implementation report](#) details the high levels of service user satisfaction relating to the holistic and tailored nature of support, with several service users commenting positively on the levels of support, and the encouragement and openness from delivery staff.

For those who received support from a SIP partner, there are also examples in the [SIP learning programme report](#) of where join up across the system and across different services (in this case childcare and employability) enabled better outcomes, for example individuals being able to sustain employment due to SIP support in the form of flexible childcare.

Similarly, the join up of support across a range of services, was crucial to the success of the ACF. In order to ensure families could benefit fully from school age childcare provision, projects put in place family support measures to cover a range of challenges families may be facing, such as: poverty; cost of living crisis; mental health problems; alcohol and substance misuse; and other practical issues such as those related to housing or personal finances. These elements were well received and valued by families. Evaluation participants acknowledged that this level of holistic support should help to change the system for families living in poverty.

“Family support elements of projects received very positive feedback and were appreciated by families who took part in this research. This was backed up from project leads and stakeholders who commented on the

positive impacts they had observed from providing family support, and how outcomes were rarely achieved solely through provision of childcare alone.”

School Age Childcare ([ACF evaluation report](#))

Meanwhile, openness and putting the individual/family at the centre of their support was reported across both Pathfinders, with many who had engaged with the services noting ‘that the support had met or exceeded their expectations’ and that they found strength in the ‘no wrong door’ approach:

“Parents/carers who accessed the Dundee drop-in hub, which was an in-person service, and Glasgow Helps, which was a telephone line, were similarly of the view that they valued the fast referrals, “one-stop-shop” format for information about different services. This suggests that it was the person-centred approach that people liked most, whether it was in-person or on the telephone, and that the person-centred, non-judgemental approach is valued, irrespective of the method of accessing support.”

[Pathfinders early implementation report](#)

Timeframe for seeing tangible improvements

Another challenge to seeing tangible impacts for people using services at this early stage of implementation was the length of time it takes for some individuals to see a noticeable impact on their life from engaging with support.

“Several parents/carers reported seeing limited or not seeing any impact on their life from using the service, either due to their claim still being processed or due to the scale and/or structural nature of their needs exceeding the remit of [the Pathfinder] the drop-in hub.”

[Pathfinders early implementation report](#)

It is highlighted in the Pathfinder implementation report that this should not be considered to be a negative finding, but an indication of ‘the potential time-lag in being able to see impacts’ (discussed further in [Chapter Five](#)). Further, the report emphasises the effort and time required to build relationships and trust with those living in the local area. It is noted how there are examples of families using the support services initially for crisis help, but with the person-centred and non-judgemental support in place in those first interactions, it is hoped that over time this immediate need for crisis support can move to longer term preventative support which enables families, where appropriate, to think about returning to education, training or employment.

Impact of the wider socio-economic context

Finally, [evidence from the SIP](#) highlights the difficulty of tackling poverty in a time of multiple economic crises. In the final report, the positive impact of the SIP support in improving the material position of some participants (including, moving out of deep poverty, reducing debt, gaining employment, and engaging in learning/volunteering opportunities) is clearly illustrated. However, there were also cases where individual's material circumstances worsened across the data gathering period, or remained unchanged, resulting in them remaining in poverty. The backdrop of the cost of living crisis is noted, and while many of the participants' issues predated the crisis, there are repeated examples of how the increased costs (due to rising inflation) further accelerated material and economic hardship.

Therefore, it is important to consider the socio-economic environment in which initiatives and service delivery partners are working when trying to achieve complex, large scale and long-term change. Social and economic contextual factors can add an extra layer of challenges and barriers and are outwith the control of those seeking to implement system change (discussed further in [Chapter Three](#)).

Impacts for different groups accessing services

This section considers the extent to which impacts have varied for different groups who are accessing services, for example, [priority family groups](#), for those deepest in poverty, or for those with different equality characteristics.

To date there is limited evidence of whether priority family groups and those deepest in poverty have benefitted from system change initiatives. For the Pathfinders, this was partly due to issues surrounding data sharing which limited their ability to use existing data to target the child poverty priority groups.

“Many noted that certain organisations who were involved in the Pathfinder held key demographic and income data that could be used to provide targeted offers of support to priority groups. Getting data sharing agreements in place for this purpose remained an ongoing task for those involved in both Pathfinders.”

[Pathfinders early implementation report](#)

Despite limited data so far on the benefits of initiatives for those in deeper poverty, the way support is delivered should enable these families to benefit. In the Pathfinders, for example, there are clear examples of families receiving signposting and support which has then enabled them to, for example, put their heating on, reduce or prevent debt, or have more disposable income resulting in a positive impact on their child's quality of life, with these outcomes often leading to reduced stress and feelings of being more in control. Similarly, the [NOLB implementation report](#) evidences how women who were far removed from the labour market after taking time away to care for children were accessing support in order to build confidence before taking the next steps. This highlights the importance of these initiatives in providing building blocks for longer term changes. It cannot be expected

for families living deep in poverty to access employment immediately, they may need support in building their confidence and skills and to have support mechanisms in order to do so. A system which acknowledges this and provides families with these opportunities is key to the person-centred approach embedded within place-based, system change initiatives.

In considering the impacts to date for those with protected characteristics, there are again examples from both Pathfinders and NOLB which highlight the strength of flexible and person-centred services. However, some employability service users felt that support could be tailored further for particular groups, such as those using English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) provision, as well as tailored support for disabled people, those with a health condition and veterans ([NOLB implementation report](#)).

Across the Pathfinders, it was also noted that some individuals, including those with English as a second language, may find it harder to communicate feelings of stigma and shame in accessing services and therefore experiences of this may be under-reported in the current data.

Engagement with beneficiaries

The following section explores evidence to date across the initiatives about engagement with people using or in need of services, with a particular focus on effective methods of engaging with potential beneficiaries and the challenges in doing so.

Effective methods in engaging with beneficiaries

A recurrent and key learning point about effective engagement with beneficiaries was the role of a key worker, or one single point of contact for individuals accessing services. This was noted across NOLB, both Pathfinders and the ACF. From the available evidence, it is suggested that a key worker was crucial in not only initial engagement with individuals and families, but also in sustaining engagement. For example, the quote below from a service user, in the NOLB implementation report, highlights the value of the key worker role.

“My key worker really lit a fire in me to find work. I changed my whole perspective and I was like I can do this, and I'm now working.”

Quote from Service user, [No One Left Behind implementation report](#)

When initially engaging with beneficiaries it is clear that service providers must be flexible in order to ensure appropriate levels of engagement with different groups. For example, [findings in the Pathfinders implementation report](#) describe how the Dundee Pathfinder found a combination of methods of engagement were successful, e.g. in-person door knocking alongside a leaflet with official information, especially when reaching out to targeted low-income families. Meanwhile, the Glasgow Pathfinder had success in engaging parents with a child under two years of age through a targeted campaign in early

years establishments, where parents/carers could opt in to receive support if they ticked a box on the registration form for their childcare place.

The [NOLB implementation report](#) also identified that different groups experienced different referral pathways to employment support services. For example:

- Those from a white ethnic background were more likely to have heard about the services through the Job Centre than those from a minority ethnic background.
- Single parents were less likely to have heard about the services through friends and family, careers advisors or from a training provider compared to those who were not single parents.

These findings highlight the need to have multiple referral pathways and possibly targeted campaigns for those groups that are less likely to access the service through established referral channels.

The [WFWF interim report](#) also shows the importance of tailored approaches to engagement. While all case study CSPP's receiving WFWF funding undertook consultation with children, young people and families, the scale and extent of this varied.

Challenges in engaging with beneficiaries

There were a number of challenges reported by the initiatives in engaging with potential users of support services too. The specific challenges were often individual to each initiative, but relate to common issues such as ensuring maximum reach and ensuring accessibility for hard to reach and minority groups. Particular issues identified included:

- accessing data that could identify potential service users for proactive engagement;
- overcoming multiple barriers to accessing services, including stigma associated with accessing statutory services.

In terms of data challenges, across both Pathfinders, partners and stakeholders raised the issue of challenges in gaining access to local level data, in order to ensure effective targeting of priority family groups. The required data was often held by different organisations and therefore required data sharing agreements to be put in place, which were often subject to legal difficulties (discussed further in [Chapter Four](#)).

As part of the [NOLB implementation report findings](#), there was careful consideration of which groups were not engaging with employability services and why and how this could be addressed. For example, groups who were said to be more difficult to reach or engage included: working parents; long-term unemployed; young carers and care leavers; and people dealing with addictions. For such groups it was recognised that it may take time to overcome the significant barriers individuals face when it comes to accessing employability services. This was an area where local authorities were trying to improve their understanding, in order to identify whether to scale up services or provide them in more specialised ways in order to reach those most in need of support.

“...when working with the hardest to reach groups, one local authority stakeholder reflected that it would take time to overcome the multiple

barriers some individuals face when it comes to employability. Suggestions put forward by service users included more promotion and advertisement of the services and what they offer, including through outreach work. It was also suggested that more could be done to make people aware that they can access support online and to create more online opportunities.”

[No One Left Behind implementation report](#)

Relationship building was also thought to be key to engaging groups that faced multiple barriers. For some of those accessing NOLB services, lack of confidence and the prevalence of mental health issues, were a key barrier and this required staff to develop close working relationships with individuals to build up trust.

Barriers to accessing services, including a sense of stigma when accessing support, were also identified in the SIP learning programme report (as discussed in [Chapter Four](#)). It was noted that a key benefit of partnership working across the SIP was that third sector organisations, often better placed to deliver person-centred approaches, could take time to work closely with local communities and build the necessary relationships in order to engage people who did not usually feel able to access support.

“Professionals in local authorities also described the challenges of overcoming the stigma attached to some aspects of statutory service provision, and described how third sector organisations could be better placed to deliver person-led approaches, particularly where they were closer to the communities they were serving.”

[Social Innovation Partnership learning programme report](#)

At the same time, however, it was reported that the need to collect monitoring data to evidence reach and outcomes of initiatives could potentially discourage families from engaging with local providers.

“...several interviewees [local authority practitioners] expressed the view that forming a contractual funding relationship with SIP partners might limit their effectiveness or deter families from engaging with support, particularly in the context of the reporting information that would need to be provided back to the referrer and to commissioners.”

[Social Innovation Partnership learning programme report](#)

One limitation highlighted across a number of initiatives, was that in evaluating projects, the families who provided feedback on their views of the services received were inevitably those that had already engaged with the service – and received support. To date, none of the evaluations had included research with non-participants. Therefore, it is difficult to know much about the reasons for non-engagement.

One challenge that may result in non-engagement is the challenge of stigma. The [Pathfinders early implementation report](#) found that the new approaches taken in Glasgow and Dundee reduced the stigma that some people had felt in their previous experiences of

interacting with statutory services, due to friendly, approachable and non-judgemental staff. Also the single keyworker approach limited the need for re-telling of challenging stories and, in turn, such an approach was appropriate and accessible for people who might otherwise feel vulnerable or ashamed about needing support.

However, there are areas for further work. For example, the nature of place-based approaches means services are delivered in the local community, and often by those living in the community. Therefore, there can be a lack of anonymity in accessing services. Further, due to negative previous experiences in accessing services and support it was found that some users held a sense of vulnerability and fear of judgement or stigma. Some of these experiences of stigma appeared to be internalised from shame around accessing social security support. Therefore, as noted in the report, there is a need to consider further awareness raising and communication to improve engagement with people who may be anxious or feel shame in accessing support.

Service providers

Turning to impacts for service providers, multiple benefits were reported from the development of more integrated systems and though closer, and stronger, partnership working.

For the employability staff delivering NOLB, for example, the benefits reported included increased partnership working, the development of new services, less duplication in service delivery, and improved communication between partners. Further, all of these changes were seen to provide 'building blocks for future improvements to service delivery' ([NOLB implementation report](#)). Similarly, the partners and stakeholders working on the Pathfinders spoke of how the benefits of partnership working – such as sharing resources and creating new access routes for families – meant 'they could not see themselves returning to previous ways of working' ([Pathfinders early implementation report](#)). These benefits, and ways of thinking, suggest a change of culture, which could be instrumental in long lasting and sustainable system change.

Further, those working on the Dundee and Glasgow Pathfinders spoke of their increased job satisfaction, arising from partnership working, and from seeing a positive effect on the lives of families seeking support from their services. Again, this change in thinking, with benefits for not just those using the services, but those providing the services too, may provide a fundamental cornerstone in ensuring the longevity of sustained system change actions.

Nevertheless, partnership working has not always been a smooth journey for those working in system change initiatives. Challenges amongst partners were described as 'sticky moments' in the [Pathfinders early implementation report](#). In particular, it was found that in some cases not giving sufficient time to scoping out local services already delivering in the areas led to a duplication of effort and key stakeholders not being involved in the early stages of Pathfinder design. While this was resolved by inviting appropriate local delivery services to attend planning meetings, this resulted in a number of challenges. These implementation challenges can potentially have a negative impact on partnership working if the roles and relationships are not clearly and fully worked through.

Similarly, for WFWF activity, one CSPP found challenges in the early design stage between the CSPP and third sector partners – with partners concerned about duplication of work.

“One CSPP found it difficult to gain consensus about WFWF plans amongst third sector partners during the design stage. The reason for this was where potential WFWF plans were felt to be similar, or in some cases duplicating, work felt by partners to already be delivered by third sector partners.”

[Whole Family Wellbeing Funding interim report](#)

While these initial challenges across both initiatives have been resolved – with ‘a sense of shared aims and shared commitment to enacting change’ reported subsequently ([Pathfinders early implementation report](#)) – it shows the importance of taking time to develop appropriate and strong relationships between partners before moving into the delivery phase.

Additionally, for NOLB, while many employability staff thought NOLB was making a positive difference to improving equality of service provision and making employability services easier to navigate, there were some who felt no changes or differences had been made in these areas. In particular, concerns were raised by frontline staff surrounding the administrative burden associated with service delivery and the impact of this on service users, including the volume of data required for service users in registering for the service. However, it was noted in the [NOLB implementation report](#) that these were not new challenges to NOLB but were general challenges facing employability services – and one which has not yet been resolved.

Further, and an important consideration for place-based and system change initiatives, is the importance of variation depending on context. For example, different challenges were experienced by the Dundee and Glasgow Pathfinders due to different local contexts and stakeholders. Meanwhile, the positive impacts experienced by NOLB varied amongst local authorities depending upon their existing local employability infrastructures. This meant, for some local authorities, change was not as noticeable because they had already been delivering their services in line with the principles of NOLB.

Policy stakeholders

In conducting this analysis, and engaging with analytical and policy leads across Scottish Government, it is clear there is a drive to challenge and change traditional ways of working in order to provide more person-centred and joined-up services for families living in poverty.

Place-based, system change initiatives at a local level have the potential to impact on policy stakeholders by providing important lessons about effective ways of implementing systems change. From the early implementation findings available so far, lessons for policy makers to consider include how to better share good practice and learning, ensuring better join-up between national level strategic aims with the delivery of services at the local level, and ensuring the sustainability of initiatives beyond time limited funding periods.

The Pathfinders early implementation report highlights how national policy stakeholders play an important role in the success of implementing system change at the local level. In particular, it suggests that for effective implementation, policy stakeholders need to ensure that strategic policy aims are aligned with local service delivery and that they allow sufficient time for developing relationships and ensuring the sustainability of initiatives.

“Both Pathfinders had experienced challenges in the early stages of development due to some partners and stakeholders being unclear on how the strategic aims of the Pathfinders would be met at a service delivery level. This appeared to have evolved and stakeholders and partners described the sense that things were now much clearer. Developing the relationships that were required to ensure success and work effectively across organisations took time.”

[Pathfinders early implementation report](#)

The [WWF interim report](#) highlights similar concerns around sustainability, with a particular focus on the legacy of WWF and the sharing of best practice. In particular, there is an emphasis on the role of Scottish Government in supporting local partners by more effectively sharing learning from across initiatives.

While these early implementation findings highlight how the Scottish Government and national stakeholders may be able to further support local partnerships, the voice and role of national stakeholders in supporting and facilitating system change is somewhat absent from the available outputs to date. This should be a greater focus of evaluations going forward.

5. Assessing effective approaches to system change

Key messages

As most initiatives are in the early stages of design and implementation at the moment, it is too early to say whether particular approaches are more or less effective or have resulted in positive outcomes. However, early implementation findings highlight the importance of ensuring that monitoring and evaluation is in place from the outset.

There were two key challenges experienced by initiatives in setting up monitoring and evaluation processes for system change initiatives:

- the capacity of local partners in implementing the monitoring requirements (such as measurement frameworks) or having the staff capacity to collect and analyse data.
- knowing how to effectively measure long term system change, in particular, how to define and collect outcomes to indicate system change, as well as the practicalities of collecting data cutting across a complex system and often across multiple services and organisations).

In terms of scaling up system change initiatives, most initiatives are in the early stages and have not yet reported on scalability and replicability, but where this has been considered, views of stakeholders suggest that scaling up might be better based on a set of principles and values, rather than aiming for the exact replication of an approach.

In order to ensure we can assess the effectiveness of place-based, system change initiatives— and the extent to which approaches can, and do, contribute to reductions in child poverty – we need to understand the mechanisms by which these changes are expected to occur through establishing logic models and evaluation frameworks. While it is too early to report on effective approaches to system change at this stage, this chapter focuses on the experiences of different initiatives in setting up and implementing monitoring and evaluation processes. Future reports will be able to consider the question of effectiveness in more detail.

Monitoring and evaluating system change initiatives

Across the selected initiatives, there was a mixed response to the establishment of monitoring and evaluation frameworks from stakeholders, and as of yet, there is no consensus on best practice approaches to assessing the effectiveness of system change initiatives. Developing appropriate, valuable and robust monitoring and evaluation

frameworks appeared to be a consistent challenge across initiatives. However, there are also elements of good practice emerging across initiatives with stakeholders considering, and engaging with partners, to develop frameworks which are appropriate for all. This section will outline the challenges of establishing monitoring and evaluation processes for place-based, system change initiatives.

Two key challenges were reported across the initiatives. These are:

- Capacity of local stakeholders to implement monitoring and evaluation frameworks
- Effective measurement of long-term system change

Capacity of local stakeholders to implement monitoring and evaluation

For NOLB, a [shared measurement framework](#) was developed with partners from across the public, third and private sectors, in order to provide evidence on the outcomes from the initiative. However, levels of awareness and engagement with the measurement framework were mixed. For some local authorities, often those that were larger and with more resource and capacity, it was embedded into the work, while for other local authorities, often in smaller areas with less capacity, it was found to be more challenging to engage and embed the framework.

There were some local authorities who reported valuing and benefitting from the Framework.

“One local authority described how they are now tracking things they had not done before, such as the number of service users who have a cognitive impairment. The insights from this are being used to inform and support continuous improvement in service delivery.”

[No One Left Behind implementation report](#)

However, the general consensus reported in the implementation report was that the monitoring and reporting requirements for NOLB were time consuming. In particular, the standardisation of information set out in the framework, when partners and local authorities have different existing processes and systems for the collection and recording of data, was deemed ‘frustrating’. This was due to the levels of engagement, communication and support that was required, between local authorities and delivery partners, in order to provide the information in a standardised form.

Further, feedback from NOLB stakeholders and employability staff highlighted the burden of the administration surrounding monitoring and reporting requirements for the Scottish Government. This suggests that there is a need for greater time to be given to engaging stakeholders when designing and implementing measurement frameworks.

“The consensus was that the administration [of monitoring and reporting requirements] associated with service delivery was time consuming. One local authority stakeholder described how the time they spent collating and organising data could justify recruitment of a full-time staff member. Another

noted that whilst the Scottish Government had been receptive to feedback on streamlining requirements, there were frustrations with how often changes were made to monitoring requirements and the time it takes to implement these.”

[No One Left Behind implementation report](#)

As part of Phase 1 of the Pathfinders evaluation, a [draft monitoring framework](#) was also developed. However, it was felt by partners and stakeholders that they would have benefitted from a monitoring framework in place earlier to use in the design and early implementation of the Pathfinders. In particular, there were some stakeholders who felt it was difficult to know whether the Pathfinder was on track due to the lack of a monitoring framework. Indeed, a key recommendation of the Pathfinder early implementation report was to:

“...[have] a locally agreed monitoring and evaluation framework in place at the beginning will give better transparency on what is being achieved, help Pathfinders to stay on track and perform well, enable Pathfinders to identify what has worked less well and to learn from that, [and] enable data and evidence led decision making.”

[Pathfinders early implementation report](#)

This finding is similar to earlier points raised regarding the importance of taking time in the early stages of design of place-based initiatives to develop relationships between partners and establish common aims and ways of working – as part of this it is important to allow time to develop and properly embed monitoring frameworks.

[The ACF evaluation report](#) also provides some key learning and good practice for future monitoring and evaluation. This includes the development of monitoring and evaluation frameworks to enable projects to assess how well their processes work and adapt better to meet the needs of families over time. Further, there is a need to support partners to collect the required information and to clearly communicate the requirements and expectations from Scottish Government around the use of these frameworks.

Effective measurement of long-term system change

Throughout this report, the extended duration of time that system change can take to implement and embed has been repeated and this is an important element and a key challenge to consider in the design of measurement and monitoring frameworks too.

“Key barriers to sustainability were felt to be around continued funding challenges and having robust monitoring and evaluation in place to be able to evidence impact. It was felt that decisions on continued funding needed to be based around an understanding that systems change is a long term process and it will take a while for any outcomes to be fully realised and evidenced.”

[Pathfinders early implementation report](#)

There is also the challenge of being able to robustly show attribution¹² and providing clear signs of impact across a complex interlinked system of policies and services.

“Another risk relates to the nature of WFWF as a systems-wide change initiative; it requires CSPPs to monitor many different services and support and to be able to link them together to assess their combined impact.”

[Whole Family Wellbeing Funding interim report](#)

It is worth noting that the issue of attribution is always a challenge in evaluation but this is particularly so for system change initiatives that are often complex, evolving and lack clear parameters. The range of interactions, factors and individuals in a complex system can make it difficult to establish clear and stable causation and attribution between the input of system change initiatives and the outcomes it is seeking to achieve. Therefore, in evaluating system change initiatives it may be more appropriate to consider approaches that focus on contribution, rather than attribution.¹³ A further issue for system change initiatives is difficulty defining what the components of system change are, and how to effectively measure these (i.e. what can be measured and how can it be measured).

“...data currently collected on partnerships and on activities undertaken to influence systems change is minimal and not systematically collected. It is currently insufficient to assess change against the monitoring framework. This is partly due to the lack of clarity on what ‘systems change’ is and how the Pathfinder should go about achieving it as described.”

[Pathfinders early implementation report](#)

CSPPs involved in WFWF faced similar challenges in ensuring the effective measurement of softer outcomes in particular. For example, the [WFWF interim report](#) highlighted how some CSPPs had limited staff capacity to ensure high-quality data was collected, and analysed, which best captured the experiences of children, young people and families. Further, there was a challenge for CSPPs in working out how best to evidence the combined impact of a range of services and initiatives across different policy areas. Indeed, a recommendation of the WFWF Interim report was for CSPPs and Scottish Government to:

“...continue to work together to support CSPPs to articulate their intended outcomes of the WFWF. This would be a useful step before then considering how best to measure these with either existing evidence or through new evidence collection.”

¹² For example, to show that the systems change initiative was the cause of the outcomes observed.

¹³ A report on the complexities of system change evaluation can be found here: [Navigating-system-change-evaluation.pdf \(socialfinance.org.uk\)](#)

Scaling up and replicating system change initiatives

The Pathfinders early implementation report considered how system change initiatives might be scaled up. This suggested that scaling up should be based on the principles and values behind initiatives, and that the approach did not lend itself to exact replicability. It was felt that exact replicability would be working against place-based and person-centred values.

“Several partners and stakeholders mentioned that it was the concept of working together across organisations to deliver person-centred support that would be replicable, where the model itself would need to be adapted to suit the locality...As such, the actual execution would depend on local needs and resources...”

[Pathfinders early implementation report](#)

However, there were also some partners across both Pathfinders who felt it was too early in Pathfinder delivery to assess whether such activity could be replicated or scaled up in other areas. There were also several partners who felt that cost-effectiveness had to be assessed before a case could be made to sustain Pathfinder activity in the longer term.

“Most [participants from both Pathfinders] expressed that there was a need to ensure that monitoring data was being routinely collected to enable evaluations and to support cost-benefit analysis. Many felt that it would be necessary to examine long-term outcomes before it was possible to say whether the Pathfinders were delivering sufficient results to support a case for them to be sustained in the long-term.”

[Pathfinders early implementation report](#)

It is worth noting that conducting Value for Money analysis of complex interventions (such as through cost-benefit analysis) also poses challenges due to a number of factors (similar to the challenges set out above for determining robust attribution) including: the iterative design of initiatives; complex interventions operating across multiple levels of the system; and evolving interventions without clear parameters or fixed processes.

Discussions on scalability and replicability are currently absent in the outputs of other system change initiatives, likely due to the majority of initiatives being in the early stages of design and implementation.

6. Conclusions

This report has collated and synthesized evidence from across a range of initiatives focused on place-based system change in order to tackle child poverty. The findings highlight that there are early signs of positive development and implementation, with those initiatives at the implementation stage often seeing changes to structures and cultures which are seen to be creating the building blocks for longer-lasting system change. Further, it is notable that there appears to be support, and desire, across the system and across stakeholders to change ways of working and practice to ensure that support is delivered in a more place-based, person-centred way, which is a fundamental aspect of system change.

However, it is also clear from the evidence that system change initiatives will take time to implement, and embed. The development and implementation of initiatives to date has not been without struggles, with the time taken to effect system change being central to a number of challenges seen in implementation on the ground. For example, the extended timeframe for system change is relevant to challenges seen in relation to funding constraints, concerns surrounding the sustainability of initiatives, the development of monitoring frameworks and the motivation of staff.

It is also important to consider the difficult socio-economic context in which these initiatives are currently being developed, designed and implemented. Initiatives are often working to effect change across complex support systems and multiple service areas, challenging structural, organisational and cultural norms, and against a backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic and the cost of living crisis.

However, what has been highlighted by these findings on the design and early implementation of system change initiatives for tackling child poverty, is that system change requires involvement, and collaboration, by all those within the system. It requires all stakeholders to consider their role in assisting and bringing about positive change. While there have been positive developments and progress made in partnership working, across the published outputs to date, the role of national stakeholders, including Scottish Government, in supporting system change has largely been unexplored and this may be a future area of focus for system change initiatives.

In the context of needing to make progress in reducing child poverty and to meet our child poverty targets, the next stage for evaluations of systems change initiatives is to consider the impacts on those families accessing services, particularly the impacts on different groups of people in poverty (e.g. exploring impacts for the [priority family groups](#)) in further detail and as policies become more embedded. This will allow for greater understanding of the positive and negative impacts for families living in poverty and those experiencing the greatest barriers to moving out of poverty. It would also allow for the monitoring of initiatives to ensure they are not resulting in unintended consequences for families. However, it is important to note that system change initiatives take time to implement and as a result will take time to see impact for families. Further, due to the challenges in evaluating initiatives seeking to effect system change, it will likely be very difficult to directly attribute reductions in child poverty to system change initiatives, and it may be more appropriate to consider approaches that focus on understanding contribution rather

than attribution. Finally, the design and early implementation findings drawn on in this report highlight the importance of values and principles in designing system change initiatives. Place-based and person-centred approaches are fundamental to the design of all of the initiatives in scope for this research. These principles were reported by stakeholders to be key to the potential success and scaling up of initiatives. In particular, these values and principles allow for localised, and unique, contexts to shape the design of services and systems that work best for families living in poverty.

Next steps

Reporting on evidence and learning from place-based, system change initiatives to tackle child poverty is planned to take place annually as a standalone report, with a summary included within annual child poverty progress reports.

We intend to publish the next report in 2025. Learning and feedback from this report, alongside engagement with stakeholders, will feed into the development of the next iteration. However, as noted in the [evaluation approach to system change](#), this will be dependent on information from evaluations being available at the right time and able to address the research questions.

How to access background or source data

The data collected for this <statistical bulletin / social research publication>:

- are available in more detail through Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics
- are available via an alternative route. All data can be accessed by following hyperlinks throughout the report.
- may be made available on request, subject to consideration of legal and ethical factors. Please contact <email address> for further information.
- cannot be made available by Scottish Government for further analysis as Scottish Government is not the data controller.

7. Appendix A: Interview guide with key policy and analytical leads

Name of initiative:
Name of person(s) completing this template and role:
How does the initiative contribute to system change? In what way, does your policy aim to address any change in the current child poverty system?
What are the intended system change outcomes of your policy?
What are the range of actions or approaches planned to meet these outcomes? Please provide detail as to how the policy will anticipate realising a system change.
How are you anticipating that the system change driven through your policy will support child poverty outcomes? Please provide detail on the range of actions planned to achieve said system change outcomes in relation to child poverty.
Who is the intended beneficiary of your policy or initiative? For example, does the initiative benefit service providers, service users, policy stakeholders, low income households as a whole, or also those in low incomes and with children? If your policy considers the six priority family types in any way, please explain how.

What are the range of anticipated impacts for each beneficiary?
Please provide detail on how each intended beneficiary noted in the box above will benefit from your initiative.

At what level is system change intended to happen?
For example, is the initiative focused on localised system change or is it at a broader, more national level.

Is the initiative already being evaluated?
If yes, please include any links to the evaluation strategy or any other relevant documents (e.g. emerging findings)

If the initiative is being evaluated, is the evaluation exploring the system change element?



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