

Finance and Public Administration Committee

National Performance Framework: Inquiry into proposed National Outcomes - analysis of the call for views

Executive Summary

This document provides a comprehensive thematic analysis of responses to the Call for Views on the National Performance Framework (NPF): Inquiry into proposed National Outcomes. This call for views was undertaken on behalf of all Committees with the Finance and Public Administrations Committee as lead Committee. The analysis is organised around the NPF outcomes as well as cross-cutting themes.

Care: Respondents appreciate the introduction of a new Care outcome, emphasising the need for high-quality care services and the rights of carers. There are significant calls for improved support structures for both paid and unpaid carers, including fair wages, training, working conditions, respite care options, and financial support. The responses highlight the interconnectedness of care with other social determinants and stress the importance of an inclusive approach that considers the diverse needs of different populations, including disabled individuals and ethnic minorities.

Children and Young People: The importance of early childhood education, youth development programs, and support services is highlighted. Respondents call for policies ensuring safe and nurturing environments for children, with a focus on health, gender equality, and the needs of marginalised groups.

Climate Action: The new Climate Action outcome is welcomed, with respondents stating the need for a just transition that supports vulnerable and low-income households. There are calls for detailed plans ensuring fair distribution of the costs and benefits of climate policies, promoting renewable energy, energy efficiency, and integrating climate resilience into urban planning.

Communities: Volunteering is highlighted as a key indicator of community wellbeing. Respondents suggest promoting volunteer participation and enhancing digital inclusion to strengthen community connectedness. Investments in community

facilities and public spaces, as well as ensuring equitable access to community health services, are seen as vital for fostering resilient communities.

Culture: The role of Scotland's historic environment in contributing to wellbeing and economic transformation is highlighted. Respondents call for better integration of the cultural sector into the National Outcomes, supporting the arts, heritage preservation, and cultural education. Promoting cultural diversity and inclusion is seen as vital for building a vibrant and cohesive society.

Education and Learning: Support for lifelong learning is noted, with calls for an inclusive education system that addresses barriers faced by disadvantaged groups. Respondents advocate for integrating digital skills into the curriculum and promoting innovation in teaching methods.

Environment: Strong support is expressed for better reflecting water quality, availability, and management within the Environment outcome. Comprehensive environmental policies addressing biodiversity conservation, pollution control, and sustainable land use are recommended. The importance of community involvement in environmental decision-making and promoting eco-friendly practices is also highlighted.

Equality and Human Rights: Respondents stress the integration of human rights into Scots Law and highlight the need for improved access to justice for women victims of sexually motivated crimes. Addressing systemic inequalities and ensuring equal opportunities for all individuals, regardless of gender, race, or socioeconomic status, are emphasised. Specific measures to combat discrimination and promote inclusion are recommended.

Health: A holistic approach to health is advocated, addressing mental health services, preventive care, and community-based health initiatives. Respondents stress the importance of regulating commercial determinants of health, such as unhealthy food, tobacco, and alcohol, and ensuring equitable access to healthcare services.

Housing: The inclusion of a standalone Housing outcome is widely supported, with advocacy for a comprehensive approach to ensure affordability, accessibility, and energy efficiency. Respondents highlight the importance of policies addressing homelessness and housing insecurity, proposing the construction of 25,000 new homes annually. There is also a strong call for energy-efficient housing to reduce carbon emissions and lower energy costs, and for accessible housing options for disabled individuals.

International: A global perspective is recommended to ensure that Scotland's wellbeing does not come at the expense of others worldwide. Respondents advocate for international cooperation on climate change, human rights, and sustainable development. There are calls for Scotland to play an active role in global efforts to promote peace, security, and prosperity.

Poverty: Explicit measures to tackle poverty are called for, emphasising the interconnected nature of various outcomes. Respondents stress the importance of

affordable housing, access to quality education, and comprehensive social safety nets, with a specific focus on addressing child poverty.

Wellbeing Economy and Fair Work: Respondents call for a stronger focus on employability and skill acquisition, highlighting fair work principles such as job security, fair pay, and safe working conditions. There is an emphasis on supporting small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and ensuring gender-sensitive policies to address employment inequalities.

Cross-Cutting Themes: The feedback highlights the need for better integration of gender equality, human rights, and sustainability across all outcomes. Addressing systemic inequalities and promoting inclusive growth are deemed crucial by respondents. The importance of robust implementation plans, clear accountability mechanisms, and comprehensive data collection is stressed to ensure that the ambitious goals of the NPF translate into tangible improvements.

The responses to the consultation reflect strong support for the proposed outcomes of the NPF, with specific recommendations to enhance their effectiveness and inclusivity. By addressing these areas, the respondents suggest that the NPF can help create a more equitable and sustainable future.

Introduction

This summary provides a thematic analysis of the responses to the Call for Views on the National Performance Framework (NPF): Inquiry into proposed National Outcomes. This call for views was undertaken on behalf of all Committees with the Finance and Public Administrations Committee as lead Committee. The Call for Views ran from 13 May 2024 until 28 June 2024 covering seven weeks. The submissions are [published online](#). The Committees sought input as part of its inquiry into the proposed National Outcomes within the NPF, which aim to assess Scotland's progress toward national wellbeing, sustainability, and social equity.

The National Performance Framework is intended to serve as a strategic tool for the Scottish Government, outlining key priorities and outcomes across various policy areas. In response to the inquiry, a broad range of stakeholders—including local government authorities, health and social care organisations, charitable groups, educational institutions, housing developers, and advocacy bodies—submitted a total of seventy-two responses. These responses reflect the diversity of perspectives and expertise from across different sectors.

This analysis consolidates the feedback received, focusing on each of the proposed outcomes. Additionally, it examines the purpose of the NPF, the adequacy of Scottish Government consultation, connection to the UN Sustainable Development Goals, implementation and cross-cutting themes including gender equality, human rights, and sustainability. The document highlights areas of agreement as well as points where further development or clarification may be necessary.

The insights from this analysis are intended to inform the Committees scrutiny of the Scottish Government's approach to the proposed National Outcomes. By presenting

a range of views, this paper contributes to the broader discussion on how the NPF can be refined and implemented to address the challenges and opportunities facing Scotland.

Who Responded

The call for views received 72 responses: 69 from organisations and three from individuals, including a joint response from 14 organisations. The contributors included local government authorities, health and social care bodies, charitable groups, educational institutions, industry representatives, housing developers, and advocacy organisations. A full list can be found on the call for views [webpage](#). This diversity underscores the broad spectrum of interests and expertise relating to the NPF outcomes and in the call for views process.

Thematic Analysis Against Each Proposed Outcome

Care

Respondents appreciate the new Care outcome but highlight the need for a more detailed focus on high-quality care services and the rights of carers. There are significant calls for better support structures for both paid and unpaid carers, highlighting the importance of fair wages, training, and working conditions for care workers. Additionally, the well-being of carers, particularly unpaid carers who are often family members, is stressed, with suggestions for more respite care options and financial support to alleviate the burdens they face.

Wellbeing Economy Alliance Scotland stressed the importance of the new Care outcome, noting, "The proposed National Outcomes contain explicit references to the need to reduce inequalities in several of the Outcomes especially in the Equality and Human Rights Outcome but also in the Reduce Poverty Outcome, the Wellbeing Economy and Fair Work Outcome, and the Care Outcome". This highlights the interconnectedness of care with other social determinants and the importance of an integrated approach. Additionally, it is noted that care services must be inclusive and consider the diverse needs of different populations, including disabled individuals and ethnic minorities.

The importance of intersectionality is echoed by other respondents, who call for care policies that address the specific needs of marginalised groups. For example, Zero Tolerance welcomes the gender review's findings and stresses the need for intersectional data and gender mainstreaming throughout the NPF, stating, "It is essential that the purpose of the NPF is embedded throughout the National Outcomes. People across Scotland face different challenges to their well-being, and these challenges often intersect and compound".

Moreover, the responses reveal the need for enhancing the support of unpaid carers. Several responses suggest that more support is needed for unpaid carers who often

face significant financial and emotional burdens. Inclusion Scotland explains that "support for unpaid carers should be a priority, including financial support and access to respite care". These responses state that it is crucial to ensure that unpaid carers can continue to provide care without compromising their own health and well-being.

The role of digital technology in improving care services is also highlighted. Respondents suggest that integrating digital tools and platforms can enhance the delivery of care services, making them more efficient and accessible. Optometry Scotland explains the benefits and practicalities of this, stating, "digital technology should be leveraged to improve care services, particularly in remote and rural areas where access to care can be challenging".

A Scotland That Cares went as far to provide a list of potential indicators in their [response](#). These included indicators to measure quality of care, quality of life for those receiving and giving care and access to training among others. They go on to state: "It is vital that whatever Indicators are selected are tested — particularly with those with direct experience of care — and improved if necessary. Work will also be needed to identify appropriate data sources, and to plug gaps where these exist; this process should involve extensive stakeholder engagement".

While the new Care outcome is welcomed, respondents highlight the need for a comprehensive and inclusive approach that addresses the diverse needs of all individuals requiring care. This includes better support for both paid and unpaid carers, integration of digital technologies, and a strong focus on intersectionality to ensure that care services are equitable and accessible to all.

Children and Young People

Several organisations provided insight into the Children and Young People Outcome as part of their response to the Call for Views and an emphasis on lifelong learning was present in responses from several additional organisations. Respondents highlight the importance of early childhood education, youth development programs, and support services that cater to the unique needs of children and young people. There are calls for policies that ensure safe and nurturing environments for children, along with initiatives that promote their physical, emotional, and social well-being.

Obesity Action Scotland expressed disappointment that "healthy" was not added to the outcome: "Children and young people have a right to grow up healthy, and this should be made explicit and enshrined within the National Outcomes. This emphasises the importance of health as a fundamental right for children and young people, suggesting that health is critical to achieving their full potential".

Zero Tolerance highlighted the importance of gender-sensitive outcomes, noting, "A gender-sensitive outcome is vital. The Outcome should explicitly acknowledge the need to realise rights for the most marginalised children, including girls, ethnic minority children, LGBT+ children, disabled children, care-experienced children, children growing up in poverty, and those facing multiple oppressions". This suggests the necessity for an intersectional approach to address the diverse needs of all children and young people.

Early childhood education is identified as a critical area for investment. Zero Tolerance stated, "Evidence shows that the best start is a gender-equal start. A gender-equal start provides children of all genders the opportunity to explore and learn without restriction, which is crucial for their overall development". This perspective highlights the importance of ensuring early education is free from gender stereotypes and inclusive of all children.

Support services for young people are also emphasised. Respondents call for comprehensive youth development programs and support services that cater to the unique needs of children and young people. This includes mental health services, educational support, and safe recreational spaces. Zero Tolerance noted, "Youth development programs and support services that cater to the unique needs of children and young people are crucial for their well-being". Respondents believe that providing these supports can help young people navigate challenges and achieve their full potential.

The inclusion of a strong focus on safety and nurturing environments is also seen as vital. CPAG in Scotland stated, "We provide children and young people with hope for the future and create opportunities for them to fulfil their dreams". This emphasises the need to create environments where children feel safe and supported, enabling them to thrive.

Additionally, CPAG highlighted the interconnected nature with the poverty Outcome: "As 1 in 4 children in Scotland are currently living in poverty, there should be an ambition to eradicate child poverty embedded across all these outcomes".

The outcome for Children and Young People is seen as essential for ensuring that all children have the opportunity to grow up in a safe, healthy, and supportive environment. Respondents call for a specific focus on health, gender equality, and the needs of marginalised groups. By addressing these areas, respondents feel the outcome can help ensure that all children and young people in Scotland have the opportunity to reach their full potential.

Climate Action

The new Climate Action outcome is welcomed, but respondents emphasise the importance of a just transition that supports vulnerable and low-income households affected by climate policies. There are calls for detailed plans that ensure fair distribution of the costs and benefits of climate action, particularly focusing on protecting jobs and creating new opportunities in green industries. Additionally, the integration of climate resilience into urban planning and infrastructure projects is recommended to mitigate the impacts of climate change.

Zero Tolerance highlighted the need for policy coherence, stating, "The proposed National Outcomes must be backed up by gender-sensitive, sex-disaggregated data and robust indicators for gender equality". This underscores the importance of considering the differential impacts of climate policies on various population groups.

Respondents also stress the importance of aligning climate action with other National Outcomes, such as health, economy, and housing. Inclusion Scotland stated that "climate action must be integrated with other policy areas to ensure a holistic approach to sustainability and resilience".

There is strong support for policies that promote renewable energy and energy efficiency. Respondents suggest that investments in renewable energy sources and energy-efficient buildings can help reduce carbon emissions and lower energy costs for households. In their response, Scotland's International Development Alliance states that "renewable energy and energy efficiency should be prioritised to reduce carbon emissions and support a sustainable economy".

The role of green jobs in supporting a just transition is also emphasised. Respondents call for training and support programs to help workers transition to jobs in green industries. Wellbeing Economy Alliance Scotland explains "a just transition must include support for workers to transition to green jobs, including training and education programs".

The Climate Action Outcome is seen by respondents as a crucial component of the National Performance Framework, with respondents highlighting the need for a just transition, policy coherence, and investments in renewable energy and energy efficiency. Aligning climate action with other National Outcomes and supporting green jobs are also seen as key factors in achieving sustainability and resilience.

Communities

There are several themes present in the responses relating to the Communities Outcomes. Volunteering is highlighted as a key indicator of community wellbeing, with suggestions to promote volunteer participation and recognise its value in fostering social cohesion. Respondents also suggest the inclusion of digital connectedness as part of the Communities Outcome to reflect the growing importance of digital inclusion in modern society. Enhancing community facilities and public spaces, along with promoting social interactions, are seen as vital components for building strong, resilient communities.

Equitable access to community health services is also a critical aspect of community wellbeing. The Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (SCVO) stresses the need for consistent access to services like community pharmacies, GPs, and dental practices across the nation, noting that these are vital as the first point of contact for physical and mental health support. Additionally, Optometry Scotland stressed the importance of community health services, stating, "We support the emphasis on equitable access to community health services which are crucial for both physical and mental health support." The Poverty Alliance highlights that "supporting families with a sustainable route out of poverty needs to be more clearly defined in the outcomes," underscoring the interconnectedness of health, poverty, and community support systems.

Several responses highlight the role of volunteering in building strong communities. Volunteer Scotland explains further, stating that "volunteering underpins local service

delivery, promotes social capital, and stimulates the social norm of reciprocity." There are calls for policies that encourage volunteer participation and recognise the contributions of volunteers to community wellbeing.

Digital inclusion is also seen as a critical component of community resilience. Respondents suggest that ensuring access to digital technologies and training can help bridge the digital divide and enhance community connectedness. "Digital technology should be leveraged to improve community connectedness, particularly in remote and rural areas where access to services can be challenging," explains Optometry Scotland. Additionally, respondents suggest that ensuring access to digital technologies and training can help bridge the digital divide and enhance community connectedness. The Scottish Women's Convention stresses the need for improved public transport links and digital connectivity to combat social isolation, particularly in rural areas.

Enhancing community facilities and public spaces is another key theme. Respondents call for investments in community centres, parks, and recreational facilities to promote social interactions and support community wellbeing. One response from the Edinburgh Voluntary Organisations' Council states, "Investing in community facilities and public spaces is essential for fostering social interactions and building strong, resilient communities."

The Communities outcome is seen as a vital component of the National Performance Framework, with respondents stressing the importance of volunteering, digital inclusion, and investments in community facilities. Ensuring equitable access to community health services and promoting social interactions are also highlighted as key factors in building strong, resilient communities.

Culture

Culture is the only Outcome to remain unchanged. Respondents are generally content with it but suggest a limited number of changes. Inclusion Scotland suggests "should be revised to include the words 'affordable' and 'accessible'" citing research that shows "people living in the most deprived areas are 16% less likely to attend cultural venues or events than those living in the least deprived areas whilst disabled people are 29% less likely to attend cultural venues or events than people without these conditions".

The role of Scotland's historic environment in contributing to wellbeing and economic transformation is emphasised by respondents, who suggest better integration of the cultural sector into the National Outcomes. This integration is seen as essential for fostering a sense of identity and community. Respondents call for policies that support the arts, heritage preservation, and cultural education, recognising the cultural sector as a key driver of social and economic development. The promotion of cultural diversity and inclusion is also emphasised as vital to building a vibrant and cohesive society.

Historic Environment Scotland highlighted the broad contributions of the historic environment, stating, "Scotland's historic environment is central to our lives, our

sense of place, identity, and community, and to our wellbeing. It inspires us and is part of the fabric of our culture: the songs, the stories, and the traditions that shape how the world sees us and informs how we forge our future. This underscores the multifaceted value of cultural heritage, beyond its aesthetic appeal, encompassing economic and social dimensions.

Respondents also stress the economic impact of the cultural sector, noting its role in job creation and tourism. Historic Environment Scotland remarked, “In 2023, the historic environment generated £6 billion for Scotland’s economy and supported 80,000 full-time equivalent jobs, mainly in the heritage, tourism, and construction sectors”.

The preservation and promotion of cultural heritage are seen as crucial for community development. Respondents advocate for policies that ensure local communities have access to cultural resources and can participate in cultural activities. Zero Tolerance explains that “Access to cultural activities, events, facilities, and sports plays a major role in the promotion of good mental health and wellbeing”. This view aligns with the broader understanding that cultural engagement is a key component of social wellbeing.

Educational initiatives are also highlighted, with calls for integrating cultural education into school curricula. CPAG in Scotland suggested, “The education system should include references to wider settings in which education and learning occur, such as libraries, museums, arts and culture, and sports”. Respondents feel this approach can help foster a culture of lifelong learning and appreciation for cultural heritage from a young age.

Furthermore, respondents emphasise the importance of cultural diversity and inclusion. Zero Tolerance states in their response, “While this outcome is welcome, it is important to recognise that all members of our society do not have the same access to culture, arts, and events, whether due to financial exclusion or accessibility”. Addressing these disparities is seen as essential by respondents for ensuring that the benefits of cultural participation are available to all.

The integration of the cultural sector into the National Outcomes is viewed by respondents as integral for promoting wellbeing, economic development, and social cohesion. Respondents highlight the significant contributions of the historic environment, the economic benefits of the cultural sector, and the importance of inclusive and accessible cultural policies.

Education and Learning

Support for the emphasis on lifelong learning is noted, with calls for more specific references to gender equality and the needs of marginalised groups. Respondents advocate for an inclusive education system that addresses the barriers faced by disadvantaged groups and provides equal opportunities for all learners. The importance of integrating digital skills and promoting innovation in teaching methods to prepare students for the future is also highlighted.

Zero Tolerance stresses the need for a gender-sensitive education system: "Scotland needs an education system which challenges gender stereotypes, addresses sexism and harassment in schools, promotes gender-equal play and learning, and ensures the workforce is trained on gender issues". This underscores the importance of addressing gender inequality within the education system to create a more inclusive learning environment.

The inclusion of marginalised groups in education policies is another key theme. Zero Tolerance highlighted the need for specific measures to ensure that all students, regardless of their background, have access to quality education. "The Outcome should have a sentence added to explicitly acknowledge the need to realise rights for the most marginalised children, including girls, ethnic minority children, LGBT+ children, disabled children, care-experienced children, children growing up in poverty, and those facing multiple oppressions". This emphasises the need for targeted policies to support the educational needs of marginalised groups.

The importance of integrating digital skills into the education system is also highlighted. Respondents suggest that incorporating digital literacy and skills into the curriculum is essential for preparing students for the future. CPAG in Scotland noted, "The education system must integrate digital skills and promote innovation in teaching methods to prepare students for the future". Ensuring that students are proficient in digital skills is seen as crucial for their success in an increasingly digital world.

Support for lifelong learning is another key theme. Respondents share the importance of providing opportunities for continuous education and skill development throughout life. Optometry Scotland states that "Lifelong learning should be emphasised, with opportunities for continuous education and skill development available to all". Volunteering is mentioned by respondents as an important way adults gain new skills and experience. Additionally, Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) describes the importance of a flexible education system as they face net zero, digital, and productivity challenges in their industry: "opportunities for training must be made more accessible and flexible, to support multiple routes to competence". This highlights the need for a flexible education system that supports learning at all stages of life.

The Education and Learning Outcome is seen by respondents as essential for creating an inclusive and equitable education system that addresses the needs of all learners. Respondents call for a focus on gender equality, support for marginalised groups, and the integration of digital skills.

Environment

Respondents are generally supportive of the Environment outcome's focus on the natural environment and biodiversity, however there is a call from Paths for All for an additional standalone outcome with a focus on the climate and biodiversity crises. There are also concerns about potential overlap between the Environment Outcome and the Climate Action Outcome.

Respondents have voiced strong support for the need to better reflect water quality, availability, and management within the Environment outcome. This emphasis includes calls for comprehensive environmental policies that address a variety of issues such as biodiversity conservation, pollution control, and sustainable land use. The importance of community involvement in environmental decision-making and the promotion of eco-friendly practices at the local level is also highlighted. Additionally, there is a significant push for integrating environmental education into school curricula to foster a culture of sustainability from a young age.

Historic Environment Scotland highlighted the need for a more holistic approach, stating, "The proposed version has lost that inclusion of heritage and the reference to the built environment as part of 'the environment'. The historic environment is an important part of the environment as a whole" This underscores the importance of recognising and preserving Scotland's historic environment as an integral component of the overall environmental strategy.

Furthermore, respondents stress the importance of biodiversity conservation. One Kind noted, "The COVID pandemic is a recent and extreme example of how the health and wellbeing of humans and other animals is inextricably linked with devastating impacts on humans, farmed, and wild animals alike". Additionally Scottish Animal Welfare Commission highlighted that it is "not ethically justified to consider human wellbeing in isolation from that of non-human animals, who are affected by our use of animals, our behaviour, our presence and our impact on the shared environment." There is also a call to incorporate the UN One Health and One Welfare framework. This perspective focuses on the interconnectedness of human, animal, and environmental health, including the need for policies that promote biodiversity and prevent zoonotic diseases.

The call for comprehensive environmental policies extends to addressing pollution control and sustainable land use. One respondent emphasised, "A reduction in meat and dairy consumption and improved farmed animal welfare is necessary for mitigating and adapting to climate change, restoring biodiversity, reducing pollution, avoiding zoonotic disease outbreaks, tackling antibiotic resistance, and increasing food security". This reflects the multifaceted benefits of sustainable agricultural practices and their role in environmental conservation. Respondents also highlighted the connection to the Consumer Scotland Act 2020 which recognises the role for consumers in relation to climate action.

Additionally, integrating environmental education into school curricula is seen as essential for fostering a culture of sustainability. Aberdeen City Council noted, " The UN CRC article 29 includes that education should develop children's respect for the environment.". While this comment primarily focuses on digital skills, the principle can be extended to environmental education, highlighting the need to equip future generations with the knowledge and skills to address environmental challenges.

The Environment Outcome should include a comprehensive approach to water quality, biodiversity conservation, pollution control, and sustainable land use. Community involvement and environmental education are also critical components. Respondents feel that by addressing these areas, the outcome can help ensure that

Scotland's natural and built environments are preserved and enhanced for future generations.

Equality and Human Rights

Respondents stress the importance of integrating human rights into Scots Law through the proposed Human Rights Bill. There are calls for improved access to justice for those experiencing violence against women and girls, highlighting the need for better legal support and protection services. The importance of addressing systemic inequalities and ensuring equal opportunities for all individuals, regardless of gender, race, or socioeconomic status, is emphasised. Specific measures to combat discrimination and promote inclusion across various sectors are recommended.

Zero Tolerance emphasised, "The new definition should be further expanded to 'We respect, protect, and fulfil human rights and live free from violence and discrimination.' Adding 'free from violence' would help ensure further accountability to eradicating violence against women and girls in Scotland". This underscores the need for explicit commitments to address gender-based violence within the framework.

Improving access to justice for victims of gender-based violence is also highlighted. Scotland's International Development Alliance states that "there is a need for better legal support and protection services for women victims of sexually motivated crimes. This includes providing accessible legal advice, support services, and ensuring that perpetrators are held accountable. Ensuring that victims have access to justice is seen as crucial for upholding human rights and protecting vulnerable individuals.

There is also strong support for a dedicated Gender Equality Outcome. "Zero Tolerance recommends the inclusion of a Gender Equality Outcome with robust indicators for measuring violence against women and girls (VAWG). Women's rights are human rights, and men's violence is a violation of the right to live in safety and with dignity". This would ensure that gender equality is given the attention it deserves, and that progress can be effectively measured.

Addressing systemic inequalities is another key focus. Zero Tolerance explains "Systemic inequalities based on gender, race, disability, and socioeconomic status must be addressed through targeted policies and measures. This includes ensuring equal access to education, employment, and healthcare". By tackling these root causes of inequality, the framework can help create a more just and inclusive society. Additionally, Minority Ethnic Carers of People Project (MECOPP) urges the Scottish Government to add the following to the Outcome "a strong commitment to tackle barriers and discrimination faced by Scotland's minority ethnic communities".

The Equality and Human Rights outcome is seen as a critical component of the National Performance Framework. Respondents call for a focus on gender equality, addressing systemic inequalities, and improving access to justice for victims of

gender-based violence. By addressing these areas, the outcome can help create a more equitable and inclusive society.

Health

There is a call for addressing the commercial determinants of health, such as the availability and marketing of unhealthy food, tobacco, and alcohol. Respondents emphasise the need for an inclusive approach to health that includes mental health services, preventive care, and community-based health initiatives. Strengthening public health infrastructure and ensuring equitable access to healthcare services across different regions and populations are also highlighted as priorities.

Scotland's International Development Alliance pointed out, "the Health Outcome should explicitly address the commercial determinants of health. This includes regulating the availability and marketing of unhealthy food, tobacco, and alcohol, which are major contributors to poor health outcomes". This highlights the importance of addressing the broader environmental factors that influence health behaviours and outcomes.

Mental health is also a significant concern for many respondents. Optometry Scotland calls for "mental health services [to] be integrated into the health outcome, with a focus on preventive care and early intervention. This will help reduce the burden of mental illness and improve overall wellbeing". Ensuring that mental health is given equal priority to physical health is seen as essential for a comprehensive approach to health.

Community-based health initiatives are understood by respondents as a way to improve health outcomes and reduce inequalities. The Care Inspectorate states in their response that "strengthening community health services and ensuring equitable access to care across different regions is crucial. This includes providing services like community pharmacies, GPs, optometrists, and dental practices". By making health services more accessible and responsive to local needs, communities can achieve better health outcomes.

Preventive care is another key focus. Optometry Scotland states "preventive care should be a central component of the health outcome. This includes promoting healthy lifestyles, regular health screenings, and vaccination programs". Respondents highlight that prevention can help reduce the incidence of chronic diseases and improve long-term health outcomes.

The Health Outcome is seen by respondents as a vital part of the National Performance Framework. Respondents call for a focus on the commercial determinants of health, mental health services, community-based health initiatives, and preventive care.

Housing

The inclusion of a standalone National Outcome on Housing is widely supported, with respondents advocating for a comprehensive approach to housing that ensures

affordability, accessibility, and energy efficiency. Homes for Scotland places a strong emphasis on the necessity of a clear National Outcome that prioritises the delivery of new homes, with a target of 25,000 new homes per annum. Additionally, there are calls for policies that address homelessness and housing insecurity, ensuring that vulnerable populations have access to safe and stable housing.

A joint response from Citizens Advice Scotland, Churches Action for the Homeless, Crisis, Cyrenians, Homeless Network Scotland, I-SPHERE, Legal Services Agency, Poverty Alliance, Rock Trust, Salvation Army, Scottish Federation of Housing Associations, and Turning Point Scotland noted, "This outcome must not be just about housing supply or infrastructure, vital as these are. It should recognise that some people may require support to enable them to access and live successfully in their home, including older people, young people and care leavers, people with mental health needs or learning disabilities and homeless households. This support is wide-ranging and include things like low-level or short-term support to manage tenancies, bills and repairs, through to intensive support for people with disabilities or complex needs such as supported housing or Housing First, and may also be linked to individual care packages."

Several responses stress the importance of energy-efficient housing to address both environmental and economic concerns. Scotland's International Development Alliance states that "energy-efficient housing should be a priority to reduce carbon emissions and lower energy costs for residents". This aligns with broader climate action goals and the potential to reduce the financial burden on households.

Addressing homelessness is a key concern for many respondents. There are calls for comprehensive strategies to prevent and reduce homelessness, including providing adequate support services and affordable housing options. In the response from Aberdeen City Council it states that "policies must focus on preventing homelessness and providing support for those at risk. This includes increasing the availability of affordable housing and providing support services". The Children and Young People's Centre for Justice also highlights the integral role housing can play in mitigating recidivism.

The need for accessible housing for disabled individuals is also highlighted. Respondents emphasise the importance of ensuring that housing policies consider the needs of disabled individuals, providing accessible housing options and necessary adaptations. For example, Zero Tolerance states that "housing policies must ensure that accessible housing is available for disabled individuals, including necessary adaptations and support services".

There is also a call for a related Home Outcome from Citizens Advice Scotland, Churches Action for the Homeless, Crisis, Cyrenians, Homeless Network Scotland, I-SPHERE, Legal Services Agency, Poverty Alliance, Rock Trust, Salvation Army, Scottish Federation of Housing Associations, and Turning Point Scotland:

"A national outcome focusing on home – and the support people need to live as independently as possible at home – will strengthen housing rights for people with a range of support needs including older people, homeless households, people with learning disabilities, mental health needs and others."

The standalone Housing outcome is seen by respondents as a crucial step towards addressing housing-related issues in Scotland. Respondents emphasise the need for a comprehensive approach that includes the delivery of new, energy-efficient homes, strategies to prevent and reduce homelessness, and ensuring accessible housing for all.

International

A global perspective is recommended to ensure that Scotland's wellbeing does not come at the expense of others worldwide. Respondents advocate for international cooperation on issues such as climate change, human rights, and sustainable development. There are calls for Scotland to play an active role in global efforts to promote peace, security, and prosperity. Additionally, the importance of fostering international partnerships and exchanges in areas such as education, research, and cultural activities is highlighted.

For example, NHS National Services Scotland emphasised the alignment of the National Outcomes with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), stating, "Enhancing the alignment of the proposed National Outcomes with the UN Sustainable Development Goals and the inclusion of 'climate action' and 'environment' in the Scottish National Outcomes is of value". Respondents also call for active participation in global efforts to address climate change. NHS National Services Scotland notes, "The importance of developing and future-proofing our coastal water and waste infrastructure (SDG6) will be essential in light of climate change and vital for healthy communities and industry". Respondents emphasise the need for robust environmental policies that also contribute to global sustainability goals.

The need for Scotland to take a leadership role in international development is also stressed. In their response, Zero Tolerance states "Scotland should show leadership and make a positive contribution globally. This includes promoting peace, democracy, human rights, international development, climate action, international trade, and welcoming diversity".

The role of international partnerships in education and research is highlighted as crucial for fostering innovation and global understanding. CPAG in Scotland suggested, "International partnerships and exchanges in areas such as education, research, and cultural activities are important for fostering global understanding and collaboration". Respondents feel these partnerships can help drive progress in various sectors and enhance Scotland's global influence.

The promotion of human rights is another key theme, with respondents advocating for Scotland to take a strong stance on international human rights issues. Graham Long states in his response that "Promoting human rights globally is a key aspect of Scotland's international outcome. This includes ensuring the protection and assistance for refugees and migrants". This aligns with Scotland's commitment to being a welcoming and inclusive society.

Respondents feel the International Outcome should reflect Scotland's commitment to global cooperation and leadership. Respondents call for alignment with the UN SDGs, active participation in climate action, international development, and human rights advocacy.

Poverty

Respondents call for the inclusion of explicit measures to tackle poverty, highlighting the interconnected nature of outcomes and their contribution to overall social and economic well-being. Emphasising the need for targeted interventions to support low-income families, respondents stress the importance of affordable housing, access to quality education, and comprehensive social safety nets. Addressing child poverty and ensuring that all individuals have the resources and opportunities to lead fulfilling lives are seen as essential.

The Child Poverty Action Group in Scotland highlighted the necessity of clear and strong language in the poverty outcome, stating, "It is welcome to see 'reduce poverty' as a national outcome but this wording does not fully match the proposed updated purpose of the Framework or existing government commitments" This comment suggests that the framework should reflect stronger commitments, possibly including terms like "eradicate poverty," to align with existing governmental promises and ambitions.

North Ayrshire Council stressed the importance of integrating poverty reduction with other outcomes, noting, "There is also an opportunity to show how poverty is intrinsically linked throughout the majority of the outcomes". This suggests the need for a holistic approach that recognises the interplay between poverty and other social determinants such as health, education, and housing.

Affordable housing is frequently mentioned as a critical factor in poverty reduction however there are many other factors. The joint response from Citizens Advice Scotland, Churches Action for the Homeless, Crisis, Cyrenians, Homeless Network Scotland, I-SPHERE, Legal Services Agency, Poverty Alliance, Rock Trust, Salvation Army, Scottish Federation of Housing Associations, Turning Point Scotland calls for an expanded outcome stating, "when defining [the Outcome] further this must recognise the importance of sustaining a home and not be restricted to a narrow definition regarding numbers of houses". This response suggests the need for a broad and inclusive definition of housing that goes beyond mere availability to consider the quality and sustainability of living conditions.

The importance of addressing child poverty specifically is also highlighted. The Child Poverty Action Group in Scotland suggest amending the Children and Young People Outcome in to include poverty specifically. This perspective suggests that addressing child poverty is fundamental to achieving broader social and economic goals.

Respondents also call for comprehensive social safety nets to support low-income families. North Ayrshire Council stated, "supporting families with a sustainable route out of poverty needs to be more clearly defined in the outcomes". This suggests the

need for well-defined and robust support systems that provide long-term solutions rather than temporary relief.

In conclusion, responses related to the Poverty outcome state that it should include explicit measures to address various aspects of poverty, with a strong emphasis on interconnectedness with other outcomes, affordable housing, and child poverty. Comprehensive social safety nets are also essential.

Wellbeing Economy and Fair Work

Respondents call for a stronger focus on employability and the acquisition of necessary skills for employment, suggesting revisions to better acknowledge alternative methods of gaining skills, such as modern apprenticeships. The importance of fair work principles, including job security, fair pay, and safe working conditions, is emphasised as foundational to a wellbeing economy. Additionally, there is a call for policies that support small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) as crucial drivers of economic growth and employment.

Zero Tolerance stated, "The proposed changes are welcome, but the Wellbeing Economy and Fair Work Outcome should explicitly address the gender inequalities in employment, pay, and progression. This highlights the need for gender-sensitive policies within the framework to ensure that women, who are often overrepresented in low-paid and precarious work, benefit from fair work initiatives.

Wellbeing Economy Alliance Scotland added, "A wellbeing economy should focus on delivering good lives for all people, protecting the health of our planet, and providing fair work for everyone. This aligns with the broader purpose of the NPF to improve the wellbeing of people living in Scotland now and in the future. This perspective demonstrates the holistic nature of a wellbeing economy, which respondents state should encompass environmental sustainability and social equity.

Respondents also stress the importance of supporting SMEs, which play a crucial role in the Scottish economy. Wellbeing Economy Alliance Scotland stated that "policies should support SMEs as they are key drivers of economic growth and employment. This includes providing access to finance, reducing regulatory burdens, and offering support for innovation and expansion". SMEs are seen as vital for creating jobs and fostering economic resilience, especially in local communities.

The need for comprehensive support systems for workers is also highlighted. Zero Tolerance explains that "fair work principles should include not only fair pay and job security but also access to training and career development opportunities. This will help workers adapt to changing economic conditions and improve their employability". Ensuring that workers have opportunities for continuous learning and development is essential for maintaining a dynamic and competitive workforce.

The Wellbeing Economy and Fair Work Outcome is seen as a critical component of the National Performance Framework. Respondents call for a stronger emphasis on gender equality, support for SMEs, and comprehensive fair work principles. By

addressing these areas, the outcome can help create a more inclusive and sustainable economy that benefits all citizens.

Broad Thematic Analysis

SG Approach and Consistency Across Outcomes

Respondents largely appreciate the National Performance Framework (NPF) for its extensive coverage of key areas impacting wellbeing, such as health, education, economy, environment, and human rights. However, there are concerns regarding the omission of explicit references to economic growth and innovation. Some suggest that these aspects should be retained to ensure a balanced and inclusive approach to economic development.

Consistency across outcomes is frequently highlighted as essential. Many respondents advocate for a framework that recognises the interconnected nature of various sectors and outcomes. For instance, health outcomes are closely linked to economic conditions, educational opportunities, and environmental factors. This interconnectedness should be reflected in policy design and implementation processes to foster holistic progress. Aberdeen City Council noted, "Joined-up policy making requires an understanding of the interlinkages and co-dependencies between the outcomes and there is a need for a holistic view".

Overall, respondents call for the NPF to be underpinned by supporting theories of change that flow into relevant Scottish Government strategies. This would help ensure cohesion between SG strategy and the broader goals of reducing inequalities and promoting inclusive growth. Aberdeen City Council stated, "We advocate for the National Outcomes being underpinned by supporting theories of change which then flow into relevant Scottish Government Strategies".

While the NPF's comprehensive coverage is appreciated, maintaining a balanced approach that includes economic growth and innovation is considered vital by respondents. They highlight ensuring consistency across outcomes, setting specific indicators and targets, and integrating gender equality and human rights into the framework are essential steps for achieving the broader goals of the NPF.

Change of Purpose

The updated purpose of the National Performance Framework (NPF), "to improve the wellbeing of people living in Scotland now and in the future," has garnered significant support, though perspectives vary on its effectiveness and areas for improvement.

Many respondents welcome the revised purpose's focus on wellbeing. For instance, Zero Tolerance emphasises that the emphasis on wellbeing and future generations is "welcome to encourage long-lasting and sustainable change". Similarly, Volunteer Scotland highlights the importance of collective responsibility for wellbeing,

suggesting the purpose could be strengthened by reflecting this notion more explicitly.

However, some express concerns regarding the clarity and scope of the revised purpose. Carnegie UK, while supportive of the wellbeing focus, suggests that a name change to 'Scotland's Wellbeing Framework' could make the purpose clearer and engage citizens more effectively. Similarly, MECOPP notes that the term "people" should reflect an intersectional approach to avoid exclusion, urging for more inclusivity in the purpose.

Others criticise the exclusion of economic growth from the revised purpose. Respondents such as Obesity Action Scotland argue that removing references to sustainable and inclusive economic growth could lead to overlooked groups and potential negative impacts on wellbeing, stating that "flourish" is a more ambitious term than "improve."

Several respondents suggest expanding the scope of the purpose beyond Scotland. Scotland's International Development Alliance advocates adding "and elsewhere in the world" to reflect a global outlook, emphasising interconnected global wellbeing.

Overall, while the updated purpose is seen as a positive step towards a more streamlined and accessible framework, there are calls for more precise language, inclusivity, and integration of economic factors to ensure its effectiveness in achieving long-term wellbeing goals.

Alignment with the United Nations Sustainability Goals

The alignment of the proposed National Outcomes with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) has sparked a range of perspectives among respondents. Many commend the effort to incorporate SDG principles into Scotland's NPF but call for improvements in specific areas.

Several respondents acknowledge that the National Outcomes generally align with the SDGs but note areas where this alignment could be strengthened. For instance, Aberdeen City Council supports the alignment but suggests that the Scottish Government "considers how it could improve the alignment of the NPF with the SDGs". This view is echoed by the Scottish Human Rights Commission, which recognises that themes such as climate action, wellbeing, and human rights are integrated into the Outcomes, yet calls for explicit linking of each Outcome with specific SDGs to enhance coherence and accountability.

A recurring concern is the treatment of poverty within the National Outcomes. Inclusion Scotland highlights that SDG 1's goal to "end poverty in all its forms everywhere" is prioritised globally, but Scotland's National Outcomes frame this issue as reducing rather than ending poverty. This subtle shift in language is seen as diminishing the importance of tackling poverty as a foundational element for achieving other goals. CPAG in Scotland argues that amending the National

Outcome from "reduce poverty" to "end poverty" would more closely reflect SDG 1 and strengthen Scotland's commitment to this goal.

Gender equality (SDG 5) is another area where respondents urge more focused attention. The absence of a dedicated National Outcome on gender equality has raised concerns, with some respondents pointing out that despite improvements in integrating gender considerations across other Outcomes, the lack of a standalone Outcome weakens the focus on gender-specific issues. Engender and others argue that addressing gender equality requires a "twin-track" approach—both through a specific Outcome and by embedding gender equality across all policy.

Additionally, respondents advocate for better incorporation of SDGs that are currently underrepresented. North Ayrshire Council, for instance, highlights the need for more emphasis on SDG 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy), SDG 9 (Industry Innovation and Infrastructure), and SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals), suggesting that these areas require stronger integration into the National Outcomes.

Implementation and Accountability

The implementation gap between policy objectives and real-world outcomes is a significant concern. Respondents including The Scottish Human Rights Commission call for stronger processes for accountability and capacity-building to ensure that the National Outcomes are not only aspirational but also actionable.

While the NPF sets ambitious goals, there are calls for robust implementation plans and accountability mechanisms to ensure these goals translate into tangible improvements. This includes detailed action plans specifying the steps needed to achieve each outcome, as well as metrics to monitor progress and evaluate success. Stirling Council stated, "The delivery mechanism which sets out 'how' we are going to achieve national outcomes with enough detail to link to specific actors and programmes to be accountable for delivery is crucial".

Improved Data Collection and Accountability Mechanisms

To ensure effective realisation of the proposed changes, respondents call for specific actions such as setting clear indicators and targets to measure progress. Stirling Council highlights the importance of this stating "The delivery mechanism which sets out 'how' we are going to achieve national outcomes with enough detail to link to specific actors and programmes to be accountable for delivery is crucial".

To ensure effective monitoring and progress, improved data collection and clear accountability mechanisms are seen as crucial.

Several responses underscore the need for comprehensive and gender-sensitive data collection to monitor progress effectively. For example, Zero Tolerance discusses the lack of sex-disaggregated data and robust indicators for gender equality as a barrier to meaningful progress. Ensuring that all relevant data is collected and analysed will help in tracking disparities and making informed decisions to address them.

Many responses stress the need for specific mechanisms such as SMART targets (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound), a national decision-making tool, and legal duties to integrate the National Outcomes into decision-making processes.

For instance, Inclusion Scotland highlights concerns about the adequacy of current data collection methods, stating, "At present, much of the data collected as indicators or proxy indicators are not capable of measuring the impact on groups such as the BAME communities and disabled people". They call for better data and a determination to use it to work with disabled people in devising and developing evidence-based solutions informed by direct lived experience.

Guidance and Good Practice Examples

Respondents suggest that the implementation plan should include detailed guidance and good practice examples to help public bodies align their operations with the National Outcomes. The Care Inspectorate notes the importance of "clear guidance and good practice examples" to demonstrate how decision-making supports the delivery of the National Performance Framework.

Sector-Specific Feedback and Integration

Several responses emphasize the need for integrating the National Outcomes with existing policies and sector-specific frameworks. For example, Paths for All recommends making better use of the toolkit for policymakers developed by Scottish Government in partnership with IDEAS members and SDG Network Scotland. In another example, Zero Tolerance stresses the importance of cross-referencing key policies, including the Physical Activity Framework and the revised National Walking Strategy.

Gender Competency and Training

Training for decision-makers is seen as essential to ensure the National Outcomes are effectively implemented. Zero Tolerance highlights the need for gender competency training, stating, "Gender competency training for decision makers across the Scottish Government would allow for more successful implementation of the National Outcomes. They argue that decision-makers must understand gender inequality realities in Scotland and their role in tackling it.

Corporate Plans and Legal Duties

Linking legal duties and decision-making to the National Outcomes through corporate plans or strategies is suggested by respondents. The Care Inspectorate describes how their Corporate Plan 2022-2025 focuses on helping achieve the National Outcomes and suggests that an implementation plan should be supported by clear guidance and good practice examples.

Collaboration and Partnership

Respondents feel that stakeholder collaboration at each step of implementation is vital to ensure the National Outcomes are fit for purpose and achievable. This sentiment is echoed by many, including a Joint response from Citizens Advice Scotland, Churches Action for the Homeless, Crisis, Cyrenians, Homeless Network Scotland, I-SPHERE, Legal Services Agency, Poverty Alliance, Rock Trust, Salvation Army, Scottish Federation of Housing Associations, Turning Point Scotland that highlights the importance of a "golden thread" running from the National Performance Framework down to local-level policy and practice.

Resource Allocation and Capacity Building

Adequate funding and resources are essential for successful implementation. Several responses express concerns about the gap between policy intent and actual implementation. Housing Support Enabling Unit emphasises the need for a clear budgetary framework that aligns with the National Outcomes, ensuring financial resources are directed towards critical areas. The Care Inspectorate suggests that implementation should be supported by clear guidance and good practice examples, taking account of the capacity, resources, and training needs of stakeholders.

Legal Framework and Accountability

Wellbeing Economy Alliance Scotland welcomes the introduction of a Wellbeing and Sustainable Development Bill and recommends using it to provide a stronger legal basis for the National Outcomes. This Bill could embed a long-term and preventative approach to public policy and ensure the National Outcomes and the framework they sit in become a roadmap for a future where everyone can thrive. The proposed Bill includes components such as clear definitions of wellbeing and sustainable development, stronger legal duties, support for collaborative ways of working, and the creation of an independent Future Generations Commissioner to provide scrutiny and guidance.

In their response, Audit Scotland on behalf of the Auditor General for Scotland and the Accounts Commission references The Scottish Leaders Forum's reported on the barriers to delivering an effective system of accountability against the NPF:

“Behavioural – the need to embed outcomes and wellbeing into the day-to-day thinking and actions of most public service leaders

Structural – the current system of accountability does little to incentivise cross-organisational working or to hold individuals responsible for their organisation's contribution to the delivery of national outcomes

Procedural - current procedures (such as budgeting processes, audit processes etc) do not make significant use of the NPF

Political - the NPF is not routinely embedded in political scrutiny such as the work of parliamentary and council committees.”

Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

Respondents highlight the need for a robust framework for monitoring and evaluation including regular reporting, independent evaluations, and stakeholder engagement in the implementation process. The Scottish Human Rights Commission emphasises the need for "regular monitoring and public reporting of progress" and suggests a framework for accountability, including the roles of various stakeholders. The Housing Support Enabling Unit highlights the importance of aligning indicators with existing measurement work in sectors like housing and homelessness for example.

Embedding National Outcomes in Decision-Making

To ensure the National Outcomes are used effectively in decision-making, respondents recommend that all Scottish Government legislation, strategies, and related publications outline how they will contribute to achieving the National Outcomes. This includes ensuring that both the National Outcomes and the measuring indicators are appropriately aligned with other Scottish Government aspirations and targets, such as those related to climate action and child poverty.

By addressing these areas, respondents believe the implementation plan can provide a comprehensive roadmap for achieving the National Outcomes, ensuring that they are integrated into decision-making processes and that progress is effectively monitored and evaluated.

Cross-Cutting Issues Raised Against All/Most Outcomes

Several cross-cutting issues have been identified in the feedback on the National Outcomes, highlighting the need for better integration of across all outcomes. Addressing systemic inequalities and promoting inclusive growth are deemed crucial for achieving the broader goals of the NPF.

Respondents feel that addressing these cross-cutting issues requires a comprehensive and integrated approach to policy design and implementation. By incorporating human rights and sustainability across all National Outcomes, the NPF can more effectively achieve its goals of promoting inclusive growth and reducing inequalities.

Equalities/Human Rights as a Cross-Cutting Theme

Respondents strongly emphasise the necessity of integrating human rights and equality more explicitly into the National Outcomes. Several feedback entries suggest that while the proposed Outcomes have the potential to reduce inequalities, their impact will largely depend on the thoroughness of their implementation and the robustness of associated indicators.

Greater Emphasis on Tackling Inequalities

Inclusion Scotland highlights three critical factors for effectively addressing inequalities through the National Outcomes: (i) enhancing some Outcomes to focus more on tackling inequalities, (ii) ensuring proper monitoring and evaluation of progress in reducing inequalities, and (iii) bridging the gap between policy intent and implementation, including adequate funding and resources for delivery partners such as Disabled People's Organisations (DPOs).

Challenges in Measuring Inequality

Several respondents express concerns regarding the challenges in defining and measuring inequality. In his response, George Eckton questions what constitutes the tipping point from equality to inequality and what types of inequality should be targeted, whether it be wealth, outcomes, or opportunity.

Success Stories and Data-Driven Progress

Despite these challenges, some responses point to positive trends as a result of previous implementations of the National Outcomes. For example, Scottish Women's Convention (SWC) discusses the reduction in child poverty rates from 32% in 1994-97 to 24% in 2020-23 and the decrease in pensioner poverty from 31% to 15% over the same period are highlighted. However, it is noted that working-age poverty has increased, indicating areas that need more. The importance of continued monitoring and data collection to track these trends is emphasized.

Global Perspective

The potential global impact of effectively internationalised and implemented National Outcomes is also discussed. Scotland's International Development Alliance state in their response that by ensuring sustainable development is taken into account in decision-making, the National Outcomes could positively impact global inequality.

Human rights integration is another critical issue. In their response, Engender discusses the forthcoming Human Rights Bill and its importance for the NPF, suggesting that "the National Outcome on Equality and Human Rights could be strengthened by explicitly mentioning the Human Rights Bill and the incorporation of key group treaties related to equalities. They feel that this would ensure that human rights are firmly embedded in the framework.

Gender Mainstreaming and Intersectionality

Gender equality is another significant area where respondents see the need for improved coherence. The feedback indicates that current inconsistencies could lead to policies that align with the framework but work against broader commitments to gender equality. Engender mentioned, "The NPF's capacity to embed an integrated intersectional and gendered approach to equality in Scotland is undermined by policy incoherence". This calls for a more integrated approach to gender policy across all outcomes.

Zero Tolerance and Engender raise concerns about the lack of gender mainstreaming in the proposed Outcomes. They argue that insufficient integration of gender perspectives may hinder progress towards equality. They advocate for an intersectional and gendered approach to be embedded across all National Outcomes to reflect the diverse wellbeing challenges faced by women and girls across Scotland.

Addressing Specific Inequalities

Responses also call for focused efforts to address specific inequalities, such as those related to healthcare access in remote and rural communities as stated by Optometry Scotland. The joint response from Citizens Advice Scotland, Churches Action for the Homeless, Crisis, Cyrenians, Homeless Network Scotland, I-SPHERE, Legal Services Agency, Poverty Alliance, Rock Trust, Salvation Army, Scottish Federation of Housing Associations, Turning Point Scotland states that the integration of housing policies that ensure safe, high-quality, and affordable homes is a crucial step towards reducing a wide range of inequalities, particularly in preventing homelessness among vulnerable groups like young people and care leavers.

Holistic Approach and Intersectional Policy

There is a consensus from respondents that a holistic, intersectional approach is necessary for tackling inequalities effectively. Respondents highlighted the need to the National Outcomes to better incorporate policy from across sectors and government be designed with an understanding of how different outcomes influence each other. This includes recognising the interconnected nature of various types of inequality and addressing them through comprehensive policies and actions that consider gender, race, disability, and other intersecting factors.

The Scottish Human Rights Commission noted, " The proposed National Outcomes have the potential to support joined-up policymaking by providing a common framework that aligns various sectors and levels of government. This holistic approach of the Outcomes could encourage cross-sector collaboration and integrated policy responses to complex issues such as climate change, health, and economic development.

Community Engagement and Localised Solutions

Engaging local communities and ensuring that solutions are tailored to their specific needs is crucial. The importance of aligning local policies with the National Outcomes and ensuring consistent approaches across different areas of Scotland is highlighted by South Lanarkshire Council. This includes addressing local disparities and ensuring that all communities benefit from national progress.

By addressing these areas, respondents feel the integration of equalities and human rights as a cross-cutting theme can be strengthened, ensuring that the National Outcomes lead to tangible and equitable improvements across Scotland.

Sustainability as a Cross-Cutting Theme

The necessity for a comprehensive approach to sustainability is underscored by respondents, who call for its integration into housing, climate action, and economic policies. This approach must support vulnerable and low-income households, ensuring a just transition, and better reflect environmental management practices within the National Outcomes.

Supporting Communities

The social dimensions of sustainability are also crucial. Respondents highlight the need for policies supporting communities most affected by environmental changes, such as those in areas prone to flooding or other climate-related impacts. Aberdeen City Council noted, "A comprehensive approach to sustainability must include support for vulnerable communities affected by climate change, ensuring they are not left behind in the transition".

Across Various Sectors

NHS Ayrshire & Arran articulated the importance of sustainability across various sectors, stating, "The key priorities set out by the First Minister to eradicate child poverty, grow the economy, and tackle the climate emergency all underpin the work reflected in the National Outcomes proposed". This highlights the interconnected nature of sustainability with social and economic objectives.

Policy Making

Integrating sustainability into all aspects of policymaking, from urban planning to industrial development, is a recurring theme among respondents. Policies should promote renewable energy, reduce carbon emissions, and enhance resilience to climate change. This includes setting ambitious targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, increasing energy efficiency, and transitioning to a low-carbon economy. Zero Tolerance noted, "The proposed National Outcomes must support a move to a low-carbon economy by promoting renewable energy and energy efficiency".

Equity and Inclusion

The social dimensions of sustainability are also highlighted, ensuring that environmental protection efforts promote social equity and economic inclusion. This involves supporting communities most affected by environmental changes, such as those in areas prone to flooding or other climate-related impacts. Aberdeen City Council stressed, "A comprehensive approach to sustainability must include support for vulnerable communities affected by climate change, ensuring they are not left behind in the transition".

Production and Consumption

Promoting sustainable consumption and production patterns is seen as crucial. Respondents see encouraging individuals and businesses to adopt practices that

minimise their environmental footprint as necessary for achieving long-term sustainability goals. The City of Edinburgh Council explains "Policies should encourage sustainable consumption and production, reducing waste and promoting recycling". This aligns with the broader objective of fostering an environmentally responsible society.

Awareness and Education

Respondents agree education and public awareness are key components of a sustainable future. Respondents recommend integrating environmental education into school curricula and promoting public campaigns to raise awareness about sustainability issues. This includes encouraging citizens to make environmentally friendly choices and participate in community initiatives aimed at protecting the environment. Zero Tolerance noted, "Environmental education should be a fundamental part of the curriculum to foster a culture of sustainability from a young age".

Sustainability is a theme highlighted by respondents across the National Outcomes. They suggest integrated into all aspects, including a comprehensive approach that addresses housing, climate action, and economic policies, with a focus on supporting vulnerable communities and promoting social equity. Respondents see the integration of sustainability into urban planning, industrial development, and education is crucial for achieving these goals.

Annex A

List of Respondents

[A Scotland That Cares](#)
[Aberdeen City Council](#)
[Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership](#)
[Age Scotland](#)
[Argyll and Bute Council](#)
[Audit Scotland on behalf of the Auditor General for Scotland and the Accounts Commission](#)
[Avant Homes](#)
[Built Environment Forum Scotland \(BEFS\)](#)
[CPAG in Scotland](#)
[Cala Homes East](#)
[Care Inspectorate](#)
[Carnegie UK](#)
[Children and Young People's Centre for Justice](#)
[Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland](#)
[Citizens Advice Scotland](#)
[Connect](#)
[Construction Industry Training Board \(CITB\)](#)
[Consumer Scotland](#)
[East Ayrshire Council](#)
[East Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership](#)
[Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce](#)
[Edinburgh Napier University](#)
[Engender](#)
[Equality and Human Rights Commission](#)
[Federation of Small Businesses \(Scotland\)](#)
[George Eckton](#)
[Graham Long](#)
[Headon Developments](#)
[Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland \(the ALLIANCE\)](#)
[Historic Environment Scotland](#)
[Homes for Scotland](#)
[Housing Support Enabling Unit](#)
[Inclusion Scotland](#)
[Joint response from Citizens Advice Scotland, Churches Action for the Homeless, Crisis, Cyrenians, Homeless Network Scotland, I-SPHERE, Legal Services Agency, Poverty Alliance, Rock Trust, Salvation Army, Scottish Federation of Housing Associations, Turning Point Scotland](#)
[MECOPP](#)
[Marie Curie](#)
[Max French](#)

[McTaggart Construction Ltd, Janice Russell](#)
[Miller Homes](#)
[NHS Ayrshire & Arran](#)
[NHS Education for Scotland](#)
[NHS National Services Scotland](#)
[North Ayrshire Council](#)
[Obesity Action Scotland](#)
[OneKind](#)
[Optometry Scotland](#)
[Oxfam Scotland](#)
[Pat Munro \(Ainess\) Ltd](#)
[Paths for All](#)
[Public Health Scotland](#)
[Robertson Homes](#)
[Scotia Homes](#)
[Scotland's International Development Alliance](#)
[Scottish Animal Welfare Commission](#)
[Scottish Human Rights Commission](#)
[Scottish Partnership for Palliative Care](#)
[Scottish Property Federation](#)
[Scottish Sports Association](#)
[Scottish Women's Budget Group](#)
[Scottish Women's Convention \(SWC\)](#)
[South Lanarkshire Council](#)
[St Clair Residential Ltd, John Low](#)
[Stirling Council, Stirling Council](#)
[Sustrans Scotland](#)
[Taylor Wimpey](#)
[The City of Edinburgh Council](#)
[The Open Seas Trust](#)
[The Royal Town Planning Institute Scotland](#)
[VisitScotland](#)
[Volunteer Scotland](#)
[Wellbeing Economy Alliance Scotland](#)
[Zero Tolerance](#)

Kelly Eagle, Senior Researcher, SPICe Research
16 August 2024

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