Introduction

Girlguiding Scotland is Scotland’s leading charity for girls and young women, helping 50,000 young members grow in confidence, have fun and be a powerful force for good. We’re committed to offering a supportive, inclusive and exciting environment where girls can discover their full potential and take part in exciting activities.

We conduct research and listen to our young members to find out what issues matter most to them. We empower them speak out and take positive action to improve their lives and the lives of others.

We are for all girls and young women, whatever their background and circumstances. We offer them fun, exciting activities and the chance to make lifelong friends. You’ll find us in many communities, helping to give girls a head start in life and encouraging them to be happy, self-confident and curious about the world they live in and the difference they can make.

We give girls a place where they can really be themselves with other girls and share the experience of growing up as a girl in today’s world. We provide a safe, non-judgemental environment where girls can explore the issues they care about while having lots of fun, enjoying new experiences and learning vital skills.

We are relevant to today’s girls because we listen to them and constantly evolve and adapt what we offer them without losing what makes us uniquely us. We provide support, comfort and friendship in what can often seem a complex world for girls as they grow up.

Questions

1. What are the key public policy areas where individuals and protected groups are struggling to access their rights?

Our research shows there continues to be a number of policy areas where girls and young women are not able to access their rights fully.

This includes the full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life; the right to live without the threat of sexual violence or domestic abuse; access to sexual and reproductive health services and information, and equality in the labour market, particularly equal pay.
2. Which groups of people are most likely to be affected and why?

The groups of people most likely to be affected in these areas of public policy are girls and young women.

3. What type of public sector funding (European, national or local) is provided to your organisation to support vulnerable groups and those with protected characteristics to access public services?

Girlguiding Scotland receives funding from the Scottish Government through Cashback for communities, Generation Cashback; the Children, Young People & Families Early Intervention Fund (CYPFEI fund) and National Voluntary Youth Organisations Support fund from YouthLink.

Generation Cashback supports Girlguiding Scotland to deliver services and programmes to girls and young women in areas of areas of deprivation and other disadvantaged young people who are not currently able to access the opportunities that guiding offers.

The CYPFEI fund is our biggest public sector grant and is our core funding. This predominately covers the cost of Girlguiding Scotland staff and infrastructure costs.

The National Voluntary Youth Organisations Support fund from YouthLink helps us to deliver our activities across Scotland and to support our volunteers.

4. Is the level of public sector funding provided enough to deliver national priorities and better outcomes for people and communities, please provide evidence?

Girlguiding Scotland follows the National Youth Work Strategy 2014-19. When assessing the adequacy of funding to deliver national priorities, we refer to the priorities and actions as set out in the National Youth Work Strategy 2014-19 and the National Outcomes for Children and Young People (which references the UN Sustainable Development Goals UN SDGs), as part of the National Performance Framework (NPF).

We believe an increase in public sector funding would enable us to build capacity across our organisation which supports a universal youth work offer in local communities. We are committed to strengthening governance of our organisation locally so that the offer to girls and volunteers can be expanded. This would mean the benefits to local communities can be maximized.

5. Are there public funding challenges for the third sector; if so what would be the implications for delivering equalities and human rights outcomes?
Yes. In order to ensure all girls/volunteers in a community could access our offer we need more affordable meeting places. The intersection between third sector and public sector needs more attention as access to community schools is limited and expensive. Upkeep of community premises is also very challenging and can lead to costs precluding access for some minority groups.

The competition for funds is growing and is in danger of becoming too targeted. The criteria for funding is becoming increasingly specific. This makes is more difficult to access funding for organisations like Guiding and Scouting, which have a low cost universal offer that is accessible in all 32 local authorities and engages girls, young women and adults in positive community activity. We are an affordable vehicle to deliver the aspiration of Scotland being the best place to grow up - for all young people.

6. What type of administrative systems are in place to monitor the impact on equalities and human rights outcomes from public sector funding to the third sector?

The monitoring of funds for youth work is already linked to UNCRC as this underpins the National Youth Work Strategy. We support the continuation of this and as an organisation we fully support the incorporation of the UNCRC into Scots law. We are always keen to promote member awareness of UNCRC further.

7. What changes could be made to improve accountability for national priorities being delivered by the public sector in partnership with the third sector?

The third sector interface organisations work well in some areas. Our work is delivered by volunteers at a community level – there are limited links at this more grassroots level. An under represented link for partnership is with schools. It is patchy and more action could be taken to encourage this.