Local Government and Communities Committee

Consultation of the Scottish Parliament on the Scottish Government’s Revised National Outcomes

Submission from George Eckton

Thanks for the opportunity to comment on the National Outcomes. It's very welcome to see the SDGs being woven into the fabric of government through the new NPF. I've long been an advocate of SDG5 so it's welcome to see it there.

Can I offer a few quick comments on SDG5 Gender Equality in the outcomes and proposed indicators.

I realise it's spread across the outcomes but it is slightly disappointing as a male ally not to see the word "equality" in the outcomes, a pedantic point I admit. However, the wording of "more equally" to me says we are going to try but not succeed potentially in some reading of that. I realise its contained within a phrase around wealth and opportunities which is perhaps the reason for this tampering of the language. However, I'd be very keen to see gender equality for this reason referenced separately in the outcomes and indicators. I also recognise that gender equality is first and foremost a human rights issue, so there is the discrimination element of the other outcome, but for me as a male ally gender equality seems to be less obvious in the outcomes on first reading than I would have expected given it has its own SDG.

SDG5 – Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls, with key outcomes to include:

- adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels,
- end all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere,
- and eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation.

I acknowledge the excellent work that has gone into the NPF and outcomes and I'm seeking to be constructively critical as it will have been very hard work to bring all that work together.

ON the indicators, as well as those on the pay gap, equal representation, would it also be possible to have attitudinal indicators and that factors such as below will be presumably incorporated within the proposed indicators such as crime victimisation or mental wellbeing etc?

- Access to education for all women;
- the elimination of violence (of all forms) against women;
• full and effective integration of women into the formal economy and decision-making;
• an end to gender-based discrimination and stereotyping at work and at home.

However, would it also be possible to have an indicator that looks at attitudinal levels. Primary prevention of gender based violence and changing men and boys attitudes will be a generational issue and it would be useful if these antecedents of behaviour were measured and tracked as an indicator of gender equality. I think this would help outline and endorse the vital role non-perpetrating men have in challenging violence against women and girls and delivering gender equality. Therefore, I think an attitudinal indicator would be welcome, not only for gender equality but potentially other forms of.

Rather than we men continuing to leave it to women to have to point out to us year after year, generation after generation, that they feel that they have to defy gravity to get ahead in this world, let’s pull our collective male fingers out and willingly, do our bit to dismantle the gendered landscape we all inhabit. It’s in our interest it’s good for business and dismantling a gendered landscape is good for men and the toxicity of masculinity and mental health at work. On that basis a indicator on attitudes and behaviours especially of males and a clearer reference to gender equality would be helpful direction in the final national outcomes and direction of those charged with delivering the final outcomes. So that men could clearly be called to day their part in delivering equality and Goal 5.

I hope these personal views are helpful and taken in the spirit of they are intended, strong support for the current outcomes, recognition of hard work of those involved and a plea to go slightly further if possible when finalised.