



SINGLE OUTCOME AGREEMENTS 2008-09 AN ANALYSIS



INTRODUCTION TO ENGENDER

Engender works to make Scotland a fairer, safer place where women can flourish and contribute to both the social and market economies with dignity, freedom and justice. To this end we seek to increase women's power and influence; make visible the impact of sexism on women and on Scotland's social, economic and political development; and support people, organisations and our government to make equality a reality.

One strand of our work is concerned with gendered poverty. We believe that women's poverty reflects women's unequal place in society, in the gendered division of labour, continued sex discrimination and gender stereotyping. Together these underpin women's position in the labour market, family and welfare state and the interaction between the three determines women's economic status over their lifetimes and this in turn is inextricably linked to child and pension poverty despite seldom being acknowledged as such.

RATIONALE

Engender is currently working on a Women and Poverty project funded by Oxfam. This involves developing exemplar projects to:

- model the use of Gender Equality Mentors [GEMs] in promoting gendered thinking in policy and practice among public sector managers
- build the capacity of local women's organisations in understanding gendered poverty and in participatory appraisal so that they can better engage with public bodies, local authorities and public sector managers in anti-poverty programmes, providing both insight and opportunities to evidence the impact of policy and practice from a gendered perspective
- bring the public sector managers and women's organisations together to establish a process of reflective practice using participatory appraisal of agreed gendered poverty indicators

As part of the Women and Poverty project our Policy Lead has conducted a desk study of policy and performance indicators to identify any public sector indicators for gender and poverty. Through the project we aim to work with stakeholders to develop a set of gendered poverty indicators which can be used by public sector managers in gendered planning and by women's organisations to engage with public bodies and to hold them to account.

Since public authority gender poverty indicators are not currently used in Scotland we began by looking at existing local authority and community planning partnerships' regeneration mechanisms and agreements. We hoped to glean useful information regarding indicators and outcomes relating to anti-poverty work in Scotland and thus develop the rationale for a more effective gendered approach to this work.

The desk study coincided with the first round of Local Authority Single Outcome Agreements (SOAs) which were in place by July 2008 so we were able to conduct a brief initial review using a random sample of SOAs to see what kind of poverty indicators might be available and what specific data would be required in order to gender these. (See Appendix One)

POLICY BACKGROUND TO TACKLING POVERTY AND THE SINGLE OUTCOME AGREEMENTS

In November 2007, the Scottish Government and COSLA published a Concordat, setting out a new way of working between central and local government in Scotland. The Concordat saw the removal of ring-fencing from much local authority funding, and a greater freedom for local authorities to focus on local priorities, within a framework of 15 national outcomes and 45 national indicators. (See Appendix Two)

Also, as part of its November 2007 Spending Review, the Scottish Government announced the creation of the Fairer Scotland Fund worth £435 million over 2008-11 aimed at tackling poverty and deprivation across Scotland. This replaced a number of programmes and funding streams. An allocation from the fund has been made to each local authority area to enable community planning partnerships to work together to tackle area based and individual poverty; and to help more people access and sustain employment opportunities. The allocation is ring-fenced for the first two years to 2010.

Between February and June 2008 the Scottish Government conducted a consultation exercise with their *Discussion Paper on Tackling Poverty, Inequality and Deprivation in Scotland*. A total of 138 unique responses were received – 106 from organisations and 32 from individuals. Almost all shared the view that inequality does not always lead to poverty, but suggested inequalities in Scottish society must be reduced if poverty is to be tackled.

You can view Engender's response to this consultation at:

<http://www.engender.org.uk/UserFiles/File/Consultation%20Responses/080621%20Discussion%20Paper%20on%20Tackling%20Poverty%20Final%20Response.pdf>

In July 2008, all 32 local authorities in Scotland published their Single Outcome Agreements, documents setting out how each area will contribute to meeting the national outcomes set out by the Scottish Government, and describing local outcomes and areas on which particular attention will be focused. The second round of SOAs is to be submitted to the Scottish Government in February 2009 for agreement within a 3 month period.

In November 2008 the Scottish Government published *A Framework to tackle poverty and income inequality in Scotland*¹. This Framework – agreed with COSLA – provides a focus for public, private and voluntary sectors to work together to deliver greater Solidarity for all. (Key actions for local govt. see Appendix Three)

“Progress can now be tracked at a national level through the Scotland Performs website². In addition, the Single Outcome Agreements between the Scottish Government and Community Planning Partnerships will provide the vehicle for describing how poverty is being tackled at a local level.”

(Nicola Sturgeon MSP, Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Health and Wellbeing).

It is important to note that the SOAs are not intended to be local Service Plans; rather they are high level strategic documents and as such there is no requirement to include specific details about services being delivered in the locality. Supporting plans and activities will lie beneath this high level document with appropriate links built in to track such information as required.

STUDY/ANALYSIS

Methodology

The study was carried out by Engender at the end of 2008, following our initial review. First we carried out a quantitative analysis of the content of the SOAs to identify references poverty (1) and people experiencing poverty (2):

1. Poverty, deprivation, employability, education, training, housing, participation, health and wellbeing
2. Specific groups of people experiencing poverty including lone parents; older people; disabled people; children, young people and families; those experiencing domestic abuse; carers etc.

The study looked at reference to addressing poverty within each of the SOAs and the priority and coverage given to addressing it within the SOA framework.

We then looked at the local context for the national outcomes since this section in the SOA provides background information on the local area and assisted in explaining the prioritisation of local outcomes, indicators and targets. However, we are already aware that since the agreements must have a strategic focus

¹ Achieving Our Potential A Framework to tackle poverty and income inequality in Scotland, 2008. Available at www.scotland.gov.uk

² www.scotlandperforms.com

there will undoubtedly be less detail in terms of local context in the second round of SOAs.

In addition, we looked at the national outcome used by each local authority within which they situated poverty as well as what each local authority is seeking to achieve by their local outcome, in relation to tackling poverty.

Motivated by our focus on the gendered nature of poverty we were keen to establish what impact the Gender Equality Duty has had on the SOAs in terms of introducing a gender lens and making appropriate links to child and pension poverty. The Scottish Government state quite clearly that tackling poverty and income inequality is at the heart of their activity.

“Evidence tells us that of all households, those headed by lone mothers with dependent children are most vulnerable to persistent poverty, and by far the most frequent route out of poverty for working age adults is through well paid and sustained employment. The quality of employment people are able to access is therefore crucial, as is removing barriers to that employment. To tackle poverty effectively we need to tackle it across the board.”

(Achieving Our Potential, 2009)

Although this acknowledges the gendered nature of poverty it is limited in its analysis focusing on only lone mothers. It could also result in lone mothers being forced into low paid jobs and their children into child care (also a low paid job).

So finally each SOA was analysed for specific issues relevant to women’s experience of poverty such as occupational segregation, the gender pay gap, work, pensions and issues around maternity, childcare and caring as related to each of the themes identified above.

FINDINGS

Of the 32 local authorities in Scotland, all made reference to poverty within the SOA (mainly with regard to the Fairer Scotland Fund). However, the priority given to poverty within each of the different authorities varied considerably which is surprising given that poverty is such an important issue nationwide. We are also aware that all local authorities are engaged in anti-poverty strategies.

NATIONAL OUTCOMES

National Outcomes are defined in the SOA Guidance as the impacts or consequences for society of the activities of the whole public sector, a statement of what the Scottish Government in partnership with local government is trying to achieve. The Scottish Government agreed 15 National Outcomes with local government (see AppendixTwo).

The table below illustrates the range of National Outcomes under which local authorities referred specifically to poverty.

| National Outcome | No. of LAs referring to 'poverty' in this outcome |
|--|--|
| 1: <i>"We live in a Scotland that is the most attractive place for doing business in Europe"</i> | 1 |
| 2: <i>"We realise our full economic potential with more and better employment opportunities for our people"</i> | 7 |
| 4: <i>"Our young people are successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens"</i> | 2 |
| 5: <i>"Our children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed"</i> | 7 |
| 6: <i>"We live longer, healthier lives"</i> | 6 |
| 7: <i>"We have tackled the significant inequalities in Scottish society"</i> | 18 |
| 8: <i>"We have improved the life chances for children, young people and families at risk"</i> | 8 |
| 10: <i>"We live in well-designed, sustainable places where we are able to access the amenities and services we need"</i> | 3 |
| 11: <i>"We have strong, resilient and supportive communities where people take responsibility for their own actions and how they affect others"</i> | 5 |
| 12: <i>"We value and enjoy our built and natural environment and protect it and enhance it for future generations"</i> | 1 |
| 13: <i>"We take pride in a strong, fair and inclusive national identity"</i> | 1 |

The majority referred to poverty under outcome 7 which addresses significant inequality. It is interesting to note that only one local authority referred to poverty in relation to outcome 13 that seeks to address fairness and inclusivity. None refer to gender in the context of poverty.

LOCAL OUTCOMES

9 local authorities made specific reference to reducing, combating and tackling poverty in their local outcomes. Examples given all appear in relation to National Outcome 7 and are as follows:

East Ayrshire Council - "Everyone within our communities can access the full range of services which help people to combat poverty"

Edinburgh City Council - "Levels of homelessness and poverty are reduced"

Glasgow City Council - "Reduce the proportion of children in poverty"

South Ayrshire Council - "To tackle poverty and help create employment opportunities"

West Dunbartonshire Council (3 local outcomes) - "Reduced child poverty", "Decreased the proportion of people living in poverty", and "Reduced fuel poverty".

Of course not all local authorities adopt the same approach or indeed the same language. Examples of other local outcomes relating to poverty include:

Moray Council - "There will be a reduction in the level of deprivation in our communities".

Highland Council - "Reducing financial hardship by ensuring more people access services and benefits they are entitled to".

The majority of local authorities have included outcomes which relate closely to the causes and consequences of poverty including homelessness, health inequalities, tackling discrimination, low income, uptake of benefits etc.

Local authorities that have a strong emphasis on tackling poverty also have a clearer focus in the SOA on improving quality of life and well being throughout the life course (i.e. for adults and families as well as children and young people). There is however no mention of gender.

LO2. Communities are stronger, responsible and more able to identify, articulate and take action on their needs and aspirations to bring about an improvement in the quality of community life.

LO4. Economic activity in Inverclyde is higher, and skills development enables both those in work and those furthest from the labour market to realise their full potential.

LO5. The health of local people is improved, combating health inequality and promoting healthy lifestyles.

LO7. All our young people have the best start in life.

(Inverclyde Council)

Local Contexts

12 local authorities included poverty when describing their local context and in particular for National Outcomes **2, 5, 6, 7, 8** and **11**. As already mentioned, although this was useful for the purposes of our analysis it is unlikely that there will be as much detail on local context in the second round of SOAs.

Fairer Scotland Fund

Fairer Scotland funding is ring fenced for 2 years to 2010. In the final year of funding, 2010/11, ring fencing will end and the Fairer Scotland Funding will be included as part of local authorities allocation. It is therefore important to ensure there is an anti poverty focus contained in SOAs nationally.

The fund has an important role to play, at least in the short term as a catalyst fund to tackle poverty and deprivation and as such it has been integrated into the national performance framework. The development of a national anti-poverty framework *has to include a clear role for Fairer Scotland Funding. Although the fund does not specify a gendered analysis it does state that there should be, “a clear focus on investment to address the causes of poverty, not its symptoms” and that there should be, “a strong emphasis placed on making early interventions for vulnerable individuals, families and disadvantaged communities.”*

30 of the local authorities talk about the Fairer Scotland Fund (FSF) within their SOAs but only 17 of these make clear how the fund links to the SOA in terms of plans, outcomes etc. 7 of the 30 make only cursory mention of the FSF and the remaining 2 SOAs make no reference at all to the FSF.

12 local authorities specifically talk about poverty in their SOAs in relation to the Fairer Scotland Fund but for the majority of these (8) this was the only mention of poverty as it did not appear in either their descriptions of local context or in their local outcomes.

Our SOA sets out the high level priorities for the strategic deployment of the Fairer Scotland Fund with our outcomes linked to regenerating communities, tackling poverty, and overcoming barriers to employment detailed within the SOA templates.

This approach reflects the existing strength of partnership working within East Dunbartonshire and ensures that our shared priorities are fully integrated within the SOA prior to 2010/11 when the fund will no longer be ring-fenced.

The guidance received from the Scottish Government clearly outlines a strategic line of sight for the investment and deployment of the Fairer Scotland Fund. This identifies eight of the fifteen national outcomes and a selection of indicators drawn from the menu of national and local indicators as the most relevant to the purpose of FSF.

On the basis of analysis of the evidence of need the Council and partners have identified four priorities for the deployment of FSF:

Employability

Financial Inclusion

Addictions

Early Interventions

(East Dunbartonshire Council)

Clearer linkages need to be made between the national anti-poverty framework and the Single Outcome Agreement and how the key principles contained in the *Discussion Paper on Tackling Poverty, Inequality and Deprivation in Scotland* link back to the high level priorities identified for Fairer Scotland Funding.

LOOKING FOR GENDER

Equalities

The extent to which SOAs discuss equalities varies considerably, from making detailed commitments to providing no information at all.

22 local authorities made lots of mention of the need for an emphasis on equalities as well as work to tackle inequalities, 8 made some references to this – mostly in relation to health inequalities and 1 local authority made scant mention of equalities. It is interesting to note that this same local authority had no less than 3 local outcomes aimed at reducing poverty. None are specific to gender or to gendered poverty.

Some authorities have noted the lack of suitable national datasets for monitoring equality objectives this reflects the findings of our initial review where we found none in the national or local outcome indicators. However, some SOAs have successfully developed functional local indicators which could be adopted elsewhere. These include targets to review all policies, functions and practice for relevance to equalities and conducting equality impact assessments in relation to each national outcome. This is in line with the requirements of the three public sector equality duties addressing gender, race and disability.

The Gender Equality Duty

Public sector duties and equality schemes were mentioned in only 9 of the 32 SOAs despite the fact that the Gender Equality Duty (GED) was introduced in

April 2007, by which time all public authorities were required to draw up and publish gender equality schemes that identified objectives and steps to implement them. The GED requires local authorities to conduct gender impact assessments of all new policies and laws, including on employment and service delivery.

It is clear that the SOA's have not been subject to the appropriate or necessary equality impact assessment, in compliance with the Public Sector Duties on equality, specifically for the purposes of this study the GED.

In the context of the UK's failure to fulfil its commitment under the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) the apparent lack of gender impact assessments of SOA's should be cause for concern. CEDAW in its report on the UK's progress towards the elimination of discrimination³ say that it is a matter of some concern that many UK public bodies "*have faced difficulties in developing results-based and action-oriented equality schemes and in mainstreaming gender equality into all policies and processes.*" (CEDAW, June/July 2008)

Effective discharge of these duties requires political direction and leadership consistent with the Scottish Government's ministerial commitment to promoting gender equality through the policies and programmes it funds.

From our analysis it is evident that there is a lack of direction to make visible such measures, or to promote gender equality through the SOAs as required of the local authorities in Scotland through the ministerial GED.

Gender Pay Gap

Reference was made to the gender pay gap in only 3 SOAs (two in relation to National Outcome 7 and one in relation to National Outcome 2). This is despite the Scottish Government identifying the gender pay gap as one of its gender equality scheme objectives. In terms of the Government's commitment to work in partnership with a wide range of organisations to support the 'Close the Gap' campaign and to ensure that the Government leads by example in addressing any equal pay issues it is worrying that local authorities are not following suit through the SOAs, particularly through issues such as occupational segregation, childcare, caring and flexible working. Eliminating the gender pay gap will help the Government achieve its *Economic Growth* target.

Occupational segregation

Tackling occupational segregation plays an important part in achieving the Scottish Government's targets and objectives. Ensuring that women and men have access to the full range of careers, and taking action to address the clustering of women in low paid jobs, will progress the *Solidarity* target.

³ Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, Forty-first session, 30 June-18 July 2008 http://www.bayefsky.com/.pdf/uk_t4_cedaw_41_adv.pdf

In terms of 'vertical segregation' there is clear evidence that women continue not to reach management and senior positions in employment as the same rate as men. Two issues are said to explain women's limited movement into senior positions: 'glass ceiling' and 'sticky floor' effects. The 'glass ceiling' describes the invisible barriers that women and other disadvantaged groups face in reaching the top of their chosen field. The 'sticky floor' suggests that women are stuck in low paid, low skilled jobs due to limited availability of training and promotion opportunities, and assumptions about the value of jobs such as caring. This effect is particularly acute within part-time employment.

The SOAs do not deal with job segregation in outcomes or indicators but this is presumably because an activity on this issue will be said to lie in the supporting plans beneath the high level SOA. However its invisibility is conspicuous given the emphasis on skills and training into work for *people* (including young people) which although apparently gender neutral could be said to be gender blind.

THEMES

Child Poverty

The link between women's poverty and child poverty is largely ignored in debates and policy-making around child poverty. Women's poverty matters in its own right and it has implications for child poverty because of:

- Women's role as 'poverty managers'
- Women's disadvantaged labour market position

4 in 10 children in poverty are living in lone mother households and 3 in 10 are in households where the father works but the mother is on low or no income. A gendered child poverty strategy would reinforce the case for adequate childcare provision. Despite the development of the UK's national childcare strategy, many women experience the provision as being patchy or unaffordable. We are aware that in many places services are being closed down.

In terms of addressing poverty, 8 of the 32 SOAs had a clear emphasis on child poverty through National Outcomes **2, 4, 5, 7** and **8**.

As well as attempting to reduce dependency on benefits within families and improving pathways to work, 8 local authorities mention the need to increase income through maximisation of benefits. 16 of the 32 SOAs acknowledge the importance of tackling low incomes, which is of course highly relevant to the gender pay gap. With average income levels below the national average, rural areas in particular emphasised the importance of better pay, rather than more, employment.

It is encouraging that 15 SOAs have recognised that tackling poverty is not only about economics, but also equality and social justice. However, only 5 SOAs

make mention of the need to deliver initiatives which aim for a fairer distribution of wealth and advantages.

The provision and monitoring of children in receipt of a free school meal was mentioned in 15 SOAs. This is referred to under both National Outcome 7 and 5. As well as school meals, some local authorities are seeking to address child poverty by increasing the number of disadvantaged young people attending formal nursery education.

Fuel Poverty

9 of 32 local authorities addressed the issue of fuel poverty within their SOA (most often in relation to National Outcome 8), 4 of these referring in particular to their Fuel Poverty Strategy or Plan. There was no gender analysis in terms of pensioner poverty, recognising that women retire on much lower pensions – on average 54% of a man's.

Rural Poverty

There are differing experiences of poverty in rural and urban areas since in rural areas, poverty tends to be geographically dispersed and much more hidden. The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation, the tool most commonly utilised to measure poverty, is thought to be inflexible and insensitive to the distinct nature of rural deprivation. A number of rural authorities called for an improvement in methods to identify and prioritise rural deprivation. Part of this should be recognition of the gendered nature of poverty.

Although rural poverty was highlighted by only 2 local authorities in their SOAs the issue of deprivation in rural communities was mentioned by several of the other authorities.

Employment and Employability

The continued barriers and disadvantaged labour market position that women face mean that any anti-poverty strategy that relies on paid work as the main route out of poverty has to be an explicitly gendered strategy. It also must be recognised that paid work is not always necessarily in the immediate best interests of either children or their mothers.

Given the Scottish Government's focus on economic development, it is not surprising that issues around employment are a key feature of the SOAs. All 32 local authorities mention employment and/or employability in some way. Almost all the SOAs refer to helping people into employment, with the majority of these containing an indicator or outcome relating to this topic.

22 SOAs refer in particular to supporting one or more of the following groups into work: people with mental health problems, people with disabilities and people with addictions; It is interesting to note that while helping these groups in to work is referred to most often under both National Outcomes 2 and 7, the majority of relevant local outcomes and indicators appear in relation to National Outcome 7,

suggesting that the impetus for helping these people into work relates to equalities, rather than economics.

While there is a clear focus throughout the SOAs on getting people in to work and off benefits, 11 local authorities also mention the need to ensure that those on benefits are claiming everything to which they are entitled and maximising their income.

They do not demonstrate a gendered analysis of their outcomes or indicators.

Housing and Homelessness

While the 2012 target is recognised as one of the most progressive pieces of homelessness legislation in Europe, its achievement is heavily dependent on a sufficient supply of affordable rented housing. As such, more affordable housing and widening housing options form a key part of all the SOAs.

All 32 SOAs mention homelessness. References to homelessness are made in relation to a number of national outcomes, most commonly numbers **5, 6, 7** and **8**. This reflects an acknowledgement of the role decent housing has in achieving social welfare objectives. With respect to homelessness, the SOAs centre on the 2012 target to abolish 'priority need'.

Physical health

Issues around physical health and well being receive good coverage in the SOAs. All 32 make reference to this theme, principally under National Outcomes **5, 6, 7** and **8**.

Aspects of physical health covered in the 32 SOAs range from pregnancy through to adulthood. Healthy eating and exercise were two of the issues most frequently referred to. Closely connected to this were a range of outcomes relating to the provision of sports facilities in schools and communities. Also relating to healthy lifestyles are targets relating to dental health and targets to reduce smoking and drinking.

Another commonly mentioned issue within the SOAs was breastfeeding and in particular the benefits it can offer the health of children in deprived areas.

Reducing teenage pregnancies was highlighted as a target in 11 of the SOAs but sex education was given a much lower priority.

Mental health

Mental health is dealt with primarily as a health issue by each of the local authorities, with all 32 making mention of mental health under National Outcome **6**. Scottish Association for Mental Health⁴ has prepared a briefing on the SOAs, reflecting particularly on issues around mental health. (SAMH, 2008)

⁴ SAMH Briefing on Single Outcome Agreements, October 2008

Domestic abuse

Domestic abuse has quite a high profile in the SOAs, being referred to in 27 of the 32 documents. Scottish Women's Aid⁵ has prepared a detailed analysis on this, reflecting particularly on references to domestic abuse within local outcomes or indicators. (Scottish Women's Aid, 2008)

GROUPS

Women

In general, women do not feature highly in the Single Outcome Agreements although there are references to gender in relation to the public sector duties and equality schemes or in descriptions of local context in particular for National Outcome 7.

27 of the 32 SOAs make mention of women but only in relation to breastfeeding, teenage pregnancy, smoking, and alcohol, violence against women and population changes/life expectancy /mortality rates.

Lone Parents

Around half of lone parents (of whom more than 90% are lone mothers) are not in a position to generate sufficient income to be above an income poverty line while still meeting basic obligations (for example, to ensure their children are still looked after, by themselves or someone else), *however long or hard they work*. Women as lone parents are particularly vulnerable to poverty. The lack of adequate and affordable childcare creates a significant barrier for lone parents in their attempts to escape poverty through employment.

Women with children also face constraints in terms of finding work that is potentially commensurate with their skills and aspirations as well as flexible and convenient in terms of their childcare and other caring responsibilities. A lack of options forces many women into part-time, low paid work.

Yet, lone parents are only mentioned in 13 out of 32 of the SOAs, mostly in relation to National Outcomes 2 and 7 but also to 3. Indicators tend to refer to numbers of lone parents in receipt of benefits and targets tend to be a reduction in these numbers linked to support into skills, training and employability.

Carers

More than 60% of Scotland's 650,000 carers are women. The immediate and long term costs of caring in terms of lost education and employment opportunities, income and security leave many women vulnerable to recurrent or persistent poverty and poverty in their old age. Yet, given the Scottish Government's focus on carers, and the mention of both kinship carers and support for carers in the Concordat, carers receive surprisingly little attention in the Single Outcome Agreements.

⁵ Scottish Women's Aid analysis of local authority Single Outcome Agreements 2008

6 local authorities do not mention carers at all in their SOAs, and fewer than half of authorities (13) have local outcomes or indicators related to carers or the provision of respite services. Only 8 local authorities make good reference to carer support (beyond that into employment), working in partnership with carers and gauging their satisfaction with Community Care Services, support packages etc.

Disabled people

30 of the local authorities mention physical disability or disability at some point. Of these, 21 include relevant outcomes or indicators.

Disability is mentioned most frequently in relation to equality and access issues. 8 SOAs refer to access to employment/educational support.

Only 6 SOAs mention in particular children with disabilities or affected by disability. Likewise, only a small number of SOAs specifically mention learning disability, instead choosing to refer to 'disability' generically.

Older people

Services for older people are a significant priority for local authorities, with all 32 including outcomes/indicators in relation to this age group. 25 SOAs mention in particular that demographic changes (a growing elderly population) are likely to put a strain on services in their area.

Only 5 SOAs refer to social inclusion of older people and 5 to the participation of older people in decision making.

Aside from mention of women's increased life expectancy there is no other reference to gender with relation to age and the particular vulnerabilities of older women who generally retire on much lower pensions than their male counterparts.

Children, young people and families

Issues affecting children, young people and families are covered extensively by each of the local authorities but none are gendered; all 32 SOAs reflect these issues in both the text of the documents and in local outcomes and indicators. Aside from the issue of teenage pregnancy, or women smoking during pregnancy or breastfeeding none of these outcomes or indicators is gendered.

28 SOAs put a focus on ensuring that young people are in education, employment or training. Nothing on gender segregation in education or training.

All 32 local authorities considered the protection of children to be a key priority and in some instances this was defined as a top or corporate priority. Across the board, references to child protection were made in relation to National Outcome 8. There was also some overlap to National Outcome 9, highlighting the links

between vulnerable children, youth justice and community safety. This is not gendered.

The Children's Voluntary Sector Policy Officers' Network⁶ and Scotland's Commissioner for Children and Young People have conducted a thematic analysis around these issues.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Who is in and who is not?

Having a National Outcome which relates to a particular group or issue seems to correlate most strongly with how often groups or issues are mentioned in the SOAs. Of the groups Engender looked at in relation to the SOAs, children, young people and families were mentioned most frequently. As at least 3 National Outcomes relate directly to these groups, it seems fair to conclude that where a National Outcome relates to a particular group or issue this guarantees its inclusion in the majority of Single Outcome Agreements. Furthermore the SOAs frequently discuss issues without any reference to a specific social group. Many of the outcomes and indicators relate simply to adults or 'households' and the data sources being used do not suggest aggregating information according to sex.

Targets

It is our impression that targets which are easily measurable, and on which information is already collected by the local authorities and its partners, have been used most often within the first round of the Single Outcome Agreements. While this is perhaps understandable it does nothing to instil confidence in the SOA's new ability to lay down effective and measurable goals and targets including those for tackling poverty and income inequality (particularly with a gendered lens) for every area of Scotland.

The SOA guidance⁷ states that "when setting targets, it is not enough to just consider *if* performance can be improved but *how*". Despite this, for many of the themes we looked at, local authorities gave little or no specific details on how targets were going to be reached.

What do Single Outcome Agreements contain?

Some SOAs have taken a very strategic approach, and contain almost no operational information, while others contain extensive detail on what actions will be put in place to deliver the intended outcomes.

⁶ Single Outcome Agreements for Scottish Local Government, 2008/09 A thematic analysis by the Children's Voluntary Sector Policy Officers' Network, January 2009

⁷ Improvement Service et al., (2008) Single Outcome Agreements: Guidance, Format and Indicators for Scottish Local Government, February 2008. Edinburgh: Improvement Service, page 18.

While it is accepted that the inclusions of an outcome or indicator relating to every aspect of poverty (least of all gendered poverty) would lead to excessively large documents, adding to the impenetrability of the process for some, it is worth considering what it means if a particular issue or group is not mentioned at all in an SOA. This is certainly true for gendered poverty and it also holds for each of the equality strands.

If an SOA sets out local priorities, it is reasonable to conclude that issues which are not mentioned in the document are not priorities for that area.

This is not to suggest that where an issue is not mentioned in an SOA no work is being or will be undertaken in that area in relation to that issue. It is of concern, however, that if an issue is not mentioned in the SOA, it is possible that other issues, with accompanying outcomes and indicators against which an area's performance will be monitored, may receive more attention and resources from the local authority and its partners.

How will performance against Single Outcome Agreements be reported and monitored?

Engender holds that it is vitally important that gendered poverty be covered by outcomes/indicators and that it is clear exactly how local areas will report on their performance in relation to SOAs, as well as how the Scottish Government and others will hold them to account for this. For example:

- Issues raised in the narrative of the Single Outcome Agreements, should be reflected in local outcomes or indicators and would be used in monitoring the performance of authorities; this is particularly relevant to issues marked as 'required actions' or similar.
- It should be clear how the measurement of outcomes relate to on the indicators given.
- It should be clear that measurement data should be gender disaggregated [indeed equality disaggregated].

The diversity currently found in the Single Outcome Agreements will make it extremely difficult to develop a national picture in relation to particular issues. For example, where issues around poverty are used in relation to different national outcomes, using different indicators in different local authority areas, comparison of how different areas are dealing with the issue will be extremely difficult to make.

It will be difficult to have an overview of activity in relation to different policy areas in Scotland, but even more difficult to know who should be held accountable for failure to meet any national aspirations or priorities.

CONCLUSION

The Scottish Government state quite clearly that tackling poverty and income inequality is at the heart of their activity.

“Perhaps the most important change we have made is establishing the new relationship between the Scottish Government and our local authorities. The move away from micro-management from the centre and “one-size-fits-all” national solutions, coupled with an outcomes based approach, provides local authorities with the freedom they need to take effective and decisive local action” (Achieving Our Potential, 2009)

However Engender has concerns, chiefly around the fact that it appears that the SOA’s have not been subject to the appropriate or necessary equality impact assessment, in compliance with the Ministerial GED. It is unsatisfactory that such high level documents are not impact assessed on the assumption that the policies, plans and activities that lie underneath the SOA have all been equality impact assessed, not least because many have not. Had they been there would be more evidence of gendered outcomes and indicators, indicating an understanding of the gendered nature of poverty.

As previously stated, effective discharge and monitoring of all of the public sector duties requires political direction and leadership from the Scottish Government and this is ever more important in the context of the emerging Single Equality Act. From our analysis it is evident that there is a lack of such direction to make visible measures to promote equality in the SOAs. As SOA’s are now the primary strategic planning tool required of the local authorities in Scotland this is a matter of real concern.

It is important to acknowledge that our study has focused on the first phase of the SOAs and that this system is new for both national and local government. The timescale for completing the 2008/09 SOAs was limited and consequently restricted the amount of time available for consultation with local partners and communities. The next round is to be submitted to the Scottish Government in February, for agreement by May 2009. Key messages emerging from the first round of SOAs is that agreements must have a strategic focus; they must be concerned with actual outcomes, have a strong evidence base, be capable of service delivery and promote continuous improvement.

In these high level strategic documents it is of concern that there will continue to be little or no recognition by local authorities of their responsibilities to meet their legal obligations under the Gender Equality Duty.

SOAs that agreements to meet the requirement of the Gender Equality Duty must have a strategic focus (based on a gendered analysis), they must be concerned with actual outcomes (for women, men and transgender people), have a strong evidence base (with data disaggregated by gender), be capable of service delivery (in ways that men, women and transgender people have been consulted about) and promote continuous improvement for all.

Engender will continue to monitor the development of the SOAs, and will pay particular attention to how anti-poverty work will progress when the ring-fencing of the Fairer Scotland Fund is removed in 2010.

We will be continuing our work to make policy makers and indeed all people in Scotland more aware of gender inequality and its relationship to poverty so that they understand the impacts on individual, family and social development and well being as a cause for concern for all.

Through our continued work on developing gender poverty indicators our aim is for poverty policy to be seen to be gendered, for gendered indicators and gender disaggregated data collection measures to be in place and scrutiny of national and local public policy documents to clearly show an understanding of the causal links between gender inequality and poverty.

Appendix One

SAMPLE STUDY

GENDER & POVERTY INDICATORS SINGLE OUTCOME AGREEMENT – ANGUS COUNCIL

NATIONAL OUTCOME 1 – “We live in a Scotland that is the most attractive place for doing business in Europe” (pg.1)

Indicator: Average gross weekly pay by: a) workplace (median) b) residence (median)

Frequency/Source: Annual/ONS Survey of hours and earnings

Local Target: Increase gross weekly pay

***Recommendations:**

Gross weekly pay survey should be broken out by sex – both in workplace and residence (particularly in residence to assess potential access to household income). Pay survey would also benefit by reflecting part-time versus full-time earnings by sex.

Recommendation to ONS Survey to amend data collection to reflect wider focus. With regard to residence survey, also include example indicator:

Percentage of couples where:

a) *The woman has no income of her own of any kind and the man has some source of income*

b) *The man has no income of his own of any kind and the woman has some source of income.*

NATIONAL OUTCOME 2 – “We realise our full economic potential with more and better employment opportunities for our people” (pg. 3-4)

Indicator: Number of income support, incapacity benefits, and unemployment-related benefits claimants; number of children dependent on recipient of any of the above benefits.

Frequency/Source: Annual/SNS/NOMIS & ONS

Local Target: Decrease number and % of claimants.

***Recommendations:** Benefits claimants’ data should be broken out by sex.

Number of children dependent on benefits recipients should have information broken out further by type of indicator examples:

- *Number of children dependent of benefits recipients where*

a) *Single female head of household* b) *single male head of household* c) *joint head of household (and if joint, which member is benefits recipient?)*

- *Number of unemployment-related benefits claimants where difficulty accessing affordable, reliable childcare (by sex & age of claimant)*

Indicator: Number of people experiencing multiple deprivation.

Source: Annual/ONS, National Earnings Survey

Local Target: Decrease.

***Recommendations:** Data should be broken out by sex and by types of deprivation (again by sex) to see what kind of difficulties being experienced by who?

Indicator: Number of vulnerable adults supported into employment, education, training, or volunteering.

Source: Annual/Angus Council

Local Target: Increase.

***Recommendations:** Data should be broken out by sex, as well as reasons for stopping education/employment/training originally. Indicator example can be: *Share of women and men who have interrupted their working lives or are inactive for family care reasons.* Expand example of “family care reasons” into number of different topics. Also, survey what types of employment/education/training adults are supported into – part-time versus full-time (broken out by sex).

Indicator: Median earnings in £s for residents living in the local authority area who are employed.

Source: Annual/NOMIS

Local Target: Increase.

Indicator: Net annual household income.

Source: Scottish Household Survey (every 2 yrs)

Local Target: Increase.

***Recommendations:** See above indicator examples for National Outcome 1 – re: breakout information for couples’ earnings within households. Another examination for indicator examples can be:

Number of people with debt (by sex/household type, type of debt [e.g. house/family-related vs. pleasure], and % of income payments require).

Indicator: Number of people citing public transport constraints as having a negative impact on economic mobility.

Source: Annual/Angus Council.

Local Target: Reduction.

***Recommendations:** Break out data by sex and household status to learn more about those in disadvantaged position.

NATIONAL OUTCOME 3: “We are better educated, more skilled, and more successful, renowned for our research and innovation” (pg. 6-7)

Indicator: Reduce number of working age people with severe literacy and numeracy problems.

Source: Annual/Angus Council/Angus College

Local Target: 75% achieve learning goals

Indicator: Number of people 50+ enrolled in Angus College & number of Angus adults attending Access Summer Schools at local HE institutions.

Source: Annual Angus College/Annual Dundee and Abertay Universities

Local Target: Increase.

***Recommendations:** More detailed aspects of indicators needed. Examples can include:

- % of female individuals enrolled in life long learning programs by age

- % of individuals who use or have opportunity to use a computer with Internet access, by sex and age.

Indicator: Increased proportion of school leavers going into employment, education, or training.

Source: Careers Scotland

Local Target: Increase by 2%.

Indicator: Number of modern apprenticeship opportunities

Source: Annual/Angus College

Local Target: Annual target of 100 jobs created and 300 jobs safeguarded.

***Recommendations:** Break out data by sex and type of education/employment/apprenticeship opportunities. Include indicator examples such as:

Percentage of part-time versus full-time opportunities offered and taken up, by sex.

NATIONAL OUTCOME 5: “Our children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed” (pg 12- 13)

Indicator: Number of children in temporary accommodation

Source: Annual/Angus Council

Local Target: Reduction.

***Recommendations:** When looking at children affected by poverty, it is necessary to look at the status of their parents or caregivers – for this indicator, it would be useful to have a supplementary indicator that asks for further broken out information by household type.

*This National Outcome should also reflect educational opportunities for children, not just statistics of classroom pass rates (as found on pg 9). This information should be supported by an indicator example such as:

Number of crèches and pre-schools by child/by region.

This will assist in examining the resource allocation by area and reflect whether any additional pressures are put on households in regions where such early-years educational opportunities are lacking.

NATIONAL OUTCOME 6: “We live longer, healthier lives” (pg 15)

Indicator: Average score of adults on the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale by 2011

Source: Annual/NHS Tayside

Local Target: Increase by 2011.

***Recommendation:** Break out further by sex, age, and employment/education status.

Indicator: Teenage pregnancy rate per 1000 females aged 13-15 and rate per 1000 females aged 16-19.

Source: Annual/SNS/NHS Tayside.

Local Target: Reduce.

***Recommendation:** Break out further by location, education/employment status.

Also include supplementary indicator:

What type of medical facility did she attend? Where (5miles, 10miles, 20+miles), and how frequently? By age.

Indicator: Proportion of new-born children exclusively breastfed at 6-8 weeks.

Source: Annual/NHS Tayside.

Local Target: Increase.

Indicator: % of pregnant women smoking at booking,

Source: Annual/NHS Tayside.

Local Target: Decrease.

***Recommendations:** Break out further by mother's household's status, education/employment status. Further indicator examples to assess access and performance of local health services for women could include:

- % of women who have wanted to consult a doctor for assistance on health care specific to women, but have not done so in the last 12 months due to constraints such as absence of medical assistance, waiting times, economic issues, or other reasons.

- Healthy life expectancy, by sex and age.

Indicator: % of users of community care services feeling safe.

Source: Annual/Angus Community Council.

Local Target: Increase.

***Recommendations:** Break out further by sex, age, and location. Further indicator examples to assess security within care could include:

- % of individuals who feel safe in their home environments, by sex and age.

NATIONAL OUTCOME 7: "We have tackled the significant inequalities in Scottish society" (pg 19-20)

Indicator: Number of social rented housing units in high demand areas required.

Source: Annual/Angus Council

Local Target: Reduce by 10%.

Indicator: Number of households assessed as homeless

Source: Annual/Angus Council

Local Target: Reduce.

***Recommendations:** Break out data further by household type/sex, employment/education status.

NATIONAL OUTCOME 9: “We live our lives safe from crime, disorder, and danger” (pg 23-24)

Indicator: Violent crime recorded; Overall crime rate recorded

Source: Annual/Tayside Police.

Local Target: Reduce.

***Recommendations:** In order to effectively reduce such statistics, is necessary to examine such records in further details – particularly by location to compare with other indicators (such as economic and employment stats, health, housing, etc) – to tackle root causes in certain areas. Helpful indicator example could be: *Distribution of acts suffered by women – broken out by act type, aggressor, and location.*

Indicator: Number of recorded domestic violence incidents.

Source: Annual/Tayside Police

Local Target: No target.

***Recommendations:** This category may be difficult to place a local target on, but again, more detailed information is needed to trace incidents back to root causes in particular areas. Supplementary indicators include:

- *Incidents broken out by location and household type*
- *Number of counselling and psychiatric assistance centres, shelters, and network supports for female victims of domestic violence, by region.*
- *Percentage of couples involved in domestic violence (when female is victim) where:*

a)the woman has no income of her own of any kind and the man has some source of income

b)the man has no income of his own and the woman has some source of income

NATIONAL OUTCOME 10: “We live in well-designed, sustainable places where we are able to access the amenities and services we need” (pg 25)

Indicator: Percentage of adults who rate their neighbourhood as a good place to live.

Source: Scottish Household Survey.

Local Target: Increase.

***Recommendations:** Break out data further by sex and age

NATIONAL OUTCOME 11: “We have strong, resilient and supportive communities where people take responsibility for their own actions and how they affect others” (pg 28)

Indicator: Number of young carers in Angus registered with the carers centre.

Source: Annual/Angus Council

Local Target: Improve range and quality of services.

***Recommendations:** Break out data further:

- *By sex and age*

- *Number of individuals who interrupted their working lives for some aspect of family care prior to officially registering with carers centre, by sex and age.*

- *Number of individuals who are employed full-time versus part-time, by sex and age.*

- *Number of individuals who were introduced to caring occupation by school apprenticeship or other formalised encouraged support, by sex and age.*

Indicator: Number of registered tenant/resident organisations; number of people involved with local area partnerships.

Source: Annual/Angus Council.

Local Target: Increase.

Indicator: Number of volunteers registered with Volunteer Centre Angus.

Source: Annual/VCA.

Local Target: Increase.

***Recommendations:** These two indicators are important to measure aspects of social and civic participation. Will be necessary to break out this information further as below:

- *By sex, age, employment/education status, household status, caring responsibilities.*

- *% of individuals engaged in leadership opportunities within respective organisations, by sex.*

NATIONAL OUTCOME 15: “Our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient, and responsive to local people’s needs” (pg 39)

Indicator: Number of members of community councils in Angus

Source: Annual/Angus Council

Local Target: Review boundaries in '08-09

***Recommendations:** See above indicator examples relating to tenant organisations and volunteer opportunities.

Appendix Two

National Outcome 1: We live in a Scotland that is the most attractive place for doing business in Europe

National Outcome 2: We realise our full economic potential with more and better employment opportunities for our people

National Outcome 3: We are better educated, more skilled and more successful, renowned for our research and innovation

National Outcome 4: Our young people are successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens

National Outcome 5: Our children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed

National Outcome 6: We live longer, healthier lives

National Outcome 7: We have tackled the significant inequalities in Scottish society

National Outcome 8: We have improved the life chances for children, young people and families at risk

National Outcome 9: We live our lives safe from crime, disorder and danger

National Outcome 10: We live in well-designed, sustainable places where we are able to access the amenities and services we need

National Outcome 11: We have strong, resilient and supportive communities where people take responsibility for their own actions and how they affect others

National Outcome 12: We value and enjoy our built and natural environment and protect it and enhance it for future generations

National Outcome 13: We take pride in a strong, fair and inclusive national identity

National Outcome 14: We reduce the local and global environmental impact of our consumption and production

National Outcome 15: Our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people's needs

National Indicators and Targets

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|---|
| Indicator 1: At least halve the gap in total research and development spending compared with EU average by 2011 |
| Indicator 2: Increase the business start-up rate |
| Indicator 3: Grow exports at a faster average rate than GDP |
| Indicator 4: Reduce the proportion of driver journeys delayed due to traffic congestion |
| Indicator 5: Increase the percentage of Scottish domiciled graduates from Scottish Higher Education Institutions in positive destinations |
| Indicator 6: Improve knowledge transfer from research activity in universities |
| Indicator 7: Increase the proportion of school leavers (from Scottish publicly funded schools) in positive and sustained destinations (FE, HE, employment or training) |
| Indicator 8: Increase the proportion of schools receiving positive inspection reports |
| Indicator 9: Increase the overall proportion of area child protection committees receiving positive inspection reports |
| Indicator 10: Decrease the proportion of individuals living in poverty |
| Indicator 11: 60% of school children in primary 1 will have no signs of dental disease by 2010 |
| Indicator 12: Increase the proportion of pre-school centres receiving positive inspection reports |
| Indicator 13: Increase the social economy turnover |
| Indicator 14: Reduce the rate of increase in the proportion of children with their Body Mass Index outwith a healthy range by 2018 |
| Indicator 15: Increase the average score of adults on the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale by 2011 |
| Indicator 16: Increase healthy life expectancy at birth in the most deprived areas |
| Indicator 17: Reduce the percentage of the adult population who smoke to 22% |

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| of by 2010 |
| Indicator 18: Reduce alcohol related hospital admissions by 2011 |
| Indicator 19: Achieve annual milestones for reducing inpatient or day case waiting times culminating in the delivery of an 18 week referral to treatment time from December 2011 |
| Indicator 20: Reduce proportion of people aged 65 and over admitted as emergency inpatients 2 or more times in a single year |
| Indicator 21: Reduce mortality from coronary heart disease among the under 75s in deprived areas |
| Indicator 22: All unintentionally homeless households will be entitled to settled accommodation by 2012 |
| Indicator 23: Reduce overall reconviction rates by 2 percentage points by 2011 |
| Indicator 24: Reduce overall crime victimisation rates by 2 percentage points by 2011 |
| Indicator 25: Increase the percentage of criminal cases dealt with within 26 weeks by 3 percentage points by 2011 |
| Indicator 26: Increase the percentage of people aged 65 and over with high levels of care needs who are cared for at home |
| Indicator 27: Increase the rate of new house building |
| Indicator 28: Increase the percentage of adults who rate their neighbourhood as a good place to live |
| Indicator 29: Decrease the estimated number of problem drug users in Scotland by 2011 |
| Indicator 30: Reduce number of working age people with severe literacy and numeracy problems |
| Indicator 31: Increase positive public perception of the general crime rate in local area |
| Indicator 32: Reduce overall ecological footprint |
| Indicator 33: Increase to 95% the proportion of protected nature sites in favourable condition |
| Indicator 34: Improve the state of Scotland's Historic Buildings, monuments and environment |
| Indicator 35: Biodiversity: increase the index of abundance of terrestrial breeding birds |
| Indicator 36: Increase the proportion of journeys to work made by public or active transport |
| Indicator 37: Increase the proportion of adults making one or more visits to the outdoors per week |
| Indicator 38: 50% of electricity generated in Scotland to come from renewable sources by 2020 (interim target of 31% by 2011) |
| Indicator 39: Reduce to 1.32 million tonnes waste sent to landfill by 2010 |
| Indicator 40: Increase to 70% key commercial fish stocks at full reproductive capacity and harvested sustainably by 2015 |
| Indicator 41: Improve people's perceptions, attitudes and awareness of Scotland's reputation |
| Indicator 42: Improve public sector efficiency through the generation of 2% cash releasing efficiency savings per annum |

Indicator 43: Improve people's perceptions of the quality of public services delivered

Indicator 44: Improve the quality of healthcare experience

Indicator 45: Reduce the number of Scottish public bodies by 25% by 2011

Appendix Three

Key actions by local government

As the tables below illustrate, our local partners' initial Single Outcome Agreements (SOA) are already addressing some of the key issues:

Addressing income inequalities

Angus Council has prioritised its SOA around providing more and better employment opportunities for the people in its area. The Council is taking forward specific programmes to get people off incapacity benefit and back into work and is providing a mentoring service for people entering or returning to employment. It is also taking forward initiatives to provide school leavers with more training and benefits options.

City of Edinburgh Council is taking an approach which improves family support and employability. It is working with schools and employers to ensure that potential jobseekers are better matched to employers' needs. It is also measuring the impact of this approach on local employment rates; on youth unemployment; and on the opportunity gaps within the city.

Addressing the major, long-term drivers of poverty

Dundee City Council is clear in its SOA that its highest priority is increasing the educational attainment rate of young people through a range of integrated services that support young people in their early years. This will be achieved by developing more integrated approaches to children's services including improving schools and the services they offer to the local community, raising pupil attainment and increasing achievement through more vocational opportunities.

Dundee is taking a multi-agency approach to assisting those children and families most disadvantaged across the city. This includes those young people not in education, employment or training who are more likely to be at risk of living within households on benefits/low incomes.

Glasgow City Council's SOA also focuses on action to tackle the root causes of poverty. For example, the Council has allocated £4.5 million from the Fairer Scotland Fund in 2008-09 to improve childcare services, including the particular

needs of vulnerable children and young people.

Glasgow City Council recognises that if its young people are to be successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors and it is to reduce the poverty gap, then the right environment must be in place at birth. The Council is therefore committed to high quality education and to improving participation rates as a route out of poverty. For example, by 2010-11, the Council aims to increase primary and secondary school attendance across the city by 2% and reduce exclusions by 2%. A range of challenging targets has also been developed to improve educational attainment by 2010-11. These include increasing S2 attainment in reading by 7% and mathematics/writing by 6%.

Supporting those experiencing poverty

South Lanarkshire's SOA demonstrates how people who are experiencing poverty will be assisted. For example, partners will target financially excluded people through a range of activities including money advice and a welfare to work programme. The number and range of vocational training opportunities for school pupils will also be increased to help improve leaver destinations. South Lanarkshire's health improvement agenda has moved from a lifestyle focus to a broader definition to tackle the underlying inequalities that restrict people's range of healthier choices. The focus of activities is on implementing actions to address the problems of poverty and deprivation by reducing smoking and heavy alcohol consumption, improving diet, encouraging breastfeeding and increasing levels of physical activity.

In the 15% most deprived areas, by 2011, the Council and Community Planning Partners aim to:

- Increase the percentage of survey respondents with access to a bank account from 87% to 90%.
- Increase level of attainment (stages 5-14 and exam achievement levels for S4-6) by 0.5%.
- Reduce the gap in positive school leaver destinations compared to the rest of South Lanarkshire.
- Increase the proportion of babies being breastfed at 6-8 weeks from 12.8% to 18%.

By 2011 the Council and Community Planning Partners aim to cut the number of claimants in receipt of Job Seekers Allowance in the 15% most deprived areas. The Council also aims to increase the percentage of residents in these areas with access to a bank account to 90%, and maintain credit union membership above the South Lanarkshire percentage average.

Dumfries and Galloway Council's SOA is clear that if people, and particularly

those most vulnerable, have access to employment, health, education, and housing and have the opportunity to maximise their individual potential this will collectively help tackle inequalities.

The Council is tackling child poverty through the key worker model. The aim is to increase the number of vulnerable young people progressing to positive destinations by 2010. The Council will carry out an additional 500 independent benefit checks/50 outreach clinics with the aim of enhancing benefits uptake by more than £850,000 by 2010.