

Scottish Women's Convention response to:

The Equalities and Human Rights Committee

“Review of National Outcomes and Indicators in Scotland's National Performance Framework”

April 2018

The Scottish Women's Convention (SWC)

The Scottish Women's Convention (SWC) is funded to engage with women throughout Scotland in order that their views might influence public policy. The SWC uses the views of women to respond to a variety of Parliamentary, Governmental and organisational consultation papers at both a Scottish and UK level.

The Scottish Women's Convention engages with women using numerous communication channels including Roadshow events, Thematic Conferences and regional contact groups. This submission provides the views of women and reflects their opinions and experiences in a number of key areas relevant to issues around gender inequality.

Are the proposed change to the National Outcomes and Indicators appropriate?

Given that National Outcomes are in place to reflect the values and aspirations of the people of Scotland, overall the changes are appropriate. There are, however, a few suggestions.

Committing implicitly to embed equality across all measures included within the draft indicators is positive, however, there seems to be very little mention of commitments to tackle gender inequality specifically. This was particularly surprising, given that the Sustainable Development Goals makes this a specific priority.

The consultation makes clear that equalities dimensions will be measured whenever possible under each indicator. Whilst this is to be applauded for the direct emphasis it places on equality within each indicator set, it is thought that having a specific outcome on gender could be incorporated to underscore this commitment.

For instance, women have noted that clear gender elements within all set data should be demonstrated. This should also include analysis of the unique geographical layout of Scotland and the differences when measuring the diversity of both urban and rural settings, alongside the difficulties unique to localities.

Has the Government's consultation exercise on the revised NPF been sufficient?

Clearly defining two phases within the consultation process and the differentiating approaches that were taken within this overall was seen as beneficial. Whilst women have spoken out favourably about the way in which the consultation process has included

specific regards to the likes of children from a young age and their views, there were some concerns that this focus was primarily within cities with a disregard for children in more rural areas.

[Are the SDG's incorporated into the NPF in such a way as to ensure that they will be fully implemented?](#)

The new NPF is arguably more accessible. We welcome the alignment with the SDG's, particularly in relation to outcomes supporting human rights. It is coherent to incorporate the SDG's appropriately so that they can be utilised in the most effective way possible. Given the overwhelming priority within the Sustainable Development Goals to the eradication of poverty and the many unequal forms that this can take, it is fitting to have them incorporated within the framework in an efficient and cohesive manner.

Additionally, this usage of the SDG's is seen as striking a complementary balance between Scotland's priorities for its citizens, not only at a national level but also as a measure of the country's place globally. It is thought that in doing so it will make measuring Scotland's progress more easily assimilated at an international level.

Adding a new outcome within the framework with a sole focus on poverty was seen as an extremely positive move. This aligns well with the SDG's and should be measured through a raft of different indicators in order to understand the diverse structure of poverty within Scotland.

[Will the proposed revisions to the NPF ensure policy coherence between the different National Outcomes, National Indicators and SDGs?](#)

Women have been consulted on the proposed revisions, bearing in mind the quick turnaround for responses.

It was thought beneficial to have an outcome focusing on an "open" Scotland, particularly in light of European Union withdrawal and increasing uncertainty around this. Women have spoken about increase in the likes of racist language and vitriol since the EU Referendum. It is hoped, therefore, that a specific outcome with explicit emphasis on the country as an open and inclusive environment will go some way to rectifying this.

With regards to tackling poverty, having specific indicators focussing on the likes of wealth inequalities was seen as a step forward. This will allow accurate measurement of the differences between various levels of society. It is hoped that this indicator will be measured accurately and effectively.

Indicators governing unmanageable debt and persistent poverty are seen as illustrative of the commitment to women lower down the income scale. This is often overlooked and the effect that this has on women and their families has not, as of yet, been adequately addressed.

Placing a commitment to measuring access to justice as an indicator under human rights outcomes was seen as a way in which the justice system would take a "victim first" approach to protection of women's rights.

It was seen as commendable to include indicators for mental health under health related outcomes, placing it on an equal footing with physical health. This is an extremely important and welcome step.

Whilst it is understandable that the outcomes are broad in order to encapsulate society as a whole, it is worrying that this could fail to illustrate the significant discrimination that certain groups face as a direct result of structural inequality.

The establishment of a proposed outcome focusing on human rights and living life free from discrimination was seen as a positive approach that incorporates the differing forms that inequality may take. It is, however, important to note that all outcomes, indicators and SDG's have an impact on women. Women's voices and experiences, particularly at a grassroots level, must be taken into account when measuring and reporting on progress.

[Any other views you may have on the NPF, the new Outcomes and Indicators?](#)

Women have welcomed the statement within the Scottish Government's consultation on the National Outcomes that indicators should allow better tracking of equality which is aligned with the SDG's as a whole. The proposed incorporation of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals was looked upon positively by women and seen as providing steps forward to reduce inequality within Scotland. Placing equality as a persistent measure that spans all outcomes, emphasises the interlinkage between structural gendered inequality and how it does not exist in isolation. Instead a strategic, cohesive framework that can be utilised across all outcomes in order to tackle inequality is necessary.

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