Evaluation Support Scotland

Charting the waters

A guide for the third sector on how to evaluate policy influencing work

May 2017

"In all of our work with community-led health organisations and their partners, CHEX advocates that work with communities is carefully planned and evaluated so that learning is used to guide future activities and improve impact. Equally, this applies to our own work as an intermediary organisation, in which policy influence is of upmost importance. Charting the waters will be an invaluable resource in helping us to navigate the challenges of evaluating our policy influence, and should assist us to more easily attribute longer term changes to the work of CHEX."

Andrew Paterson, Community Health Exchange

"Families Outside spends a considerable amount of time and effort participating in strategic and practice-focused discussions, responding to consultations, and raising awareness of the needs of children and families affected by imprisonment. The purpose of this is to effect lasting change that improves outcomes for families in both the short- and longer-term. Evaluating policy influence is important because we need to know that we are achieving these outcomes, and that our time spent on this is worthwhile. Even though we may not be able to attribute change directly to our own actions, the ESS guide shows that our input to a wider and more complex process can in itself make a difference: change is rarely down to one actor or one event alone, and the guide highlights the processes and pathways that contribute towards policy influence. Such guidance is both reassuring and encouraging, motivating organisations such as ours to take a step by step approach and to have the patience to recognise how we can best improve outcomes for the people we support."

Nancy Loucks, Families Outside

"Evaluating the policy influence of your organisation or a specific project/campaign not only produces useful information for funders but will enable your organisation to use its resources more efficiently, achieve outcomes more effectively, and give staff and volunteers a clear sense of direction. This guide produced by ESS will be invaluable to your evaluation process."

Emily Beever, YouthLink Scotland

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About this guide

This guide is for people in third sector organisations that want to understand and evaluate the difference their policy influencing work makes.

In 2015 Evaluation Support Scotland (ESS) was funded by Scottish Government Third Sector Unit to facilitate a working party of third sector organisations to **combine our expertise and experience** along with formal research, to produce this resource on how to evaluate policy influence. We drew out practical lessons and approaches that we felt were relevant to other colleagues in the third sector.

In a nutshell, this guide **aims to help**:

Third sector, funders and policy-makers have a better understanding of how to evaluate policy-influence.

This in turn will lead to:

More effective policy influence and better reporting about policy influence by third sector, and ultimately,

better outcomes for people and communities.

After an introduction, the guide is split into two parts:

- **Part 1**: Understanding your policy influence
- **Part 2**: How to measure and evidence your policy influence outcomes.

There are some existing resources on how to monitor and evaluate policy influence so instead of replicating what is already out there, this guide:

- **Summarises** key evaluation messages
- **Provides an overview** of existing evaluation methods and tools, and
- **Signposts** to further information.

Please note that this document is NOT about lobbying. However, please make sure you are up to date with Westminster and Scottish Parliament guidance. Obviously, the law takes precedence over this document.

This guide is for 'learning organisations' committed to sharing evidence about 'what works'. It complements the work of the Knowledge Translation Network and is a companion to "*Evidence for Success: the guide to getting evidence and using it*". **It assumes a basic knowledge of evaluation**. These and other evaluation resources and support can be found at www.evaluationsupportscotland.org.uk.

Introduction

This guide responds to an increasing demand from funders for funded organisations to evidence policy-influencing work.

The Third Sector - comprising community groups, voluntary organisations, charities, social enterprises, co-operatives and individual volunteers - has an important role in helping the Scottish Government achieve its purpose of creating a more successful country with opportunities for all to flourish, through achieving sustainable economic growth." **Scottish Government website**[1]

Third sector organisations ultimately engage in policy dialogue to help them achieve their mission and, if they are a charity, their charitable objects.

More specifically, third sector organisations want to influence policy so that:

- Their voices and their members' voices are heard / considered
- They make sure legislation works
- They shape thinking / attitudes
- People's lives are improved
- Policy / operating environment for third sector organisations improves
- Evidence informs policy developments
- Potential policy developments support their members and vice versa
- They can mitigate against potential threats to their members' interests
- The profile of the third sector increases
- Funding is used to build sustainability in the third sector.

Third sector organisations that, for example, receive Government funding to undertake policy influence work, often struggle to show outcomes of that work. This can be even more challenging for small third sector organisations that lack capacity and/or skills to evaluate their policy influencing activities.

More generally, funders and third sector organisations have identified a gap in understanding how to evaluate policy influence. How do you know you are having an influence over local or national Government policy? And what does influence look like?

Why evaluate your policy influence?

By learning how to evaluate your own policy influence you will discover what works or doesn't work, and how to make use of that learning to:

a) **Inform and improve** current and future work;

[1] http://www.gov.scot/

b) **Demonstrate** performance, report and be accountable, and

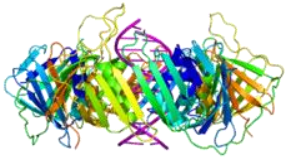
c) **Show** other organisations 'what works' in constructively influencing policy.

As a result you will:

- Understand better the **policy landscape and context** in which your organisation operates;
- Understand better your organisation's **policy influencing work** and what policy influencing activities are most effective for which policy influencing outcomes;
- Identify whether (and how) you can **attribute policy influence successes** to your organisation – this is particularly important for membership organisations that support members to influence policy themselves, to be accountable to their membership;
- Be able to **demonstrate your impact**, especially when working in partnership with others (something that can be particularly challenging to evaluate);
- Know how to **report to funders** on the difference your policy-influencing work has made, and
- Be in a better position to **maximise your chances** of securing funding.

Evaluating policy influence challenges

Policy-making is not a linear process. This makes it almost impossible to predict with confidence the likely consequences of a set of activities on policy, and extremely difficult to pin down the full effect of actions. In the field of evaluation, this difficulty in establishing causality is known as the 'attribution problem'.



The policy landscape is complex. Policy is designed, developed and implemented with contributions from numerous policy players at various times throughout the policy cycle. This can make attributing change to individuals and / or organisations particularly difficult, if not impossible.

The policy context is likely to change of its own accord, and influencing objectives may need to be altered in reaction to this or to other external forces. This means that the policy influencing objectives set out at the start of a project might not be the best yardstick against which to judge progress.

Policy changes tend to occur over long periods of time, making the use of common evaluation methods difficult or unsuitable to use. This issue is worsened by short-term funding streams which often do not give enough time for policy change. However, sometimes policy changes happen quickly. In that case, third sector organisations are required to engage and respond quickly to these changes. This can

put pressure on capacity, affect organisational priorities and leave little time to put evaluation plans in place.

Policy-making is a political process. Some decisions are likely to be influenced by political ideology.

So how do you evaluate something that is organically changing? What happens when changes in the political landscape affect your policy influencing outcomes so that what you set out to achieve and worked so hard for is no longer relevant? **Ongoing evaluation can help** you avoid 'surprises' so make sure you evaluate from the outset. **Don't wait until the end of your project to find out the difference you made.**

Influencing policy work:

- **Looks different in different organisations**. An organisation that provides direct services to a particular group of people is likely to take a different influencing approach to a membership organisation. Also, organisations have different starting points and / or capacities when influencing policy;
- Requires **clarity about desired outcomes**, if it is to succeed;
- Is often **carried out in coalitions, alliances and networks** with other organisations with similar goals. This presents difficulties in judging the specific contribution of one organisation to a change. It can also lead to competition between organisations or tokenistic collaborations;
- Requires an **investment of time, skills and other capacity and resources**, which often third sector organisations do not have. As a result, organisations struggle to connect ideas effectively, make useful contacts and identify ways of monitoring and evaluating policy change;
- Is often **unique and rarely repeated** or replicated, and
- Is **unlikely to be credited**. Although some policy-makers are happy to credit influence to their alliances, particularly when changes benefit all parties, other policy-makers are unlikely to be happy with claims that their decisions can be attributed to the influence of others.

Most **third sector organisations struggle to show the outcomes of their policy influencing work**. In turn, this could lead to:

- Key policy players lacking useful information
- Third sector not being seen as credible / influential
- Policy outcomes being too difficult to set out in funding applications
- Difficulties in securing funding
- Reduced morale amongst staff and volunteers
- A failure to progress policy issues.

Part 1:

Understanding your policy influence

There are a number of steps that you should take before you start evaluating your policy influencing work:

Step 1: Set out the **policy change(s)** you want to make (i.e. outcomes)

Step 2: Understand the **policy context** and **who** you want to influence (i.e. key policy players)

Step 3: Decide what the **best policy influencing activity** will help you influence key policy players.

Each of these three steps is explained in more detail in the relevant sections of this part of the guide.

'Logic modelling' can help you plan and understand your policy influencing work. A **logic model** tells the story of your project or work in a diagram and a few simple words. It shows a causal connection between the need you have identified, what you do, and how this makes a difference. You can also show how your work contributes to strategic outcomes. You can find more information on logic models in the **Annex**.

Our working party developed the **generic policy-influencing logic model** displayed on page 11. You might be able to take words or ideas from our logic model for your own activities and outcomes.

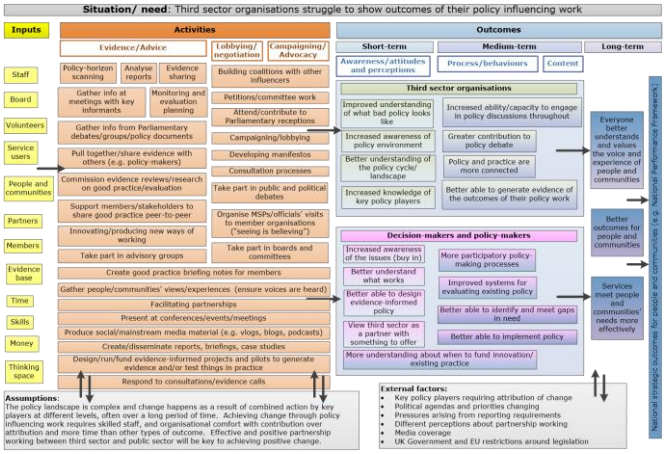
ESS Support Guide 1.2: Developing a logic model can help you build your understanding about logic modelling.

Step 1: Set out your outcomes

The first step towards successful influencing is identifying the policy changes you want to make (these are your intended outcomes).

Intended policy outcomes might be changes in[2]:

- Third sector organisations and / or decision-makers' **awareness, attitudes or perceptions**
- Policy-making **process** and policy players' **behaviours**
- Policy or legislation **content**.



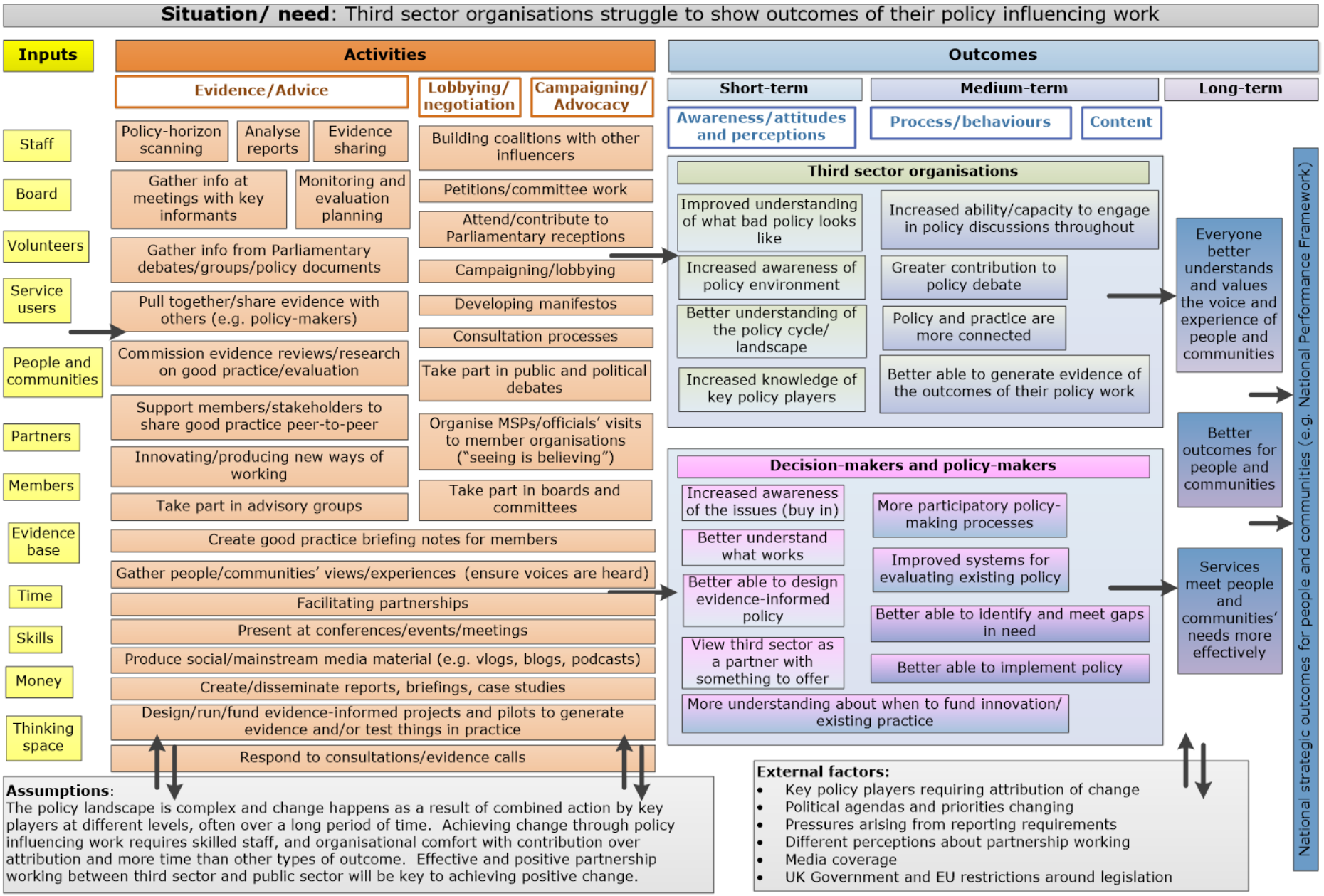
A **logic model** allows you to set longer term policy influence outcomes you want to make but also to set shorter term, realistic outcomes that are (largely) in your power to achieve which you can evaluate. Our logic model on page 11 gives examples of each of these types of outcomes.

Another tool to help you identify specific outcomes of policy influencing work is to think about the problem or situation you want to solve. A 'situation tree'[3] can help you think this through.

Although this guide sets out an outcomes approach to evaluation, **there are other methods you could take to evaluating your influence**. For example, 'driver diagrams' are a type of structured logic chart with three or more levels that include: a goal or vision; the high-level factors that you need to influence in order to achieve this goal (called 'primary drivers'), and specific projects and activities that would act upon these factors. More information on the application of this method can be found at NHS Health Scotland[4] and Scottish Government's Early Years Collaborative[5] websites.

[2] We are drawing on Jones and Villar, 2008; Keck and Sikkink, 1998
[3] Also known as a 'problem tree'
[4] http://www.healthscotland.scot/
[5] http://www.gov.scot/Topics/People/Young-People/early-years/early-years-collaborative

Logic model for third sector organisations' policy influence



Situation tree for policy influencing work

The situation tree on the next page is a generic one that our working party developed.

The trunk shows the central issue, that **policy is working in a way that there is a gap or a negative consequence for people and communities**.

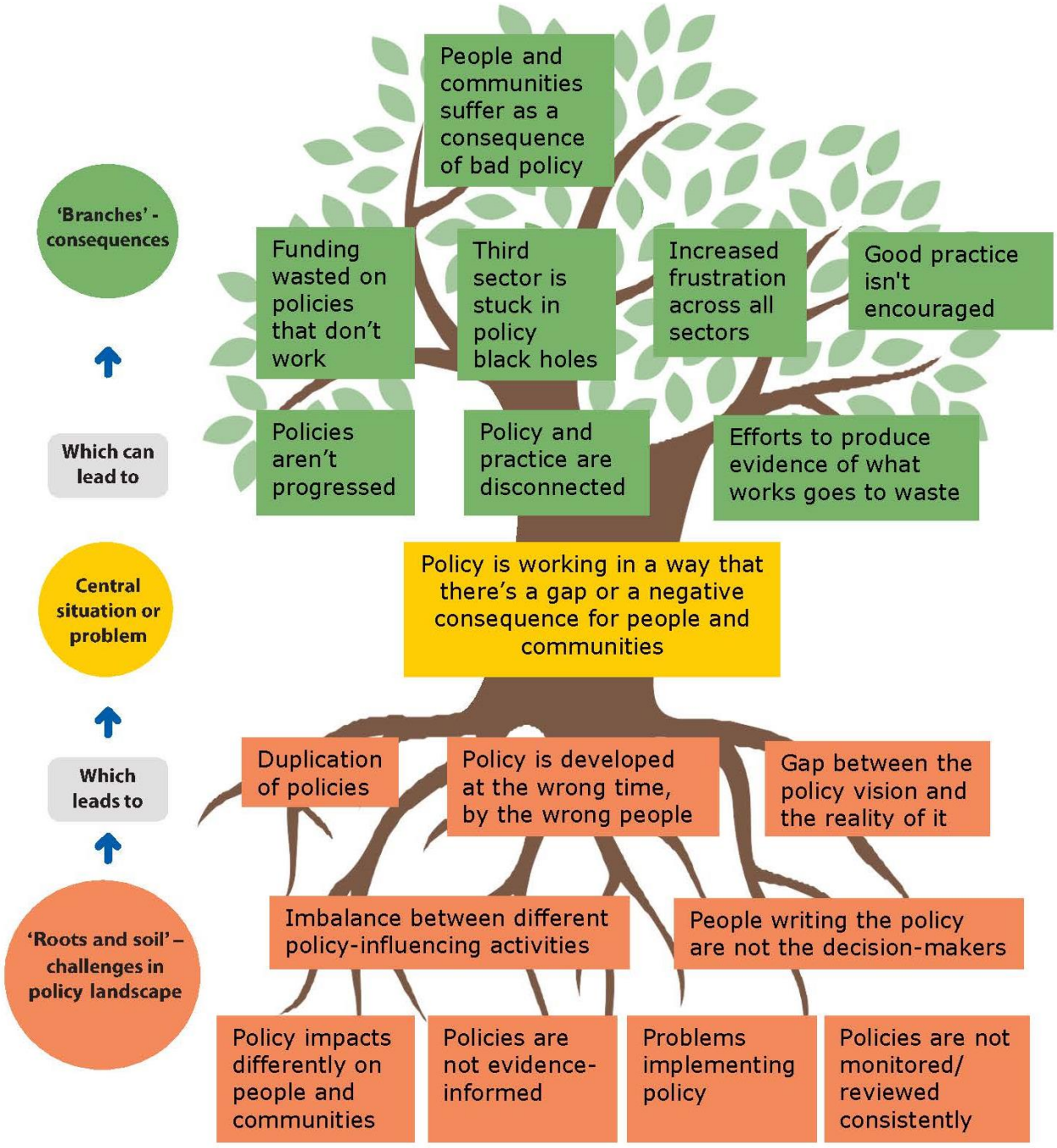
The branches and leaves show some of the **consequences** of the issue not being addressed. For example, if third sector organisations can't spot the signs of a policy black hole they could be wasting useful resources to change something that is unlikely to change. If policy-makers and practitioners work in silos there's a big chance policies will not reflect what happens on the ground and people and communities will suffer the consequences.

The roots are the **contributory factors** to the central issue. In our generic example these include: policy influencers being too reactive to other people's agendas, policies not being written by those who make decisions, mistrust and competition amongst policy influencers and so on.

The soil is **general factors** that influence this situation. For example, for some people a policy might be working well, whereas others might be seeking change. Despite best practice guidelines, policies are not always informed by evidence and can be created, instead, on the basis of what is perceived to be needed/ wanted by politicians and other key policy players.

By breaking down the issue in this way **you can identify the policy influencing outcomes you want to achieve**. These could be the 'leaves' turned around. So looking at our generic tree, an outcome could be that policy and practice are connected. The situation tree can also help you identify specific activities to achieve to stop the central issue happening and so achieve the outcomes.

The situation tree for third sector organisations' policy influence



Step 2: Understand the policy context

It is also important to understand the policy landscape or context that surrounds the issue you want to tackle, and identify who you want to influence and how they relate to your policy issue.

This will help you identify the **assumptions** underpinning your logic model, as well as any **external factors** that might influence achieving your policy influencing outcomes.

If you are **new to the policy world** or have never had to engage directly with it you might want to get acquainted with the 'policy cycle', which sets out the different stages involved in producing a policy, and the 'policy influencing cycle'.

The Evidence for Success guide contains useful information to guide you through the policy process. Also, check out the "Food for Thought" website[6] developed to help you increase your ability to influence policy.

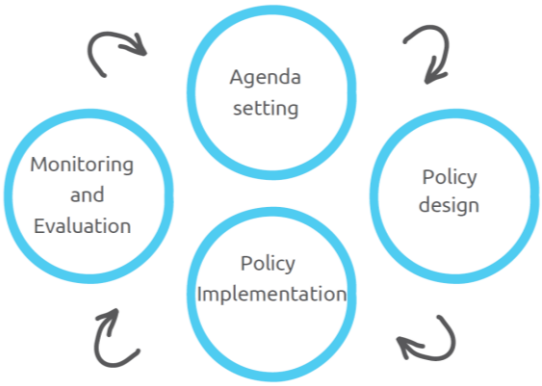
The complex policy landscape

Policies are not made in a vacuum so one of the main challenges in influencing policy is navigating the policy landscape.

The remit of this guide does not extend to policy-making theory. However, in order to understand the landscape in which policy influencers operate it might be helpful to **touch briefly on how policy is created**.

The policy process is often characterised as a cycle of activities, where the final stage of one move through the cycle becomes the starting point for the next. This is what is known as the 'policy cycle'." **Evidence for Success (2014)**

The policy cycle



The policy cycle has a number of stages that can summarised as: **1) Agenda setting**; **2) Policy design**; **3) Policy implementation**, and **4) Monitoring and evaluation**. The Scottish Government uses the illustration above to depict the policy cycle. The *Evidence for Success* guide includes information about what happens at each of these stages. The policy cycle is **not a linear model**. In the real world the stages often overlap, particularly the policy implementation

[6] http://www.foodthoughtful.ca/

stage. In fact, if we were to 'zoom in' on what actually happens when policy is developed we would be likely to be overwhelmed with the amount of activities, policy players, information and messages and so forth.

Don't forget to consider how you will allocate your time/efforts against the different stages of the policy cycle.

One thing is clear then, **the policy landscape is complex**. Those with an interest in influencing policy should be aware of how the policy cycle works. Only then they will be able to plan ahead and take into account all the different issues (positive and negative) that might arise throughout the policy-influencing journey. The illustration below uses a metaphor to depict the policy landscape and give you an idea of what some of these issues might be.

If you are not familiar with how local and national Governments operate visit: http://www.gov.scot/About and http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Government/local-government. This background information will help you establish relationships with policy-makers.

Navigating the policy landscape

Navigating through a given policy landscape can be daunting, particularly if you are new to it. To help you, this guide uses the analogy depicted below, which shows a group of sailors navigating a boat through the sea in search for a treasure chest (i.e. policy change).

Ready your boat

Let's imagine that your 'crew' are 'blue sailors' travelling by 'boat' in a 'sea' of policy. Your 'crew' includes you and the constituency of people who want to achieve the same policy-influencing outcome ('treasure chest') and support and/or add up to your evidence and messages around a specific policy issue.

If you don't know who these people are and you find yourself alone on the boat, stop and think carefully whether you can travel such distance and against the unknown all by yourself. If you are not sure, use Evidence for Success guidance to help you find ways to reach out to other policy influencers.

It's important to check that your boat is well provisioned for the whole journey and that **everyone on board understands what they are signing up for** and have the stamina and determination to stick with the duration of the journey. This is an important consideration, particularly for small third sector organisations that might have limited resources and capacity or for larger organisations that might have to react to incoming and unrelated work that take away resources for the planned journey.

Ready, steady, go!

The speed at which your boat travels will depend on whether the wind blows towards you or against you. In this metaphor the 'blue wind' represents the **opportunities and serendipity** that push your constituency forward bringing you closer to your policy-influencing change. However, the 'red wind' stands for **barriers that get in the way** of you moving forward such as government changing its policy priorities or taking longer than expected to open an issue for consultation.

Similarly, in your policy journey you might come across 'waves' of **policy related activity** that might support or go against the change you seek. It is important to be aware of **hidden actors**, represented by 'sharks' in this metaphor; these are people you might be unaware of that are resisting the change you are trying to influence.

Time, represented by an 'hourglass', is also a key factor in your boat trip. Finding the **right time to take action** will certainly increase your chances of making a difference. The right time is likely to be dictated by decision-makers' policy priorities. Therefore, it is important to be aware of what these are and how they relate to your work and the policy change you desire. Some social media channels, such as Twitter, are useful ways to find out what others are saying or doing, and enable you to engage in policy dialogue.

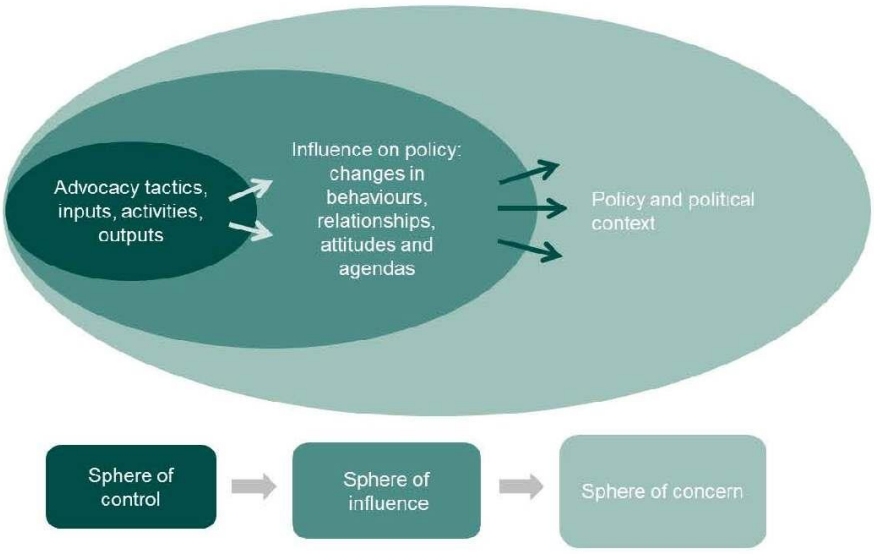
All for one and one for all

As your boat moves forward you might come across other organisations and individuals that, like you, seek to change the same policy landscape. Some will become **allies** and join your crew ('blue people') jumping on/off the boat at various points of your journey ('rocks'); others will, purposefully or accidentally, **obstruct your way** forward or even set you a few miles back or off course ('red people'). Those people who can help might do so

in various ways; for example, by **sharing intelligence** with you ('maps') or **warning you** about big policy debates ('explosions') that might stir the waters of your policy journey, either pushing your boat forward and/or on a different direction or sinking your ship.

Only by taking into account all these factors and **monitoring progress** will you be able to reach your 'treasure island'; the place where you will find those decision-makers who have the 'key' to your treasure chest; those who can take action and make the **policy change** you worked so hard to achieve.

Chances are that, despite all your hard work planning, delivering and monitoring your policy influencing activities, decision-makers may not take action or make a change you did not wish for. Therefore, it is important to acknowledge and accept that a lot of what is happening in the policy landscape lies **outside your sphere of control** (Tsui *et al.*, 2014). It is therefore important to focus any available resources on monitoring and evaluating what is within your sphere of control – what your **contribution** is to a policy change.



If you find yourself in that situation, do not despair and think 'it was all for nothing'; there is valuable learning in just being part of the policy process (not to mention the relationships you have built with others throughout your 'boat' journey).

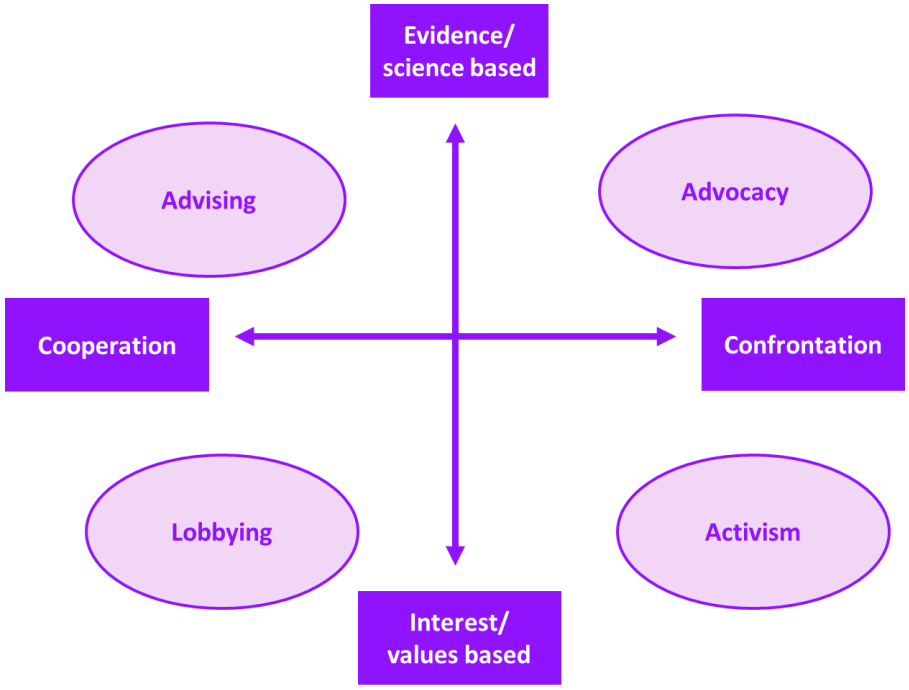
Step 3: Identify your policy influencing activities

Now that you know what change you want to make, understand the policy context and have identified your allies and opponents you can decide what policy influencing approach will work best for you.

Third sector organisations use a wide variety of activities to influence policy. These activities can be classified depending on whether they:

- Are carried out closely with decision-makers
- Seek to influence change through pressure and confrontation
- Are led by evidence research
- Involve values and interests.

There are many classifications of these activities in the literature; for example (adapted from Start and Hovland, 2004):



This guide uses the following classification of 'policy influencing approaches or types' (Jones, 2011):

1) Evidence and advice
2) Lobbying and negotiation
3) Public campaigns and advocacy.

The **table** below details some of the activities that are usually carried out in the third sector to influence policy depending on the approach chosen (adapted from Jones, 2011), as well as types of information that can be collected to track progress towards desired outcomes. The table also includes some activities to influence policy opinion, which is not the subject of this guide.

Most common policy influencing activities

Type of influencing	Where? Through what channels?	How? By what means?	What information to track?
Evidence and advice	• National and international policy debates • Formal and informal meetings	• Research and analysis • Evidence-based argument • Providing advisory support • Developing and piloting new policy approaches	• Examples where the evidence/research has been used (e.g. policy briefs of websites, reports or academic articles) • Requests for advisory support
Lobbying and negotiation	• Formal meetings • Semi-formal and informal channels • Membership and participation on board and committees	• Face to face meetings and discussions • Relationships and trust • Direct incentives and diplomacy	• Meeting minutes and e-mails by influencing targets • Interviewing key informants (e.g. UK missions, donors)
Public campaigns and advocacy	• Public and political debates in developing countries • Public meetings, speeches, presentations • Television, newsletters, radio and other media	• Public communications and campaigns • Public education • Messaging • Advocacy	• Content and tone of media coverage • Content of speeches – evidence that your messages are being picked up and used by others

Usually an organisation's policy influencing approach goes hand-in-hand with its core values. Make sure to check this and have conversations with colleagues, if appropriate, to identify what approach and therefore activities might be best suited for your work.

Top tips from policy-makers to help you achieve your influencing outcomes

This section of the guide summarises the advice that policy-makers considered helpful for third sector organisations wanting to influence policy developments.

Tip 1: Think 'contribution' rather than 'attribution'

It's about measuring your organisation's contribution as part of a (very big) big picture!" **Anonymous civil servant**

Tip 2: Work to build positive relationships with policy-makers and other policy players - It helps to:

- Have a conversation about **language** – do you use different words to mean the same? Where are the differences? Can you agree common terms?
- Be aware that some policies are more **receptive to being influenced**, others not so much
- **Be clear** about what is going to be discussed at meetings, what is on the table and what isn't (e.g. do not intend to discuss funding issues with the pretence that you want to discuss a policy issue)
- **Be honest** at both sides
- Take it as a **staged approach** / journey – don't always jump to the last step and try to offer solutions, not just problems

- **Be aware** that sometimes decision-makers don't have power to make the changes you seek (e.g. civil servants might need Ministers' approval to make a change in policy)
- Make **time and space for debrief** and take stock – this includes acknowledging external pressures that may have an effect on the relationships.

Tip 3: Policy-makers are unlikely to change policy in response to one segment alone. Build alliances! – Some things to take into account are:

- Some third sector organisations might be more **forward thinking** and / or **ready to engage** in policy debate than others. For example, some membership organisations need a mandate from members to influence policy
- Large-to-medium organisations might have **resources to influence policy**; however, they tend to be involved in many debates and their influencing priorities might change quickly
- Smaller organisations might not have all the resources needed but can **be more agile to engage** in policy than larger, more hierarchical organisations

- Grass-roots organisations can help policy-makers **make sure policies reflect reality**.

We often hear the same voices from the same players and we are aware that bigger organisations can have a louder voice. These are concerns we have […]. Coalitions or consensus with less natural allies is more effective and useful to influence policy than working with 'usual suspects'." **Anonymous civil servant**

Tip 4: Some policy-makers are happy to credit influence where it's due

I feel more comfortable when I develop policy together with the third sector. […] Involving third sector in policy debate and consultation takes longer and requires resources but it's better." **Anonymous civil servant**

I think that the Scottish Third Sector Research Forum's report 'Why involve the third sector in reducing re-offending' was very important in giving the Reducing Reoffending Change Fund steering group the confidence to pursue a course that fully involved the third sector – leading to the Public Social Partnership model finally adopted." **Mark Meiklejohn, Scottish Government**

"It's important to use the same language in policy and on the ground; discussions and consultations with communities and third sector are key. We recently launched the Scotland's National Centre for Resilience (NCR)[7] to fulfil the Ministerial vision for a nexus between policy, practice and academia which would provide practical solutions for the responder community in Scotland. We embarked on a series of presentations and engagement activities around the Centre to find out what people would be expecting from it. We received a strong signal from delivery partners and stakeholders that the Centre could provide a very useful space for a collaborative working and asset-based approach to help those operating on the ground. We now endeavour to use consistent language in all our outputs." **Alessia Morris, Scottish Government**

Tip 5: There's learning about the process through taking part, even if you don't make the change happen.

Tip 6: Make sure you have authority to take action. You don't want to invest time and other resources into influencing change to then find out that you don't have the support of your organisation, including your board of trustees.

You can find further policy influencing tips and advice in the "Evidence for Success" guide; find it at www.evaluationsupportscotland.org.uk.

[7] http://www.readyscotland.org/ready-government/ncr/

Things to consider when evaluating your policy influence

Context setting:

- ❑ I know what the policy issue I want to address is
- ❑ I understand the context around the policy issue (e.g. evidence base)
- ❑ I understand my work can be affected by policy-makers agendas/approaches
- ❑ I have set realistic and achievable policy-influencing outcomes
- ❑ I am clear on who needs to know, and why
- ❑ I have a plan to engage key stakeholders in my journey from the outset
- ❑ I have collected/know what evidence to collect to present the issue
- ❑ I know what message(s) I want to communicate to decision-makers, and how to adapt it for different key policy players

Prepping for action:

- ❑ I have a plan to influence policy change
- ❑ I know who I need to speak to and how to access them
- ❑ I know who my allies are and who can hinder my goal
- ❑ I understand that not everything might be visible to me (e.g. hidden actors)
- ❑ I have an idea of how I'll convince others
- ❑ I have the evidence I need to convince others
- ❑ I know how to adapt my messages for the right audiences
- ❑ I have authority to take action

Taking action and monitoring progress:

- ❑ I gather evidence of key developments in the policy change journey
- ❑ I am clear on what data collection methods/tools I need to use to gather relevant information and evidence at each stage of the plan
- ❑ I have evidence of how others are helping/hindering my goals

Results:

- ❑ I know whether my plan worked/ didn't work, and why
- ❑ I can evidence expected and unexpected policy influencing outcomes

Lessons learned:

- ❑ I can describe positive and negative learning from my policy influencing journey

Part 2:

How to measure and evidence your policy influencing outcomes

Policy change is often the result of various contributions from different key policy players at different levels over a long period of time. By tracking every step our organisation takes to influence policy and collecting data of our success/failure we can evidence our organisation's individual contribution to specific changes.

Developing a logic model of your policy influencing activities and intended outcomes can help with the challenge of evaluating your contribution to policy change. A logic model can help us make sense of how our inputs and activities lead to desired (and unexpected) policy changes. However, in order to evaluate policy influence you also need:

- **Outcome indicators** - what the policy influence outcomes might look like if they happen
- **Data collection methods** - for collecting evidence of whether you have, or have not, achieved outcomes.

In this part of the guide you will find:

- **A framework for measurement** to help you evaluate the difference your policy influencing work makes to the people you work with.
- **Case studies** that three Working Group members wrote to illustrate different approaches to policy influence.

Please remember that the policy context means you might not achieve your outcomes despite your best efforts. However, it is still useful to evaluate 'why' for learning.

Introducing the framework for measurement

Considering the whole logic model at once might be overwhelming, so the framework for measurement breaks down the logic model into chunks. Each chunk takes a group of outcomes and provides example indicators (what the policy influence outcomes might look like if they happen).

To evaluate outcomes you need to:

- Decide what the outcome looks like if it happens; those are **outcome indicators**. The 'framework for measurement' on pages 25 to 32 of this guide provides some example indicators that you might be able to adopt or adapt for your specific outcomes. This is not an exhaustive list.
- Collect evidence about the indicators using **evaluation methods**. We give some example methods at the end of this section.

Ideally you should **measure your indicators** at the start of your policy influencing project (i.e. your baseline) and then again at appropriate points during the lifetime of your project. That way you can compare progress towards your planned outcomes over time in comparison to your starting point.

Choosing the right **method(s) to collect information** is important. You can use the **type of influencing activity** you are carrying out to collect information and to monitor and evaluate the difference you are making.

Some of the most used **data collection methods** include: Questionnaires and surveys; focus groups and interviews; storytelling, case studies, quotes and other informal feedback; analysis of official documents such as speeches, press releases, social media communications, governmental and parliamentary records, and changes in legislation or policy guidance.

Part 1 of the guide highlighted the importance of **building, maintaining and nurturing positive long-lasting** 'relationships' with people who make policy and other policy influencers. Furthermore, the need for *'effective and positive partnership working between third sector and public sector'* was identified as an 'assumption' underpinning our logic model (see page 11). Therefore, any evaluation of policy influence should include 'relationships' with key policy players. This is the starting point for our framework for measurement.

For evaluation support guides and data collection method sheets go to www.evaluationsupportscotland.org.uk.

Evaluation Support Scotland

Charting the waters

Framework for measurement

Step 1: Select your influencing outcomes

Think about the kind of **change you want to make** (i.e. your outcomes): relationships, awareness, attitudes/behaviours, policy content and people. Pick the **outcomes that apply to you** and adapt them so they make sense to you and your organisation. Use other outcomes to set aspirations for your work.

Relationships	Awareness	Attitudes/behaviours	Content	People
Policy influencers in the third sector...				
⚓ Improve relationships with people who make policy ⚓ Improve relationships with other policy influencers	⚓ Have increased awareness of policy environment ⚓ Understand better the policy cycle (i.e. what policy-making involves)	⚓ Have increased ability/ capacity to engage in policy discussions ⚓ Make greater contribution to policy debate	⚓ Are better able to generate evidence of the outcomes of their policy work	⚓ Everyone better understands/ values the voice and experience of people and communities ⚓ Policies lead to better outcomes for people and communities ⚓ Services meet people and communities' needs more effectively
People who make policy...				
⚓ Improve relationships with policy influencers/ third sector organisations ⚓ View the third sector as a partner with something to offer	⚓ Have increased awareness of the issues ⚓ Understand better 'what works'	⚓ Are better able to design evidence-informed policy ⚓ Understand better when to fund innovation/existing practice ⚓ Make more participatory policy-making processes ⚓ Have improved systems for evaluating existing policy	⚓ Are better able to implement policy effectively ⚓ Ensure policy and practice are more connected ⚓ Are better able to identify and meet gaps in need	

Check out "ESS Support Guide 1: Setting outcomes" for practical tips on how to write your outcomes

Step 2: Set your outcome indicators

Think about **what your policy influence outcomes might look like** if they happen (i.e. your outcome indicators). You don't have to measure everything. Select those that will help you succeed. Here are some **suggested indicators** you can pick from or adapt. Remember that you can only measure your contribution to these outcomes, not your attribution!

Check out "ESS Support Guide 2.1: Developing and using indicators" for practical tips

If you want to influence 'relationships':

Influencing outcomes	Outcome indicators
Policy influencers in the third sector… ⚓ Improve relationships with people who make policy ⚓ Improve relationships with other policy influencers	❑ They know what we do (i.e. vision, role, remit) ❑ They know what we want to achieve and why ❑ We know who makes decisions ❑ They tell us they see us as experts ❑ We feel welcome/valued in policy discussions (they open the door for us) ❑ They invite us to meetings ❑ They thank us for our contribution ❑ They tell us they trust us to be honest ❑ We are open/honest with them about our limitations – what's on the table and what isn't ❑ They explain why they did/didn't take account of our views ❑ We can phone them up ❑ They respond (quickly) ❑ Being in a room with them is not stressful
People who make policy… ⚓ Improve relationships with policy influencers/ third sector organisations ⚓ View the third sector as a partner with something to offer	

If you want to influence 'awareness':

Influencing outcomes	Outcome indicators
Policy influencers in the third sector… ⚓ Have increased awareness of policy environment ⚓ Understand better the policy cycle (i.e. what policy-making involves)	❑ We know what the policy issue we want to address is ❑ We have a theory of change (activities and outcomes) that is informed by evidence ❑ We understand the context around the policy issue (i.e. policy cycle and evidence base) ❑ We can draw a general policy cycle for the issue we want to address ❑ We are clear who needs to know about the issue and why ❑ We know who other policy influencers are and what they want at each stage of the policy cycle (allies/opposition) ❑ We scan for policy developments around the issue ❑ We have a plan to engage with key policy players at each policy cycle stage ❑ We know what evidence to collect to make our point
People who make policy… ⚓ Have increased awareness of the issues ⚓ Understand better 'what works'	❑ They repeat/use our messages when talking about the issue ❑ They ask relevant questions about the issue ❑ They ask for/share their learning and evidence of need/solutions ❑ They ask us to be involved in their conversations ❑ They mention/use our evidence of the issue ❑ They invest in 'what works' – e.g. scale up/replicate/adapt/develop evidence-informed good work

If you want to influence 'attitudes/behaviours':

Influencing outcomes	Outcome indicators
Policy influencers in the third sector… ⚓ Have increased ability/ capacity to engage in policy discussions ⚓ Make greater contribution to policy debate	❑ We know how to be part of/feel comfortable contributing to a working group ❑ We take part in working groups and/or policy debates ❑ We know what language/tone to use ❑ We can write consultation responses ❑ We are invited to be involved in other policy influencers' conversations ❑ We are invited to give evidence to people who make policy ❑ We have examples of policies and organisations adopting one or more of our messages
People who make policy… ⚓ Make better policy ⚓ Are better able to design evidence-informed policy ⚓ Understand better when to fund innovation/existing practice ⚓ Make more participatory policy-making processes ⚓ Are better able to identify and meet gaps in need ⚓ Are better able to implement policy effectively	❑ The wording of local and national policies reflect our words and values ❑ Our beneficiaries' voices are heard (we speak for them / they speak for themselves) ❑ People who make policy engage others (communities, organisations, funders) in policy development and/or policy implementation processes ❑ People who make policy have appropriate systems for evaluating existing policy ❑ People who make policy use (our) third sector evidence to evaluate policy ❑ People who make policy work with the third sector to identify gaps ❑ People who make policy design and implement policies that reflect what people we work with say matters to them ❑ An implementation gap is addressed ❑ Evidence of good practice feeds into policy design and implementation

If you want to influence 'content':

Influencing outcomes	Outcome indicators
⚓ Policy and practice are more connected ⚓ Policies meet the needs of the people we work with (i.e. our beneficiaries)	❑ We can see our messages reflected (implicitly or explicitly) in policy documents ❑ Wording of policy legislation, strategies, etc. reflects what people we work with say matters to them ❑ People we work with tell us things have improved for them (i.e. better outcomes)

If you can evidence how your activities lead to better 'relationships', 'awareness', 'attitudes/behaviours' and 'content' outcomes, you can assume that you **contributed** to better outcomes for 'people'.

Visit www.evaluationsupportscotland.org.uk/resources for more guidance on outcomes and indicators.

Step 3: Choose your data collection method

Now that you know the change you want to make (i.e. your outcomes) and what you need to measure to track progress (i.e. your indicators), think about what **data collection methods and tools you are going to use** to collect the evidence you need to show your influence.

Ask yourself the following questions to help you decide on appropriate methods:

- Where and when might you see indicators happening?
- What are your clients' abilities? (e.g. literacy, age, language, verbal)
- What is the nature of the work? (e.g. one-to-one, group, lots of people, few people, active, not active)
- What is the environment like? (e.g. indoors, outdoors, community, hospital, prison, school)

***Remember: 1. outcomes ⇨ 2. indicators ⇨ 3. methods**. People have a tendency to jump to methods; for example deciding to use a questionnaire before making sure they really know **what they need to measure** and whether a questionnaire is the **most appropriate method** to use.*

It is important to remember that your method should help you **look for evidence of your outcome indicators**. Here are the most common methods and approaches to measure policy influencing outcomes (source: *Walking the talk*, 2016):

- Questionnaires, surveys and interviews (using outcome indicators)
- Focus groups, informal face-to-face or e-mail feedback
- Testimony from clients
- Citation of your policy influence in external evaluations
- Scanning for examples of policy influence indicators in policy documents, speeches, press releases, Parliamentary Official Report (also known as 'Hansard'), minutes of Government and other official meetings.
- Monitoring changes in legislation
- Monitoring statistics (national or local) for signs of increase/decrease after your influencing activities.

*The **template** on the next page can help you plan your monitoring and evaluation. It makes you set out the indicators appropriately for each outcome and then work out how you will gather the information you need.*

'Policy influencing' evaluation planning template

Outcome (change or difference you want to make)	Indicators (how you know the outcome is happening)	How to collect information about the indicator	Who will do this	When and where info will be collected	When and how the info will be used*

*This column was added to the original template: *ESS's Evaluation planning template*, which can be downloaded from www.evaluationsupportscotland.org.uk/resources.

Evaluating policy influence:

Case studies

This section includes the case studies that three Working Group members wrote to illustrate different approaches to policy influence:

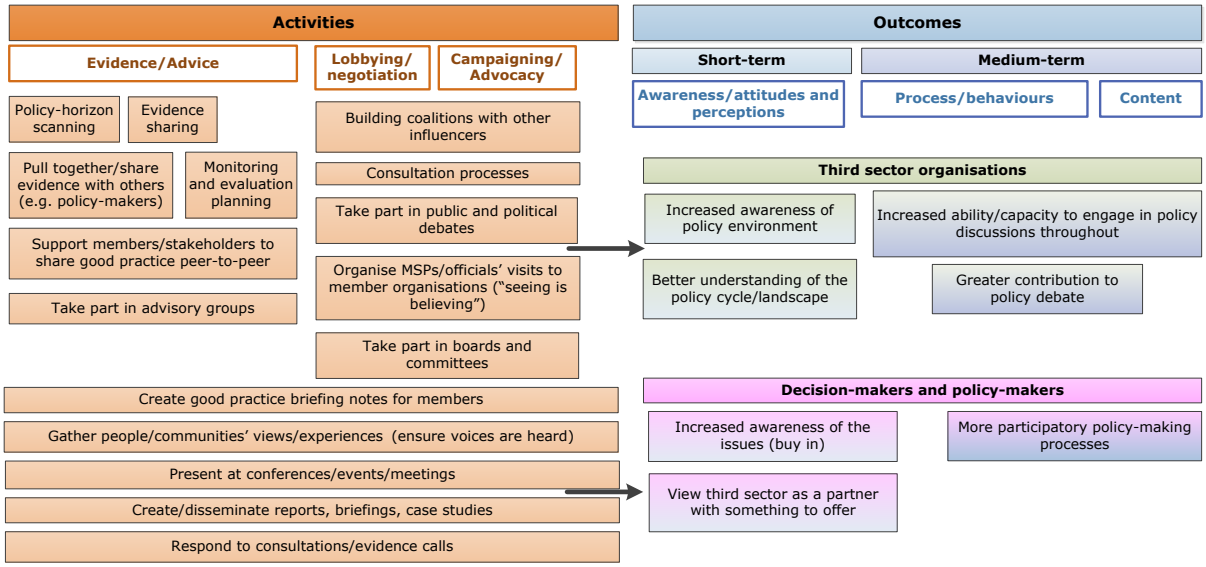
- **Community Health Exchange**
- **YouthLink Scotland**
- **Families Outside**

We start each case study with an extract from the logic model on page 11 to illustrate the main influencing activities the third sector organisations carried out and outcomes achieved.

Each case study provides evaluation evidence of how we know the influencing outcomes were achieved.

You can find more 'policy influencing' case studies in the resource, *Walking the talk: A guide for funders on how we evaluate our policy and practice influencing work* (2016), which is available for download from www.evaluationsupportscotland.org.uk .

Case study: Community Health Exchange - promoting community-led health at a policy level



Background

Community Health Exchange (CHEX) supports and promotes community development approaches to health improvement.

We provide support to a network of community-led health initiatives and their public sector partners who are tackling health inequalities in communities across Scotland. We are part of the Scottish Community Development Centre and receive funding from NHS Health Scotland.

It is increasingly being recognised that local people must have more involvement in how decisions are made, and community-led health approaches are an effective way of ensuring this happens. We want to encourage senior policy-makers in government and the NHS to see investing in community-led health as a way to help improve health outcomes.

CHEX's ambition to convince policy-makers to invest in community-led health has been a feature of our business plan for quite a long time; however, we have found the current **policy environment** to be more conducive to community-led approaches. Developments such as the Christie Commission recommendations, the integration of health and social care and the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 have allowed us to find new angles with which to convey our message.

Influencing activities

We continually reinforce our conviction that community-led health has an important role in tackling health inequalities in Scotland by **gathering and**

sharing evidence of individuals' lives being improved through participating in the activities, training and groups that community-led health projects provide. We mainly capture this through **case studies** but **success stories** are sprinkled through all our material, including **event reports**, **research publications**, **policy briefings** and **newsletters**.

As an intermediary third sector organisation, we ensure that our wider network of community-led health organisations has a say in **monitoring and evaluation planning** of CHEX actions, including those around influencing policy. We have an **Advisory Committee** made up of statutory, voluntary and community partners which helps us to plan our policy influencing activities.

We have harnessed our message to the above agendas, producing **policy briefings** and **consultation responses** and building these themes into their national **conferences**, where senior civil servants and politicians are often present. CHEX has a *bridging* role, bringing community-led health organisations and policy-makers together and creating opportunities for community-led health organisations to respond to **policy consultations**. An example of this is our current work with NHS Health Scotland, in which we are engaging with our network around the NHS Health Scotland corporate strategy. This will give community-led health organisations and practitioners the opportunity to influence NHS Health Scotland's longer term priorities.

After publishing a series of **research reports** which assessed the influence community-led health organisations feel they have on statutory agencies, we held our "Healthy Influences" conference (named after the reports). We then invited participants to a **follow-up meeting** to take forward themes from the conference and develop actions to increase the influence of the sector. We agreed to continue our work around the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015. One action from this was to deliver **workshops** on the Act to community-led health organisations and their partners so that community-led health organisations are in a **better position to influence local decisions** to **improve outcomes for their communities**.

As well as working with our members, we take part in a wide range of **policy fora and working groups** (e.g. Third Sector Health and Social Care Collaborative, Mental Health Improvement Network), and **build coalitions with other influencers** in different sectors to collaboratively influence policy.

Measuring policy influence outcomes

We use the Learning Evaluation and Planning (LEAP) framework[8] to monitor and evaluate our progress against outcomes in CHEX business plan. When we first

[8] http://www.planandevaluate.com

started using LEAP, it made us think and realise that we didn't always have, and weren't always collecting, the sorts of evidence required to show that we were making progress towards our outcomes. We also realised that we had to design more carefully our outcome indicators; particularly, indicators that enabled us to **attribute policy change** to our own work and the work of the community-led health sector.

CHEX's first step in improving our business plan was to make the outcomes and indicators more **realistic and achievable**. The first outcome in our updated business plan relates to policy influence and reads as follows: *Community-led health is better understood and valued by policy-makers and public sector agencies*. Our indicators now focus on **achievable actions** as well as the **perceptions** of our network. For example, we now have **indicators** requiring that *community-led health organisations report if CHEX has assisted them to have more policy influence*.

To show that we are meeting our indicators, we are starting to **survey our network** annually to get their views on how much progress we have made towards our outcomes. It is early days, but we are starting to collect evidence that CHEX has:

- Brokered engagement between our network members and policy makers;
- Provided evidence of community-led health's contribution to tackling health inequalities to policy makers and public sector agencies;
- Helped to increase policymakers' and public sector agencies' understanding of community-led health; and
- Supported our network members to have more policy influence.

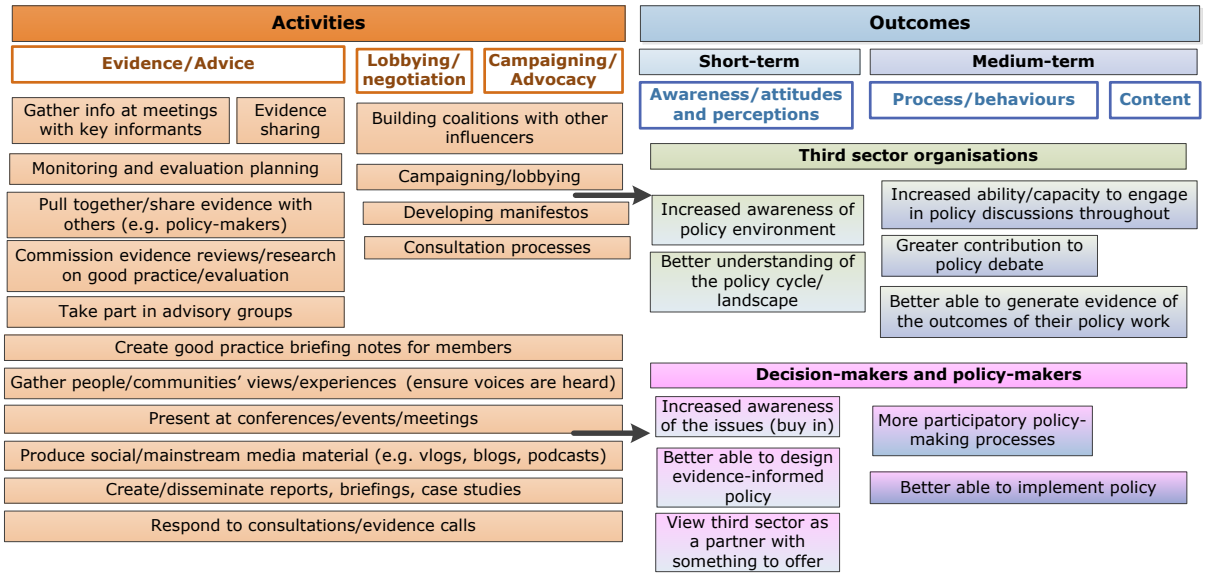
Learning

LEAP has been useful in that it provided a framework to improve the way we collected information on our policy influence. There is still room for improvement; both in terms of making sure our indicators are as effective as possible and in terms of asking the right questions in our survey.

Key messages for other influencers

- The process of using LEAP has shown us that a planning and evaluation tool not only helps an organisation to evaluate outcomes, including those around policy influence, but helps to refine those outcomes and how they are measured as well.
- Any third sector organisation seeking to evaluate their policy influence should consider asking their membership/beneficiaries for their views. Not only is this an achievable way of measuring progress, but it reflects the fact that we are ultimately trying to influence policy for the benefit of the people we work with – who better to ask?

Case study: YouthLink Scotland - representing the youth sector at policy level



Background

YouthLink Scotland (YLS) is the national agency for youth work.

We are a membership organisation, representing over 100 regional and national youth organisations from both the voluntary and statutory sectors. We champion the role and value of youth work and represent the interests and aspirations of both the voluntary and statutory sector. Our vision is of a nation which values its young people and their contribution to society, where young people are supported to achieve their potential.

Influencing activities

In our role as an intermediary we represent the sector to the Scottish Government, Scottish Parliament and other appropriate agencies using a number of different influencing activities. In a typical year we respond to around 20 public **policy consultations** or **calls for evidence** from Parliamentary committees. We capture member viewpoints through our various **networks**, including a specialist **Policy Forum** which explores the input of youth work on key upcoming policy areas. We also **work in partnership** with civil servants on **working groups** to shape strategies or initiatives.

YLS **builds coalitions** with other policy influencers; for example, we support the Scottish Youth Work Research Steering Group, which is exploring the impact of youth work on young people through three methods: a quantitative longitudinal study; a qualitative study on the impact of universal youth work, and a retrospective study. The findings shape **briefings**, **campaigns** and other influencing work.

Measuring policy influencing outcomes

In the past we used a number of measures to monitor our progress on policy work, such as tracking which of our **members are engaged in our policy work**. Our #YouthWorkChangesLives campaign aimed to **articulate the needs and ambitions of the youth work sector** in advance of the Scottish and UK Government elections. The campaign involved member organisations from the statutory and voluntary youth work sectors. As part of the campaign, 151 Scottish politicians heard in person **case studies about the impact** of youth work from 400 young people and youth workers, covering 113 constituencies across Scotland and the UK. We have also maintained a **monitoring document** (see extract on the following page) where we track relevant activities against the 14 areas in the **#YouthWorkChangesLives manifesto**.

Starting to chart the waters

A reflection during YLS's involvement in the Working Group that led to this guide is that we often don't dedicate enough time to forward planning policy influence or to evaluating our influence. We recognise that dedicating more resource to these steps will ensure that our influencing work is more effective, efficient and proactive.

We have recently begun exploring the impact of leaving the European Union on the youth work sector. We have implemented a basic **logic model** to guide our influencing efforts on this specific project. The logic model was drawn up in collaboration with member stakeholders thus ensuring we have a broad range of views and cross-sector agreement in our approach. Drawing up specific **outcomes** and corresponding **indicators** has been useful for clarifying our approach. We have now planned various methods of collection into our overall project timeline and are currently measuring the **baselines** for each indicator. We do this through a combination of **collating research and evaluations** produced by members and research carried out on behalf of YouthLink Scotland.

Learning

In this area of work it is important for us to **focus on our contribution** to achieving our outcomes, as there are many different organisations and campaigns working to similar goals. Understanding this from the outset ensures that we don't set unrealistic targets at a performance management or Board level. Going forward we will be **expanding this approach to our overall policy and influencing work** to ensure a cohesive approach.

Key message for other influencers

We would highly recommend other third sector organisations adopting this approach. Making time for thinking and planning can often slip to be the last priority when you have limited

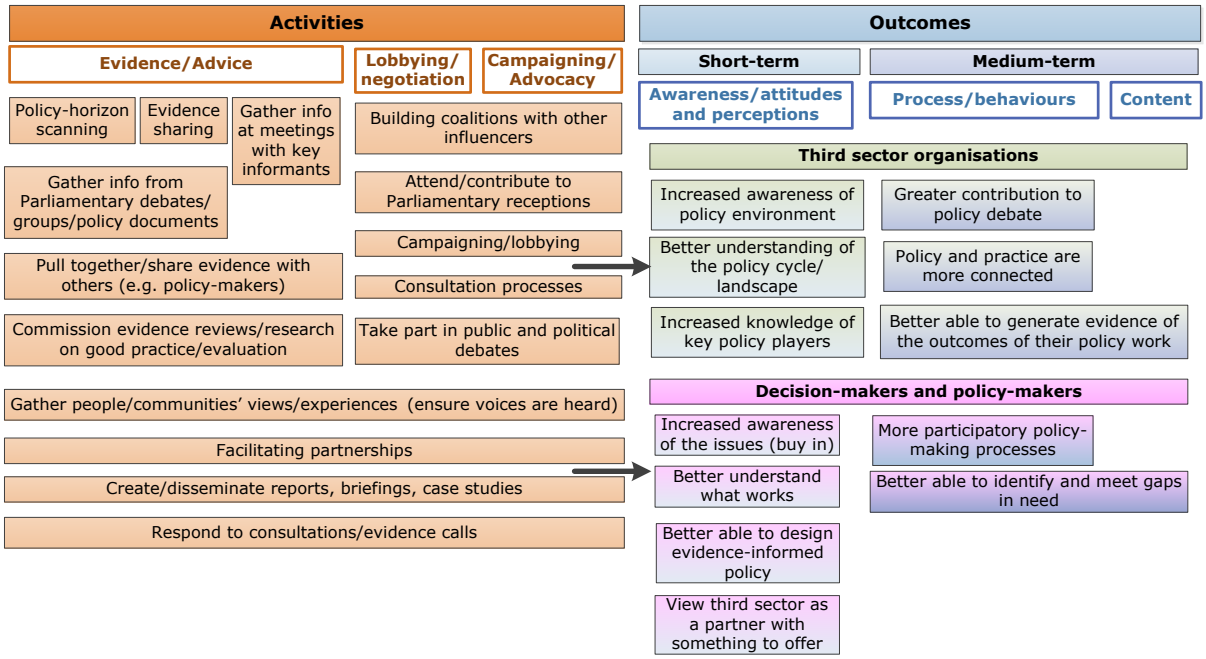
capacity but planning for and conducting evaluation will only serve to make your organisation and work more effective for the communities you work with.

Example area from the activity monitoring of #YouthWorkChangesLives

Theme	Call to action	Progress				Commentary
		Feb* 2016	Aug 2016	Oct 2016	Jan 2017	
		Invest in Youth Work				
Volunteering	❁ *Employer Supported Volunteering* to ensure everyone is supported to volunteer, meeting the needs of youth work where volunteers contribute their time frequently and over the long-term. ❁ We ask the Scottish Government to lead as an exemplar of best practice by providing *Employer Supported Volunteering* options for all staff, as an ongoing commitment to the voluntary sector.	⟺	↑	↑	↑	❁ YouthLink Scotland continuation as strategic partner for #iwill in 2016-17. ❁ Successful royal event showcasing #iwill, volunteering and youth social action to a range of stakeholders. ❁ 21 Local Authorities have pledged support to #iwill through Activity Agreements. ❁ New #iwill ambassadors recruited. ❁ Successful #iwillweek. ❁ Support for #iwill at SNP Conference including Ministers John Swinney and Jamie Hepburn. ❁ YouthLink Scotland attended volunteering promotion event at Victoria Quay on 30 November. ❁ The Scottish Government have changed their Employer Supported Volunteering policy now allowing employees up to 3 days paid time off for volunteering which may be taken flexibly.

* Baseline

Case study: Families Outside – Voicing the needs of families affected by imprisonment to change policy



Background

Families Outside is the only national charity in Scotland that works solely to support the families of people affected by imprisonment.

We work to improve outcomes for children and families affected by imprisonment so they can live healthy, active lives free from stigma and impediment.

Imprisonment can be a traumatic experience for families, and its impact is often significant and enduring. This can include:

- Risk to housing
- Financial pressures
- Problems in caring for children and the impact on the estimated 27,000 children who lose a parent to imprisonment each year
- Anxiety, distress and health problems
- Rejection, stigma, and victimisation by neighbours and the community.

Families affected by imprisonment face a process of grief and readjustment throughout the course of arrest, trial, imprisonment and release. They often have difficulty getting the information and support they need to make them feel in control during periods of crisis and stress.

Unfortunately, dependent children and family members are not identified, or the impact on them assessed, when someone goes to prison. This means that innocent people are suffering and potentially at great risk as a direct result of a court's decision.

Children and families of prisoners are our core client group, yet we have little information about who these people are or the support they need and access unless they show up at a prison to visit.

We wanted to bring this issue to the attention of legislators and MSPs who are in a position to request **child and family impact assessments**, so that those affected can receive appropriate support and so that data are available about the wider impact of judicial decision-making (the 'true' costs of crime).

Taking an 'evidence and advice' approach to influencing policy

We wanted our messages to be rooted on as much useful evidence as possible, so we carried out research to **gather primary and secondary evidence** on:

- **Why** change was needed, argued effectively in the 2007 report from Scotland's Commissioner for Children and Young People (SCCYP) and via case studies from our own work with families
- **How** this issue had been addressed elsewhere including reference to research and practice internationally
- **What** had been done about it in the UK so far
- **What difference** the change would make.

This included using a European Union Leonardo da Vinci Fellowship scholar offered to us over one year to conduct a literature review as well as two small-scale research projects on the issue. In addition to the evidence mentioned above, our research highlighted a gap in the evidence base: we could find no meaningful information about costs.

Our approach to policy influencing involved **providing evidence and expertise** throughout the process, **feeding in and commenting rather than leading on the discussion**, as we had little capacity to take on the lead role.

Influencing activities

Our policy influencing journey started on the back of a recommendation for Child Impact Assessments from SCCYP in 2007; this included identifying possible ways

forward for impact assessments through **research**[9] and **alerting key players**, such as **MSPs and civil servants**, about the importance of such action.

Aileen Campbell MSP, Minister for Public Health and Sport, then a newly-elected MSP, took an interest and gathered together a team from five different interest groups, including ourselves.

From our initial discussions we met with the (then) Cabinet Secretary for Justice, then worked with the MSP to **draft amendments** to a key Justice bill going through Scottish Parliament at the time. The policy team at Barnardo's Scotland worked with the lead MSP to draft amendments and pull together a Private Member's Bill on this issue, and with civil servants to negotiate what would and would not be submitted at key stages.

We then **commented on other organisations' responses** to the Private Member's Bill on impact assessments, and **hosted a discussion in Parliament** of our Cross-Party Group on the issue.

Although these efforts were unsuccessful, they informed us as to how to frame the discussion in the future, eventually leading to a **Private Member's Bill** from another MSP and wider support from numerous organisations, individuals, and interest groups.

We had to make our evidence palatable to the Cabinet Secretary for Justice at a **face-to-face meeting** with him; the Justice Committee via our proposed **amendments to current Justice legislation**, and to the Scottish Government Children and Families team through **longer-term discussions** with civil servants to explain why their own policies did not already address the needs of this group.

As well as pulling together existing pieces of research, we produced draft tools to conduct impact assessments. We then had to **find an organisation willing to take on the task** of conducting assessments in some way – the Scottish Court Service was unwilling to be involved – to ensure the assessments could not be perceived as interfering with judicial independence.

When initial efforts to introduce impact assessments failed, the **five organisations continued to work together** to find ways forward. The membership of this group increased, and our efforts included a successful recommendation for impact assessments from the United Nations Committee on

[9] The first two stages of this research were conducted through a European Union Leonardo da Vinci Fellowship (Tânia Loureiro, visiting scholar from Portugal, hosted by Families Outside) and through a grant from the Scottish Commissioner for Children and Young People.

Human Rights, accepted by the UK Government. Nothing further happened until the policy teams from two of the organisations, Barnardo's Scotland and the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC), pursued the issue more vigorously, based on research and information we provided.

Measuring policy influencing outcomes

Families Outside and partners in this endeavour monitored and collected evidence of progress towards desired policy changes through:

- Scottish Parliament's official records on Private Member's Bills
- Discussions in the Cross-Party Group
- Meetings with civil servants
- Support from MSPs, including through a one-week display in the Scottish Parliament.

This work was a Personal Performance Objective of the Chief Executive, and progress on this was reported internally to our Board on a quarterly basis.

A requirement to gather information about children **is now part of** the Criminal Justice (Scotland) Act 2016, placing a duty on Scottish Ministers to request information about any dependent children from people when they arrive in prison and to notify the Named Person as appropriate.

Learning

Through this experience we learned that influencing policy takes a great deal of time and effort, so compromise is often necessary: 'one step at a time' might be necessary for the long-term ends. However, change is possible, and forming coalitions with other organisations helps. Having said that, a risk to be aware of and manage when working in partnership is that partners may fight for the credit of having achieved a particular result.

Key message for others influencers

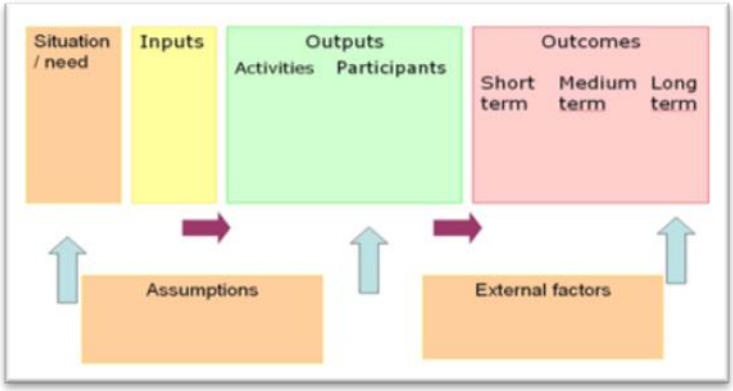
Collaborate, collaborate, collaborate! The more 'noise' you can make, the more key players recognise that your interest is the issue and not something that solely serves your own needs; and the more the issue helps the key players to achieve their own organisational objectives, the better.

Annex

Developing a logic model

Developing a 'logic model' can help overcome some of the challenges that arise when evaluating policy influence. Logic modelling, also known as 'theory of change', 'programme theory' or 'roadmap', is a model of how the policy influencing activities lead to the desired changes in policy or in beneficiaries' lives.

A logic model, as illustrated in the figure below, tells the story of your project or programme in a diagram and a few simple words. It shows a causal connection between the need you have identified, what you do, and how this makes a difference for individual communities. You can also show how your work contributes to strategic outcomes at a national or a local level.



Logic models can help you to:

- **Think** about why your project or programme exists, why you do what you do and why you think that makes a difference. They can help you explore and develop a shared understanding about these things.
- **Plan** a new project. In fact logic modelling is really a fancy term for planning. It can help you to think about the need and what you will do to address that need.
- **Communicate** your thinking to people who support or benefit from your work.
- **Develop** your evaluation plan. A logic model can help you to identify what you expect to happen, and when. It can therefore provide a pathway or road map for measuring progress.
- Identify project or programme **risks** and how you might manage them.

For advice on how to develop a logic model go to Evaluation Support Scotland's website at www.evaluationsupportscotland.org.uk.

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"A key strategic objective for Keep Scotland Beautiful is positively influencing the development and implementation of legislation, policy and guidance that will help achieve our vision of a cleaner, greener and more sustainable Scotland. We undertake a wide range of different activities to do this, including directly engaging with Ministers and civil servants, briefing parliamentary committees and MSPs and working with other organisations where we have shared interests. We can only have confidence that we are making progress towards this objective, and that our activities are having the desired impact, if we are able to evaluate their effectiveness. That is why we were keen to be involved with the development of this resource which we believe will be of real value not only to Keep Scotland Beautiful but to the wider third sector."

Paul Wallace, Keep Scotland Beautiful

"SCVO members regularly tell us they struggle to demonstrate the difference they make in policy, particularly when change happens over many years, or they are one of many players influencing a single policy issue. This new guide will be invaluable to third sector organisations with a policy remit. The guide helps break down and simplify what is often a complex picture, offering practical and pragmatic guidance alongside case studies and illustrative examples. Whether you're wondering how to get started, or you're just looking for a few ideas to strengthen evaluations, there should be something for you here."

Ilse MacKinnon, Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations

"VAS was delighted to take part in this work and the resource produced will be an excellent tool for local forums, collaborations and organisations to identify the contribution they make. It's important for all involved to understand the positive impact that third sector organisations achieve through influencing local decision making."

Allan Johnstone, Voluntary Action Scotland

Evaluation Support Scotland works with third sector organisations and funders so that they can measure and report on their impact.

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