

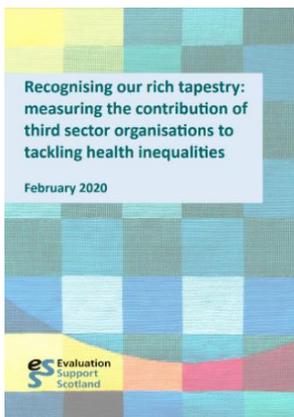
Tasting Change case study

This is one of a series of case studies showing the kind of **evidence** organisations collect to **prove** their contribution to tackling health inequalities.

Tasting Change have used "[Recognising our rich tapestry: measuring the contribution of third sector organisations to tackling health inequalities](#)" to **explain** and **prove** how their cooking groups programme contributes to tackling health inequalities.

Health inequalities are the unfair differences in people's health which lead to differences in life expectancy between the most and least disadvantaged people in Scotland.

Introduction



Evaluation Support Scotland (ESS) developed **Recognising our rich tapestry** in collaboration with third sector organisations, sector intermediaries and commissioners. This work was funded by

Public Health Scotland. The resource intends to help:

- third sector organisations explain to funders and partners how their work contributes to impacting on inequalities
- funders and commissioners better understand better the third sector's contribution

Section 1 of this case study includes a logic model which **explains** how the Tasting Change programme at The Health Agency links to tackling health inequalities.

Section 2 sets out evidence to **prove** this.

About Tasting Change at The Health Agency

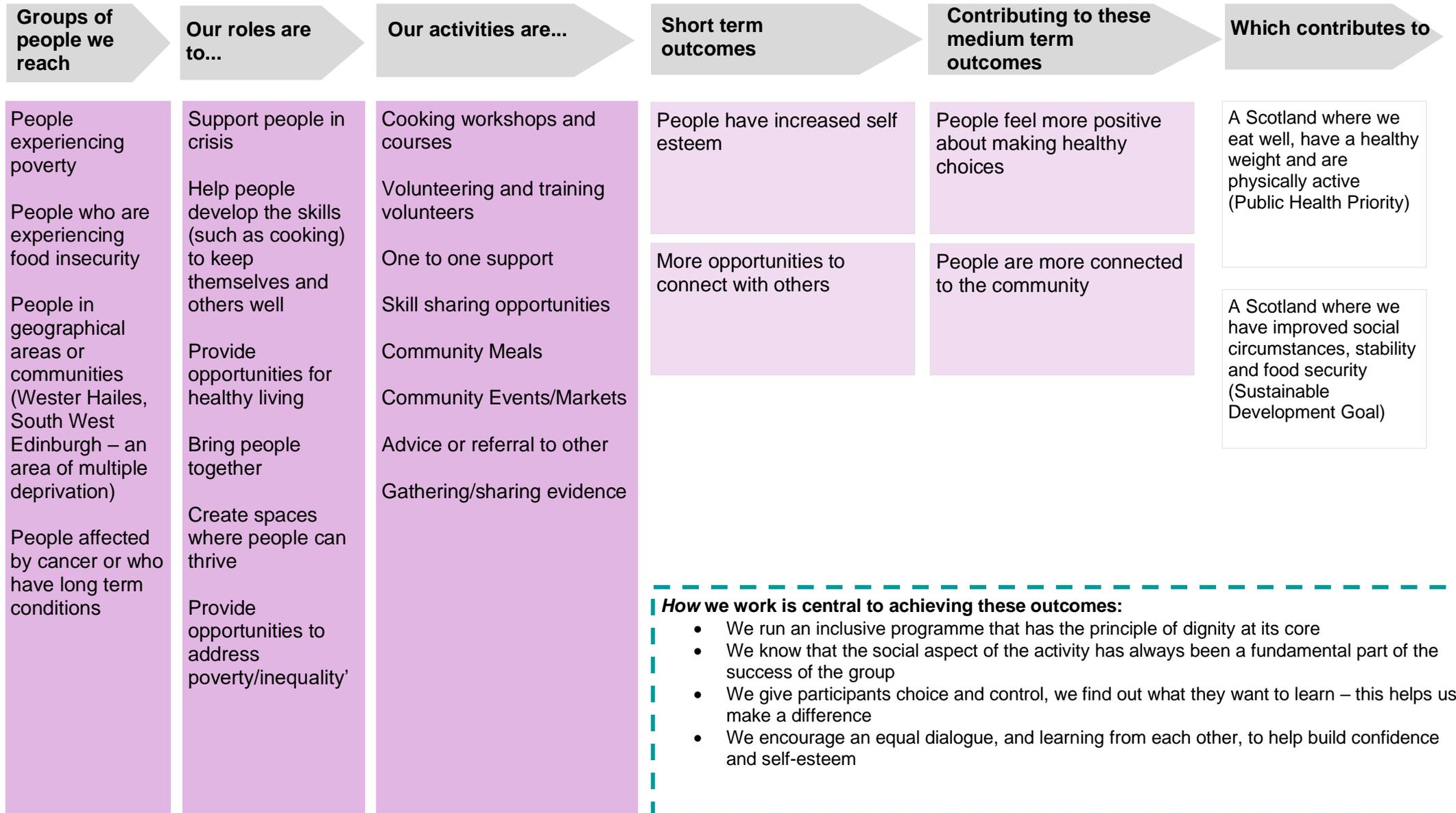
Tasting Change aims to tackle food insecurity, increase community awareness levels on the importance of good food and promote positive food opportunities.

Tasting Change runs cooking groups to help address some of the health inequalities and barriers in which individuals in the community of Wester Hailes face. The groups also aim to encourage people to adopt a healthy balanced diet. Activities include:

- providing a community meal
- delivering regular workshops and interactive education sessions
- online course during the COVID-19 pandemic. This pilot online course consisted of Zoom meetings, Recipe Videos, a closed interactive Facebook group and short face to face interactions, when participants came to pick up their ingredient bags from our weekly Community Takeaway service.

SECTION 1 – Explaining the links to health inequalities

This **logic model** for Tasting Change **explains** who the programme reaches, roles of the programme, activities, outcomes it achieves in the short term and how these outcomes contribute to strategic priorities on healthy eating and food security.



SECTION 2 - Proving the links to health inequalities

Who we try to reach

We aim to reach people experiencing food insecurity and poverty in the Wester Hailes area. Health and Wellbeing profiles for the area produced by the Scottish Public Health Observatory show that many health indicators are significantly worse than the national average including adult life expectancy, mental health wellbeing and children living in poverty. Our aspirations are to see food insecurity and inequality reduced alongside the development of a stronger, more resilient community. Food insecurity is linked to low incomes, limited availability of affordable and nutritious food, lack of transport options and lack of skills relating to meal preparation.

How we know we reach the right people

We know we reach those who need our support because our work is based in an area of multiple deprivation.

We work closely with GPs, health workers, partner agencies and Community Link workers, who refer participants who can benefit from our service.

Outcome 1: Increased self-esteem



We gather **verbal feedback** from participants both on our closed Facebook group and in person:

I'm also really enjoying cooking again with recipes. I usually just bung stuff in the pot and hope for the best...this course has given me the confidence to cook from scratch again

You feel a sense of accomplishment when you've spent this time working hard and it comes out being really tasty

Not only has (my involvement in the project) increased my confidence, it has made me feel like I can do anything now

This group means so much to me and is giving me a purpose, a focus and it is motivating me to keep going sometimes which is helping my mental health so much



Workers **observe** changes over time to the way people engage on the closed Facebook group and their willingness to share their meals. For example, one member of the group regularly stated that they were a 'bad cook' prior to the sessions. Once involved they said that the group had invoked a newfound interest in not only making meals from scratch but being a more adventurous cook as well.



On occasion we receive **feedback from referrers** like this:

Benefits from LD experienced in participating in the Tasting Change Cooking Group have included reduced social isolation, reduced loneliness, sense of purpose, sense of community within local area and also new online community, physical exercise, weight loss, increased knowledge and understanding about new health promoting foods, improved confidence due to a sense of achievement and new learning

17:58
from Around The Globe
50 mins · Facebook for Android · 📷

Got inspired by last weeks recipe and made my own risotto with leeks, mushrooms and chicken for dinner tonight. Not the most appetising looking plate of food but it did taste delicious 😊



Seen by 6

👍👍 Catherine Fyfe and Ferdous Jahan 2 comments

Outcome 2: People have more opportunities to connect with others



When attending the face-to-face groups **participants typically tell us:**

It makes me feel less isolated. It makes me feel good coming here. It's like a big family and I feel like I have lots of friends

If it wasn't for this group I would be sitting home alone. It makes me really happy that I am coming here and giving something back to the community

This kind of group is great for not only learning new techniques in eating healthily, but also, to get to know more people and interests. It builds community spirit

We are still able to achieve this even while delivering the classes online. The closed Facebook group allowed for discussion in a safe supportive space and a real sense of togetherness and belonging was created. Participants were also able to pick up their bags at the Community Meal Takeaway on a Wednesday too so a quick chat with the workers here was possible.



We also received **verbal feedback** from those attending the online group:

Thanks so much for the ingredients and recipe again today we've only been in the area for a few months so it's been nice to meet some faces



We also receive feedback in our participants **questionnaire:**

My main benefit was getting to talk to other members of the community, and I have been exchanging recipes online...I would not have done this if it wasn't for coming to the group and learning new things and meeting new people

Would highly recommend this group to others. Good meeting other people in the group, especially when we collected our bags every week



We sometimes also receive **referrer feedback** which tells us these outcomes are happening:

L said that being on the course brought her closer to her family and to her community - particularly going to collect the ingredients at the community meal and seeing other people there. Each week she would cook a meal and her whole family would eat it together, she said that while some things were familiar, others were totally new and her Grandpa particularly liked some of the new recipes. She was also able to teach her family how to cook some of the recipes too. Her mum loved that fact that once a week L would cook the meal

Outcome 3: People feel more positive about making healthy choices



Workers observe participants speaking positively about food and demonstrating an awareness of why eating healthy is important to them but also that eating healthier is something that makes you feel good in many ways.

It was clear that all participants had learned a bank of new recipes to put into the weekly meal routines but also a passion and enthusiasm to learn more. Each participant was engaged and spoke positively about eating healthier.



Verbal feedback from both online group and face to face groups also shows this outcome happening:

Soup was amazing Thank you so much again such a great recipe and the boys adored it thanks so much

I haven't tasted a courgette before but it was lovely, will definitely try this again

Leek, potato and kale soup plus croutons using up the heel of the bread which we would typically bin, we only used half the ingredients to make lunch for tomorrow and have prepped the rest ready to make another batch on Mon nite ready for school lunch next week, thanks very much we enjoyed watching the video and using the fresh products some of which we have never used before

I'm in recovery early on so I'm trying to make caring choices. I'm glad I found you and I can continue to make delicious healthy foods



We receive feedback in our **questionnaires**:

I have thoroughly enjoyed the group. Has made me more adventurous in my cooking. I have learnt how to prepare things I had never even considered trying before i.e. butternut squash. Celery, chillis. currv

I am making a lot more food from scratch and hope to keep doing so

From what I have learnt in the group I'd like to make my food more interesting by using more spices etc and hopefully save money by buying 'real' vegetables to prepare from scratch. I will also look more closely at items (and labels) in the supermarket when I'm browsing in a grocery store

I am now cooking from scratch which is a new skill and its healthier



Scaled responses on our **questionnaire**.

All participants agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that:

I feel more able to cook health meals

I am more aware of the importance of healthy eating



We sometimes also receive **referrer feedback** like this:

He enjoyed learning about new ingredients and trying out the tasty nutritious recipes and managed to achieve an initial weight loss of 2kg

Strategic priority

Over time our work contributes to the following strategic outcomes:

- **A Scotland where we eat well, have a healthy weight and are physically active**
- **A Scotland where we have improved social circumstances, stability and food security**

We have evidence that we make a positive difference to these outcomes in the longer term.



Workers observe that participants continue engaging in other local activities too, also demonstrating their awareness and aspirations for a healthy lifestyle, such as 'Wester Hailes Eats Together', a community take away in which staff prepare healthy nutritious meals in place of a community meal.

Workers also observe that participants taking part in the online cooking groups have involved their families more in food preparation, encouraging healthy food choices among young people and creating lasting change.

If you want to explain and prove your contribution to tackling health inequalities please read "[Recognising our rich tapestry: measuring the contribution of third sector organisations to tackling health inequalities](#)" and follow the steps set out in the resource.

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You can download ESS resources free from our website.

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