

Using a Whole-of-Government Approach to Advance Child Well-Being Final Report

Commissioned by the OECD

Written by the Institute for Inspiring Children's Futures, University of Strathclyde

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July 2022

Description for Website

This paper seeks to strengthen the delivery of the vision for children and their well-being to which all nations aspire.

It focusses on the good intentions and efforts of governments, with a particular emphasis on the criticality of bringing together key contributors and interest groups, inspired by a shared and coordinated vision and approach for collective policies and programmes which address the primary challenges of children's well-being. Through this mechanism, it seeks to secure the most effective implementation of policy and the more rapid achievement of countries' targeted outcome objectives.

It provides therefore the key elements of a whole-of-government (WGA) approach, drawn from good practice experiences and evidence, to equip governments with effective frameworks, mechanisms, and tools to support children's well-being, in the face of new and entrenched complexities during the COVID recovery. The paper also embraces wider considerations, drawing out the crucial need for governments to support and encourage a whole-of-nation (WNA) approach, embracing the insights and delivery expertise of organisations throughout their societies.

The paper highlights how a WGA approach needs to be explicitly shaped to reflect the extremely specific and distinctive nature of children and their circumstances. While WGA are increasingly common across the world across many thematic areas, the prioritisation of children poses its own distinct challenges that necessitate a sharply tailored WGA.

Within a WGA approach, this Paper:

- Highlights the criticality of sharpening the collective vision for children's well-being, the primary outcome objectives, and the prioritisation of child-being
- Identifies the drivers to address the implementation challenge and close the existing gaps between aspiration and effectiveness
- Locates the WGA as critical to driving a WNA which sustains efforts over the long-term
- Offers in-depth insights on sustaining cross-government commitment over the longer-term and the understanding of sound governance and leadership for child well-being, and on the interactions between various child well-being policy areas
- Focusses on governments' response to the complexity of children's needs, by promoting the necessary institutional frameworks and mechanisms for horizontal co-ordination and integration in the process of policy design and implementation
- Helps develop a strategic capacity and direction, policy options and interventions based on the research, identified good practices and overall child well-being priorities.

It does so by:

- Identifying key governance pillars for child well-being, with a focus on both national and regional/local government, and multi-level governance¹, together with the collective governance of all partners across society in overseeing the complex leadership required from a WNA approach for the delivery of the child well-being vision.
- Considering the use of evidence, data, and governance tools; key medium-term challenges and opportunities. It will for example identify good practices from OECD member countries as a basis from which to draw out key elements and issues. It builds on the OECD governance work to-date and the examples of good country practices.

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Executive Summary

The gap is widening between our aspirations for children, and the reality that many children face. The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed governance gaps and challenges and had a far-reaching impact on children's lives. A focused whole-of-government (WGA) approach to achieve children's well-being has become even more urgent.

Supporting children's well-being is complex and requires a multi-faceted response from governments. Sound public governance principles are essential to inform this response, requiring actions that unite across government portfolios, driven by a clear vision for the outcomes, sustained over a long time-horizon.

This cannot be achieved through agencies' efforts within singular mandates. A WGA approach for children's well-being demands government leadership and action to initiate, catalyse and coordinate aligned and integrated efforts. While WGA are increasingly common across the world in many thematic areas, the prioritisation of children poses its own distinct challenges that necessitate a sharply tailored WGA.

A WGA to achieve children's well-being needs to be informed by the *distinct* nature of children – their needs, rights, and evolving capacities, as well as their circumstances. Where a WGA approach is explicitly shaped to reflect the distinctive nature of children, governments are more successful in their efforts.

Sufficiently effective responses to children's circumstances are simply out of reach without a WGA approach which also convenes and motivates national non-governmental partners to inspire a whole nation's effort. In doing so, a WGA plays a key role in inspiring, facilitating and accelerating a whole-of-nation (WNA) approach, to ensure the effective delivery of programmes on the ground, essential to achieving the distinctive and long time-horizon for children's well-being.

This paper outlines a Whole-of-Government Framework for Child Well-being: a strategic approach to secure the vision for children over the long-term, one which all nations aspire to achieve. This Framework is built on four Key Pillars for governance and applied through three dynamic and responsive Action Phases. Together, these Pillars and Action Phases are central to establishing an integrated and collective Whole-of-Government Framework for Child Well-being for a whole nation to effectively respond to, nurture and sustain the well-being of children.

Building: Pillars of the Framework

Pillar 1: Integration. Key Policy Messages

- Establish good leadership for a successful WGA-WNA
- Champion the interdependence of political leadership and administrative capacity
- Drive and maintain coordination efforts for child and familial well-being over time, from conception of vision to delivery
- Value and create space for dialogue and engagement between and within government and civil society
- Engage with children, as well as with their families and carers
- [See full key policy messages for Pillar 1: Integration](#)

Pillar 2: Evidence and Learning. Key Policy Messages

- Develop a data framework for monitoring
- Pursue learning from a range of analysis approaches.
- Prioritise Child Impact Assessments even in crowded policy environments.
- Embark on meaningful cost-benefit analyses.
- Build on the work already underway to make progress
- [See full key policy messages for Pillar 2: Evidence and Learning](#)

Pillar 3: Resources. Key Policy Messages

- Design appropriate long-term resourcing levels
- Determine tools for understanding and measuring impact and progress
- Establish a budgetary priority for children's well-being
- Secure the range of human resources that correspond with the specific roles needed
- Determine the implementation methods
- [See full key policy messages for Pillar 3: Resources](#)

Pillar 4: Sustainability. Key Policy Messages

- Establish an inter-generational horizon
- Anticipate shocks and deploy strategic foresight to embed resilience
- Commit government and encourage parliamentary leadership
- Sustain collective leadership
- Nurture the commitment of broader society
- Regularly make the case for investing in the well-being of children
- Sustain the infrastructure and operationalisation
- [See full key policy messages for Pillar 4: Sustainability](#)

Implementing: A Coherent Framework

Effectively applying the four Key Pillars of this strategic Whole-of-Government Framework for Child Well-being is a cyclical and highly responsive process across three dynamic Action Phases. The phases, priorities, emphases, and actions will change as new learning and evidence emerge, and as the approaches are refined to reflect these insights. This is needed to achieve and maintain improvements which lead to children's well-being over the long-term.

These Action Phases include:

- **Committing** to WGA and WNA principles to establish a shared policy agenda and maintain a high-level commitment to achieve children's well-being.
- **Designing** high quality interventions and redesigning these further as new evidence and data are fed into the process; and
- **Delivering** these policies, programmes, and services through WGA and WNA principles.

Many challenges can be anticipated. Governments should develop the early warning systems needed to raise awareness of emerging concerns, and plan contingencies for: retaining participation; anticipating gaps; building incentives; and anticipating counterincentives.

1. Overview

Achieving children’s² well-being is complex. Sound public governance principles are essential to informing governments’ efforts. Where a whole-of-government (WGA) approach is explicitly shaped to reflect the distinctive nature of children and their circumstances, governments are more successful in their efforts. However, prioritising children in the effort poses distinct challenges, and so a sharply tailored WGA is important, drawing on—but not replicating—other thematic WGA approaches common across the world. The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed governance gaps and challenges and had a far-reaching impact on children’s lives; a focused WGA approach to achieve children’s well-being has become even more urgent. In doing so, a WGA can also play a key role in inspiring and facilitating a whole-of-nation (WNA) approach, to ensure the effective delivery of programmes on the ground, essential to achieve the distinctive and long time-horizon for children’s well-being.

This paper outlines four **Key Pillars** for governance, and three dynamic **Action Phases** that together form a **Whole-of-Government Framework for Child Well-being**; a strategic approach necessary to secure the vision for children to which all nations aspire. The four Key Pillars form the *foundation* for securing a successful WGA approach. The approach captures governments’ role in driving forward a WNA approach to sustain efforts over the long-term. Effectively *applying* the Pillars is a highly dynamic process; it is cyclical, responsive and has many phases. And so, the Framework also incorporates Action Phases outlining the changing priorities, emphases, and actions throughout the approach, as programmes and policies of intervention are taken forward. Together, these Pillars and Action Phases are central to establishing an integrated and collective Whole-of-Government Framework for Child Well-being for a whole nation to effectively respond to, nurture and sustain the well-being of children. The Key Pillars are set out in more detail in Section 4 below, while the Action Phases are expanded upon in Section 5.

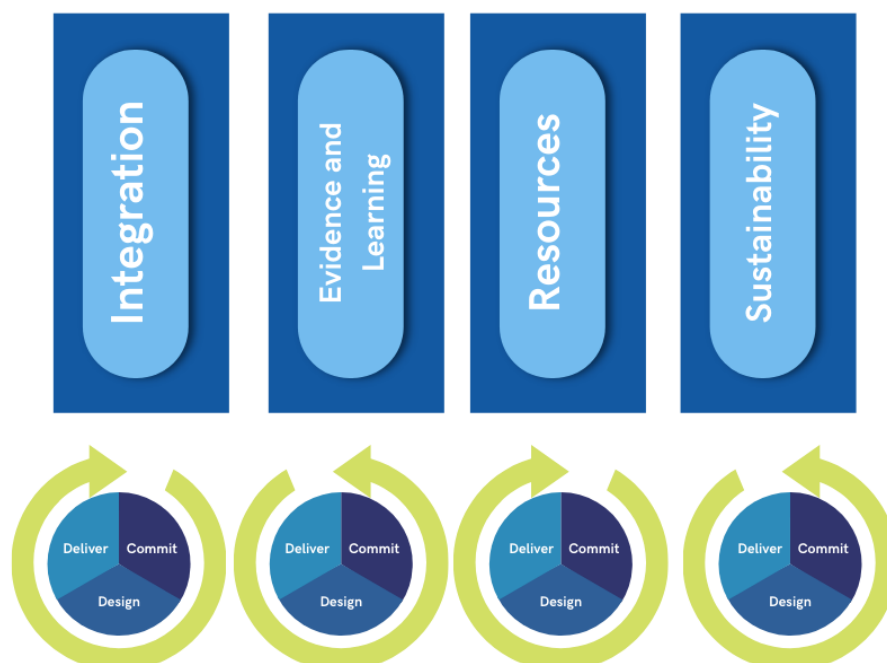


Figure 1: Key Pillars and Action Phases of a Whole-of-Government Framework for Child Well-being

2. Policy Distinctions for Child Well-Being

The gap is widening between our aspirations for children, and the reality that many children face. A greater number of children and families are facing disadvantaged or vulnerable situations than pre-pandemic, and there is an intensification of the unmet needs of those who were already facing disadvantage. COVID-19 pandemic responses have made this gap even wider. Because a range of both individual³ and environmental⁴ factors profoundly affect child vulnerability, supporting children's well-being is complex and multifaceted.

The goal of securing the well-being of children is undoubtedly one of the most problematic challenges faced in almost every nation. This complexity of need requires a multi-disciplinary service system response from governments. This cannot be achieved through agencies' efforts within singular mandates. An effective government response requires actions that unite across government portfolios, driven by an unclouded vision for the outcomes, sustained over a long time-horizon. A whole-of-government (WGA) approach for children's well-being demands government leadership and action to initiate, catalyse and coordinate aligned and integrated efforts. This must be informed by the distinct nature of children and their circumstances and include measure to convene and motivate national non-governmental partners to inspire a whole-of-nation effort.

In some ways, this is not new territory. There are many common lessons to draw from government responses to other complex challenges being tackled using a WGA approach, like climate change and gender equality. Previous frameworks and good practices on OECD Public Governance abound.⁵ This paper will build on this work and member states' vast experiences. Synergies between achieving *other* national outcome goals may also be integral to delivering child well-being outcomes. These key elements have driven change in other places. And where elements of a WGA approach have been tested and did not sufficiently deliver desired outcomes, we can learn about the barriers that were encountered, and apply this learning to a WGA for child well-being.

The complexity of securing child well-being is also *different* from other complex challenges. This is by nature of the distinct needs, rights and evolving capacities of children, and the immense mediating role that adults, communities and public services play in children's lives. Responding differently in the light of this distinctiveness requires an intricacy of solutions, and a structure and nature of integration that matches the task. Sufficiently effective responses to such circumstances are simply out of reach without a WGA approach which also nurtures a whole-of-nation (WNA) approach.

Given the complexity of the challenge to achieve child well-being, and the increased urgency given the impact of COVID-19, a WGA approach needs to be explicitly shaped to reflect the distinct nature of children and their circumstances.

Policy responses should integrate the following distinctions:

- *Children have evolving agency and capacities*; the impact of policies and programmes on children at various stages of their development requires careful consideration and specialised knowledge so the impact of policy decisions are tailored to children's development.
- *Lived experience offers crucial insights* into understanding the lives and experiences of children whose well-being is compromised, especially those children who are less visible.

- *The nature of the challenge of child well-being* demands the integration of a full understanding of the nature of children’s well-being, the determinants of adversity and of their future well-being, and the understanding of what programmes and policies will most likely impact on their primary needs. This includes acknowledging the reality of children being at the most formative point in their lives, with deep-seated and long-lasting – and potentially irreversible, or only partially reversible - impacts from the failure of policy.
- *Children’s interdependencies* means their well-being is inextricably linked to the well-being of the family, and supporting the family is as critical as supporting the child. Local and community experiences in turn support families and their children, and so insights and expertise at the local and community level are key contributors to children’s lives. This is illustrated in this OECD Report⁶ Figure 2. These interdependencies call for the adoption of an approach in which an integrated WGA effort in turn encourages and strengthens a WNA approach for children. The community is an indispensable and equal partner.



Figure 2: Child Well-being in a Nutshell⁷

- *Children play a pivotal role* to the success of a very wide range of national economic and social objectives that are often seen as quite distinct from the child *per se*, for example gender equality; inclusive growth; and climate change. Child well-being is inherently interconnected with adults’ well-being, and to the adults’ contribution to society and the economy in the immediate- and medium-term. As such, child well-being needs to be positioned as both a priority outcome to which society aspires, and as a fundamental determinant of many other high priority national outcomes.
- *The time horizon* for children requires both urgency, due to the speed of their changing developmental stages, and sustained, high levels of commitment over time. Further efforts are needed to prevent lapses in coherence and consistency of programmes.⁸ A WGA and WNA to children’s well-being requires long-term nurturing with a sustained clarity of vision and programmes of intervention, which evolve over time.

3. Key Principles

3.1 A Whole-of-Government Approach Accelerates a Whole-of-Nation Approach

The whole-of-government approach (WGA), and governments’ role in facilitating its related whole-of-nation approach (WNA), are at the heart of effective policy implementation, and crucial to securing a nation’s vision for children.

Box: A Whole-of-Government Approach Defined

A WGA approach encompasses government at all levels. This ranges from the top of central government, across all the central and line ministries with their thematic responsibilities and objectives, through the layers of government agencies and into the regional and local governments of the nation. All these levels impact on the well-being of children.

A WNA approach^{9,10} draws in and integrates the thinking, expertise, and experience of all - including children and their families - who contribute, both directly and indirectly. Together, a WNA identifies and delivers the most effective interventions to achieve the vision with and for children.

A WGA is integral to and is embedded *within* a WNA (See Figure 3 and [Annex 2: Notes on Whole-of-Government and Whole-of-Nation Approaches](#)). A WGA approach for children’s well-being demands government leadership and action to initiate, catalyse and coordinate aligned and integrated efforts. This includes convening and incentivising national non-governmental partners to inspire a WNA effort, while respecting the status and roles of non-governmental contributors who have their critical role to play.

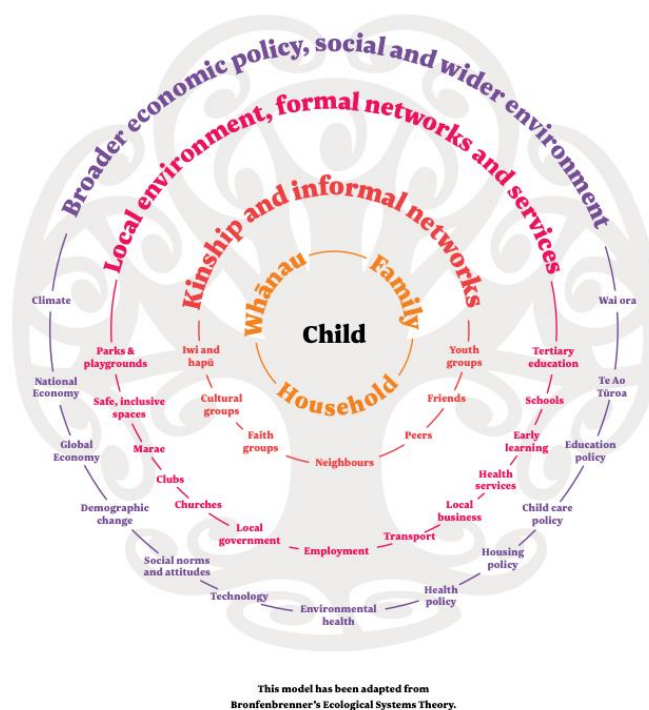


Figure 3: New Zealand’s Ecological Model for Child and Youth Well-Being¹¹

Central government¹², plays a leading role in actively facilitating a WNA as well as establishing and developing this WGA¹³ as they will typically have greater resources and convening power to support intensive, collaborative programmes to support child well-being.

Partnership working is at the heart of these approaches. This involves empowering and genuine partnerships that are led at the highest level with vigour and commitment and are sustained as a top priority over many years. Notably, it embraces both all government and civil society at the outset, as the collective grouping defines its vision and commitment, before moving forward to design what they collectively consider to be the best set of interventions, and subsequently deliver those programmes in a highly coordinated and coherent operation. This includes involving children themselves in meaningful ways, and adults with experience of the well-being challenges that partnerships are seeking to tackle. The private sector are also important partners, who can and should contribute to the over-arching societal vision, as well as to the impact of operations on their own staff.¹

The existing literature – both the more academic literature and the applied strategic and policy documents of many governments – set out significant detail on the primary elements of WGA and WNA Approaches, and especially on the WGA approach. This paper will draw on this knowledge, illustrating the approach using country examples in this complex policy area.

3.2 Learn from Other Policy Domains

Many countries that have pursued continuity, coordination, and evidence in tandem have managed to achieve complete transformations through a WGA approach. These include countries like Singapore, the Republic of Korea, Japan, Ireland, and Finland, to name but a few. Many have managed to achieve significant transformations in just a few decades¹⁴ across political cycles, coordinating across government, and designing policies and programmes that use and expand data and evidence, reaping many lasting social and economic benefits.¹⁵

While the vision and thematic focus of these approaches might be quite different, and the cultural and institutional cultures may be very varied, the fundamental essence of WGA and WNA approaches to achieve a range of outcomes is widely shared.

There are important insights to be gained from the way in which WGA and WNA Approaches have been applied in many policy domains across the world. Relevant examples include:

In **Finland**, the Government Action Plan for Gender Equality 2016-19 developed 30 measures across six key policy areas related to gender equality, which cover all Finnish Ministries. Finland's strategy sets objectives for each based on medium- and long-term goals, using extensive inter-ministerial collaboration and commitment, and tools such as gender impact assessment. [See More in Annex 1A.](#)

In **Canada**, a Greening Government Strategy supports the government's commitment to a WGA to get to net-zero by 2050. The Centre for Greening Government, as part of the Treasury Board of Canada's Secretariat, calls on government to reduce emissions, as well as increasing climate-resilient operations. Measures include including 'green priorities' into the responsibilities of senior government officials, implementing tools based on further training, and objectives to establish community partnership. [See More in Annex 1B.](#)

3.3 Focus Sharply on Child-Centred Outcomes

A common feature of successful WGA and WNA Approaches—and key to achieving any vision—is keeping people at the centre of the vision, and their outcomes as the primary objective. The key outcomes that encapsulate a child’s well-being have been well established in other OECD papers.¹⁶ This paper is focused on how the outcomes identified by any individual national government might be most effectively achieved. This recognises that every nation will formulate its own distinct vision for children and reflect the views of its national society in determining what precisely these outcomes will be. A sharply defined, widely understood and shared commitment to child-centred primary outcome objectives enables the work of any grouping across government or the broader civil society to be more focussed and prioritised, with improved results.

4. Building: Pillars of the Framework

This section sets out Four Pillars that form the foundation for a successful and sustainable whole-of-government (WGA) approach to child well-being. The Action Phases of delivery are outlined in the following section on a Phased Approach. These Pillars combine with a Phased Approach to form a **Whole-of-Government Framework for Child Well-being**.

Four Pillars¹⁷ of activity direct the focus of a WGA with the distinctiveness of children's well-being in mind:

- Building the foundations of a sustainable framework in this effort begins with a clear focus on actions to establish and maintain integration efforts, both horizontally and vertically across government and in collaboration with national and local stakeholders, including children themselves.
- Tools and mechanisms to ensure evidence is gathered and applied to securing the primary outcome objectives, and continually informing monitoring efforts, enable the learning needed for the design and continual enhancement of effective policy.
- Identifying and securing - based on a well-reasoned and evidence-based argument - the necessary resources of government enable strong implementation efforts.
- With an eye to the long time-horizon required, efforts are required to sustain a WGA approach (including through supporting a whole-of-nation (WNA) approach).

These Pillars are summarised in the Figure 4 here and considered in greater detail below.

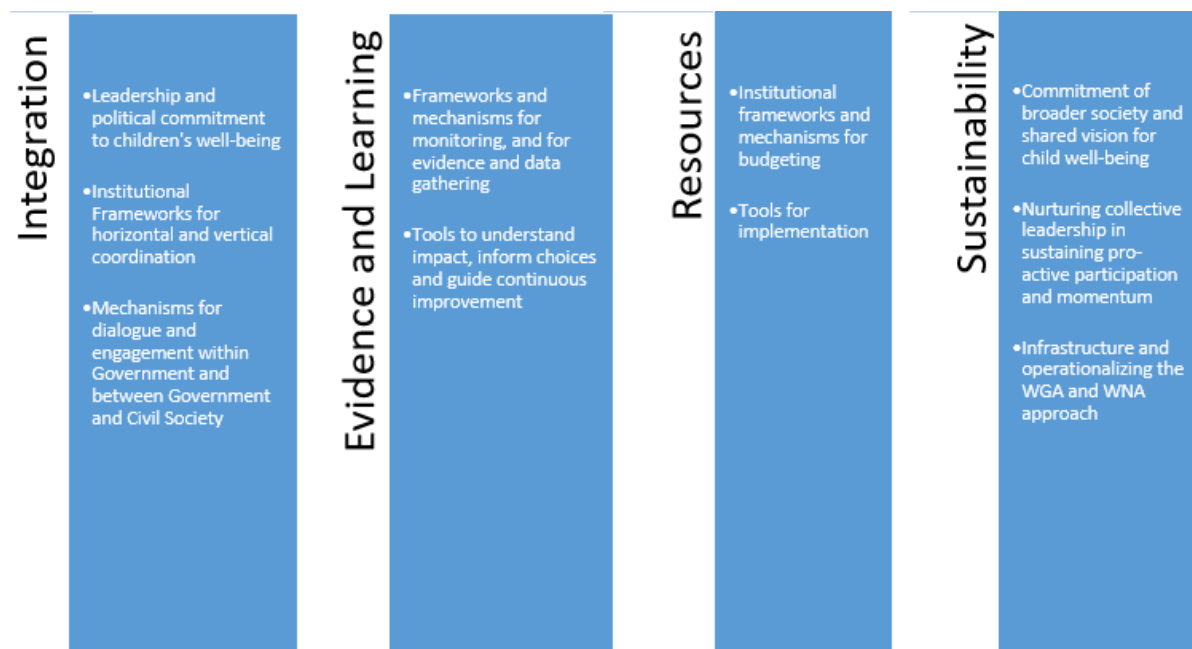


Figure 4: The Four Pillars of the Whole-of-Government Framework for Child Well-being

4.1 Pillar 1: Integration

Integration is key to addressing the most complex goals, and so this Integration Pillar is at the heart of the WGA approach. Specialised and fragmented policy measures alone cannot solve complex problems that span across sectors.¹⁸

At its core, integration efforts promote horizontal and vertical integration and coordination, as well as promoting dialogue and engagement within and between government, civil society and, critically, those with lived experience. Integrated and collective high-level leadership forms part of successful integration. This is underpinned by a sustained commitment at the political and administrative levels, driven by a set of integration frameworks and mechanisms.

Why integrate?

Governments around the world are integrating their policies for a variety of reasons. There are functional benefits, including addressing crosscutting problems; to reduce the policymaking inefficiencies and failures associated with duplications and contractions.¹⁹ But also, an integrated approach to policymaking requires political choices of aligning policies to overarching goals that in turn requires a clear prioritisation of objectives; so, this brings a political value to integration as well. This alignment and prioritisation involve both political and administrative levels of governance.²⁰

Dimensions of integration

Policy integration is a multi-dimensional concept, ‘a process over time encompassing various degrees and dimensions’²¹. These dimensions are outlined in Box X. (See also [Annex 3: Notes on the Multiple Dimensions of Policy Integration](#))

The key components of integration explored below include political leadership and commitment; institutional frameworks for horizontal and vertical integration; mechanisms for dialogue and engagement within government and between government and civil society; and channels to engage those with lived experience.

4.1.1 Leadership and political commitment to children’s well-being

Leadership is the most critical dimension of policy integration processes as this determinant is often associated with policy integration failure²². Leaders need to inspire and steer people toward a vision, by crystallising the thinking of a range of institutions and individuals, to define the collective mission and vision as policies are designed and implemented, often outlined in a national action plan. An underlying political and executive commitment is an indispensable pre-requisite to establish the priority of the vision for children’s well-being and, most importantly, to sustain that priority over many years.

The OECD identifies several countries, such as **Finland** and **Chile**, who have set out a vision for child well-being by aligning with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.²³ Other countries have chosen to be among ‘the best in the world for children’ (**Ireland** and **New Zealand**). A further group of countries have chosen to put the integration (**Portugal**) or collaborative governance (**Northern Ireland, UK**) of child well-being at the core of their vision and strategy. Done well, these three forms of political commitment are followed by steps to consolidate *integrative leadership*.

‘Integrative leaders’ are “characterised by the work of integrating people, resources, and organizations across various boundaries to tackle complex public problems and achieve the

common good.”²⁴ Integrative leaders must therefore set the cross-cutting policy issue in a coherent and salient political agenda. They then must capitalise on windows of opportunity, establish rules and structures for multi-actor policy collaboration and establish accountabilities to assess policy outcomes and manage results.

Examples of integrative leadership for child well-being include:

- Setting government responsibility for child well-being with a Cabinet Minister for Children, with portfolio supported by a government Department for Children. This would be effective if also accompanied by full collective Cabinet responsibility for the vision, strategy and outcome delivery, and full collective Ministerial sharing of implementation and delivery responsibility. For example, **New Zealand’s** Prime Minister, Jacinda Ardern, is Minister for Child Poverty Reduction, supported by a Child Wellbeing Unit. (See Box X.)
- Establishing a Parliamentary Select Committee for Children and an independent Children’s Rights Commissioner.²⁵ These are examples of an independent body at the heart of government with the integrity, respect, and influence to oversee progress towards the outcomes. A cross-party arrangement is essential to secure the activities of the parliamentary committee. In these examples, the Parliamentary Committee oversees the government’s delivery of its stated policy goals, while the Children’s Rights Commissioner oversees progress on children more broadly.
- The clear allocation of roles and responsibilities: **Spain’s** Strategic Plan for Equal Opportunities 2014-16 used a clear governance scheme of three disparate agents for Gender Mainstreaming: responsible agents; support agents; and co-ordination agents. [See More in Annex 1D.](#)

Clarity of individual leadership for child well-being initiatives must be accompanied by a full collective sharing of responsibility. In addition, the concepts of political leadership and administrative capacity (see Pillar X) are interdependent. Without human and financial resources and a bureaucratic structure, no leader can integrate policy.

Box: A scenario approach to build strengths for integration

Based on a government’s level of integrative capacity and leadership²⁶, we can anticipate the potential feasibility and viability of successful integration to achieve children’s well-being. Depending on institutional design, strengths, and motivation, we can determine the approaches with the greatest potential for securing successful integration (See 4.1.2). [\(See Annex 3: Multiple Dimensions of Policy Integration\)](#)

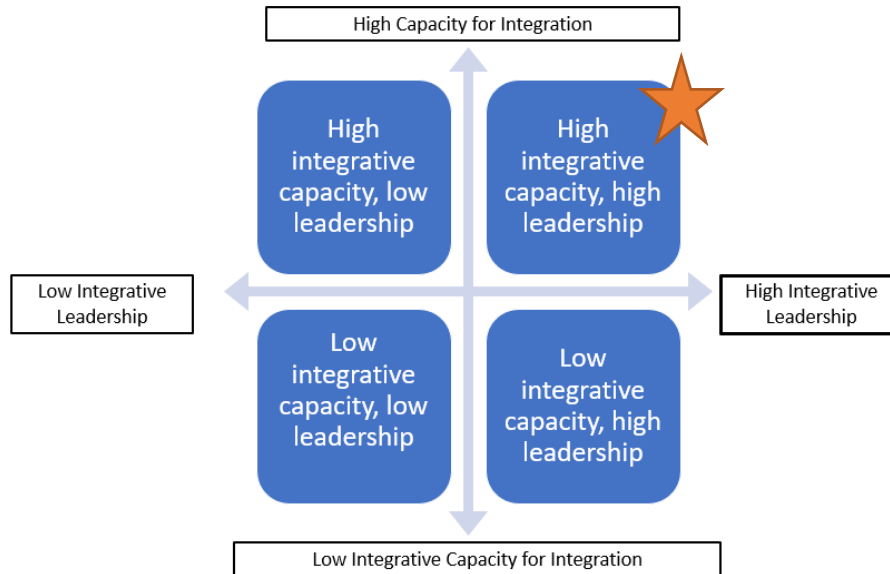


Figure 5: Scenarios to assess suitable approaches for integration

A successful WGA-WNA approach depends on good leadership. Integration and delivery will only be effective with this leadership at both the political and administrative levels. Governments with a high level of integrative capacity and high level of leadership are able to achieve full policy integration of child well-being into policymaking. The expected outcome is that child well-being would be prioritised through the adoption of a set of overarching, coherent policy goals as well as a consistent mix of policy instruments.

In contrast:

- Where there is both low integrative capacity and low leadership, political and administrative frustration follows.
- Where there is high leadership but low integrative capacity, political commitment through the adoption of legislation and the definition of a vision for child well-being will bolster integration efforts and impact, but limited administrative capacity leads to low capacity for integration.
- Where high integrative capacity but low leadership, successful outcomes are not likely and at best, integration is limited to policy implementation and service delivery rather than affecting the quality of decision-making for solving cross-boundary issues.

Having a clear mission statement or a vision on child well-being is the main action and usually the first step for countries with low leadership and low integrative capacity. It ensures an initial political commitment across different governments and facilitates the emergence of administrative (integrative) capacity and leadership also at the service delivery level. This form of political commitment can be also triggered by international agreements and the sustainable development goals.²⁷ At the national level, agreements between government, political parties, and stakeholders facilitate the sustainability of political commitment. An expression of high political salience at the domestic level are political parties' manifestos and pledges dedicated to children and child well-being.

To enhance such political salience in countries where child well-being is an emerging policy focus:

- Governments should focus on the most harmful impact of reform of policy sectors typically close to child well-being such as education, health, and family policy.
- Child well-being strategies should be inserted in a broader and more salient policy agenda such as the one to tackle climate change and social inequalities

4.1.2 Institutional horizontal and vertical coordination frameworks

Administrative coordination is the critical procedural dimension of integration and brings together disparate administrations to engage in joint actions for achieving a predefined goal.²⁸ This second component follows on from the main and formal step towards policy integration outlined above, *political* commitment.

There are various models of coordination that draw on different arrangements to secure a productive coordination function, depending on the institutional design, strengths, and motivation (See more in [Annex 4: Notes on Four Types of Policy Integration](#)). Regardless of the type of coordination, the challenge for an emerging horizontal policy such as child well-being is to achieve progress in establishing systematic and sustained coordination, coherence and consistency among other horizontal goals and priorities, other overseeing institutions and agencies, other league tables, scorecards and indicator dashboards, and other collaborative governance forums. Integration and coordination are not only about the different policy sectors that have an impact on children, but also coordination with other policy integration initiatives and mechanisms.

In pursuit of a WGA, most situations require some combination of these different models, and countries should seek to incorporate critical components from all these forms. More comprehensive models for enhancing administrative capacity will include policy appraisal methods (such as child impact assessment and children budgeting, see 4.2.2 and 4.3.1 respectively), as well as collaborative governance. Choices of forms of coordination are also dependent on what governments are trying to do e.g., engaging children's voices in policy (See 4.3.2) requires a different form of coordination and integration as compared to coordinating tax and welfare policy. Each of these forms of coordination has elements that are critical to a WGA/WNA. Coordination efforts also evolve over time, from conception of vision to delivery.

Models of coordination

Countries should seek to incorporate critical components from all these forms:

Hierarchical Coordination:

- An institutional design mode where an executive leader governs integration and coordination.
- This mode of coordination rests on the assumption that executive leaders are in the best position to grasp the salience of the political and public debate.
- This model fits to the case of political commitment towards child well-being made by a president, prime minister, or important ministers such as finance ministers.
- Examples include Austria's Youth Strategy, where each Federal Ministry is required to develop at least one national 'youth objective.'

Incentivising Coordination:

- A model of coordination, which involves working with *incentives* for pursuing a policy goal.
- Based on an auditing system of 'cross-departmental league tables and benchmarking activities', this coordination mode is characterized by and centred on policy performance targets.
- Examples include utilising child well-being dashboards and benchmarks, such as the Indicator Set used in [Ireland's 'Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures' Strategy](#)

Positive Coordination:

- This model requires an institutional arrangement of diverse departments.
- Positive coordination is achieved through (integrated) impact assessments, or other procedural tools, which allow decision-makers in various sectors to engage with the goals of child well-being.
- Often institutionalised in task forces and interdepartmental working groups, this coordination mode requires a decision-making method for reaching an agreement among conflicting social interests.
- Examples include conducting child impact assessments (CIA) (See 4.2.2) and [Iceland's inter-political committee on children's prosperity](#).

Collaborative Coordination:

- This model requires negotiation and deliberation with stakeholders
- This coordination mode resonates with collaborative governance by engaging a wide pool of stakeholders and affected parties in consultation processes, to seek compromises and coordination.
- Examples include creating collaborative governance structures like [Governors Children's Cabinets](#), in various states in the USA.

For more information, see [Annex 4: Notes on Four Types of Policy Integration](#)

4.1.3 Nature and quality of dialogue *within* government and *between* government and civil society

Dialogue and engagement *within* government, and *between* government and civil society, are both essential to enhancing policies' effectiveness and legitimacy. Importantly, these mechanisms can contribute to achieving a WGA by ensuring active engagement of actors and stakeholders with relevant experience.³⁰

Engagement within government

Positive, proactive, and formalised coordination mechanisms improve dialogue and engagement *within government* through, for example, task forces and interdepartmental working groups.

For example, Local Safeguarding Children Boards³¹(LSCBs) in England and Wales (UK).

- LSCBs were set up as the key statutory mechanism to develop locally determined cooperation arrangements 'to safeguard and promote children's welfare with the purpose of holding each other to account and ensuring that safeguarding children remains high on the agenda across the partnership area'.³²
- Boards consist of senior representatives from local providers, usually including the local authority (which will include education and social work), and the chief officers of police, health, and probation services.³³

Engagement between government and civil society

Engagement can range from *consultation*, which allows children, families, and stakeholder to have a say on policies, through to *collaboration*, which is a greater power-sharing effort to increase engagement in decision-making. Here, we strongly advocate the value of both these, but particularly note the limitations of purely relying on the former, and the fundamental importance of recognising the integral nature of the latter within a WGA and WNA Approach.

Engaging civil society in decision-making through collaboration requires deliberation, trust, reciprocity, and interdependence. These processes pool knowledge and information, enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of policy, and improve the legitimacy of decisions.

This collaborative governance assumes that dialogue and cooperation can produce more desirable outcomes as it creates the spaces to discover opportunities for mutual gains. Given that these processes will take additional time, skill and resourcing, careful planning in advance can maximise the meaningfulness, value, and benefit of collaboration.³⁴

For example, **South Korea's** Hope Start programme:³⁵

- In 2007, South Korea's Ministry of Health and Welfare launched Hope Start in sixteen areas, incrementally expanding, to address intergenerational poverty.
- The programme emphasises prevention of problems in nutrition, emotional development, and social skills using an integrated approach.

- They designed an ‘integrative welfare service programme’ – making a package of health, welfare, and education available to children and families, with opportunities to request use of external services like those of welfare facilities, hospitals, and NGOs.

Consultation and collaboration mechanisms shift the governance of child well-being in influential ways, from a situation of *no interaction* between the actors and institutions involved in cross-boundaries issues, and the dominant sectoral and specialised decision-makers, to a scenario of *high levels of interaction* between actors and institutions that collectively formulate, implement, and deliver better-informed policies. Over time and through ongoing political commitment, both are apt to enhance the administrative capacity of both national institutions and local authorities.

Within government mechanisms for dialogue and engagement links with the positive model of administrative coordination and will be more useful for coordinating national policymakers at the implementation stage, whereas mechanisms for involving civil society rely on forms of collaborative governance. These may be more suitable for integrating local authorities and engaging civil society at the stage of service delivery.

4.1.4 Channels for engaging with those with lived experience

Policy-makers make better policies when they understand the nuanced realities that directly relate to the outcomes they are addressing. People-centred – and especially child-centred policy-making demands seeking these insights. Beyond dialogue and engagement with government and civil society (See 4.1.3), specifically seeking the views of those with the very experiences related to the area is a rich method to enable policy-makers to better understand people’s complex multi-faceted experiences and respond with effective policies. This can result in more responsive, cost-effective policymaking.

While this principle is now widely accepted, its application is mixed, often lacking the quality to generate real insight. Identifying those in the most vulnerable circumstances is exceptionally difficult and selecting representative and well-targeted individuals or groups covering the range of lived experience may often be very challenging. Moreover, conducting detailed investigations with children demands a level of sensitivity and skill that is often overlooked, highlighting again the distinctiveness of a WGA and WNA when the intended beneficiaries are children.

Engaging with families

Those who support the upbringing and development of a child know the child’s relationships, behaviours and activities best, and so can offer important insights into not only what the child might need, but also what caregivers need to best support their children. ([See Figure 2: Child Well-being in a Nutshell](#)).³⁶

This engagement contributes to the ‘what’ - what will improve children’s well-being – as well as the ‘how’ – how these policies are best implemented. Pursuing insights in advance of determining policies and their implementation can avoid unintended consequences and maximise the beneficial impact of child well-being policies.

However, engaging with families and others *about* children must not be seen as a sufficient proxy for engaging, consulting, and collaborating with children themselves.

Engaging children

To engage with adults with experience of the issues which policy seeks to address requires skill, time, and intent. To engage with *children and young people* in such a way brings added layers of complexity; and many would argue further benefit. (See Pillar 4: Sustainability).

Children for whom government policies seek to most support can be those hardest to engage—and most important to hear from. These are the children whose voices are seldom heard, who experience the most serious risks and vulnerable situations, and whose rights are at greatest risk of being breached.

Drawing on civil society organisations where staff have expertise and trusting relationships with children in vulnerable situations, to facilitate engagement with government, or mediate government consultations and collaborations offer fruitful channels.³⁷ Additionally, commissioning independent reviews and arms-length intermediary bodies to facilitate these engagements on behalf of government has also been shown to be effective.

The primary incentive is the enhanced well-being of children. As set out in the UNCRC, children are accorded the right to have their views heard in decisions which affect them, and for those views to be given due weight.³⁸

Box The Lundy Model

There are various models for engaging meaningfully with children. Principles of good practice for engaging with children³⁹ based on the UNCRC encompass the four dimensions of: Space, Voice, Audience, and Influence.

- Space: Children are given the opportunity to express their view
- Voice: Children are facilitated to express their views
- Audience: The view is listened to.
- Influence: The view is acted upon as appropriate

Increasingly, governments are finding inspiring and creative ways to engage children in the developments of their global child well-being strategies. The wider benefits of engaging with lived experience include benefits in fulfilling children's rights and to wider society, as these practices affirm children's agency.

National-Level Good Practice for Engaging with People with Lived Experience

In **Japan**, the Cabinet Office appoints students as 'Special Youth Rapporteurs.' These students help to inform government policy and legislation related to children and young people. Their inputs are then shared across relevant ministries and government agencies and are published online. [See more in Annex 1I.](#)

In **Ireland**, the *Lundy Model* is the methodological basis for the incorporation of child participation across the entirety of Ireland's work with and for children, rooted in Ireland's Participation Strategy for Children and Young People. In addition, Ireland has integrated child participation in its legislative framework, including in its Child and Family Agency Act 2013, which requires the consideration of children's views in planning and reviewing the provision of services and the performance of functions, among other legislative initiatives for child well-being. [See more in Annex 1S.](#)

In **Luxembourg**, 80 children aged between eight and twelve are engaged in annual conferences (ChiCo) to discuss democracy and children's rights. Organised by the Centre for Political Education, children discussed in small groups a range of topics and adults were supported to listen to them.⁴⁰ [See more in Annex 1T.](#)

Regional-Level Good Practice for Engaging with People with Lived Experience

In **Vienna, Austria**, as part of the Children and Youth Strategy 2020-2025, *the Werkstatt Junges Wien* (Repair Shop Young Vienna) project created a large-scale participatory process to develop a strategy for children and young people in Vienna. [See more in Annex 1G.](#)

In **New South Wales, Australia**, a WGA Strategic Plan for Children and Young People was launched in 2016. As part of the plan's development, the Office of the Advocate of Children and Young People consulted with over 4,000 children and young people and created a Youth Advisory Council. [See more in Annex 1H.](#)

In 2016, **Scotland, UK**, Scotland's First Minister announced an independent review of the system of alternative care. Over 5,500 children and adults with experience of care engaged with the Care Review, as well as service delivery organisations and community groups, who came together and pledged to #KeepThePromise; the Promise organisation was established by the Scottish government to support services to realise the recommendations of the Care Review, based in the UNCRC. [See more in Annex 1J.](#)

Engaging with families

Those closest to the child who support the child's upbringing and development will know about the child's relationships, behaviours and activities and can offer important insights into not only what the child might need, but also what helps them as family members, to best support their children ([See Figure 2: Child Well-being in a Nutshell.](#)) This engagement can contribute not only to the 'what' will improve children's well-being; but also 'how' these policies are best implemented as well. Pursuing their insights in advance of determining policies, and how these will be rolled out, can avoid unintended consequences, and maximise the beneficial impact of child well-being policies.

KEY POLICY MESSAGES for Integration

Establish good leadership for a successful WGA-WNA. Leadership that listens, learns, inspires, and steers people toward a vision, crystallising the thinking of a range of institutions and individuals, to define the collective mission and vision, is essential. These leaders set the cross-cutting policy issues in a coherent and salient political agenda, capitalise on windows of opportunity, establish rules and structures for multi-actor policy collaboration and establish accountabilities to assess policy outcomes and manage results.

Champion the interdependence of political leadership and administrative capacity. Without human and financial resources and a bureaucratic structure, no leader can integrate policy. Clarity of individual leadership for child well-being initiatives must be accompanied by a full collective sharing of responsibility for the delivery of the overall child well-being outcome objectives.

Drive and maintain coordination efforts for child and familial well-being over time, from conception of vision to delivery. All governments should seek to identify how their policy and programmes might beneficially impact child well-being. Most government interventions affect the well-being of both the child and the family in some way, e.g., those which address climate change and social inequalities, and so designing interventions which both enhance familial and child well-being (and minimise potential harm) should be a central focus of government. In nations where child well-being is a relatively new emerging focus, an early emphasis on areas of policy which directly impact children is a valuable priority, e.g. those in health and education. Enhancing the outcomes here is a critical first step. In nations where child well-being policy is more advanced and has been a focus for some years, governments should build on strong political leadership and administrative capacity to create comprehensive programmes for significantly enhancing delivery and implementation capacity and effectiveness.

Value and create space for dialogue and engagement between and within government and civil society. This is essential to enhance policies effectiveness and legitimacy. Better policies require an understanding of the nuanced realities that directly relate to the outcomes they are addressing. People-centred – and especially child-centred – policy-making demands these insights.

Engage with children, as well as with their families and carers. Children most needing support can be those hardest to engage—and most important to hear from. These are the children whose voices are seldom heard, who experience the most serious risks and vulnerable situations, and whose rights are at greatest risk of being breached. These are the children that governments' policies seek to most support. Prioritising engaging with these children reflects the UN Agenda 2030 pledge by all governments to “address the furthest behind, first”. Governments must draw on organisations where staff have expertise and trusting relationships and find inspiring and creative ways to engage children in the development of their overall child well-being strategies. Engaging with families and others about children is essential, but insufficient.

4.2 Pillar 2: Evidence and Learning

*'Interventions designed using existing empirical evidence or new analyses can help deliver higher returns to investments in human capital.'*⁴¹

With an array of forces that act to create adverse circumstances for children and to diminish their well-being, and with the inevitable scarcity of resources in government and society more generally to address these challenges, the best available knowledge to guide the policy choices is of immense importance.

Evidence, supported by the most appropriate and timely data, is of critical priority. However, evidence is never perfect. In most circumstances, it is incomplete and often second best. Evidence informing whole-of-government (WGA) and whole-of-nation (WNA) approaches will be no different.

Adapting this approach to well-being requires drawing upon a wide range of evidence and data across complex systems. Institutional frameworks and mechanisms for the monitoring, evidence and data gathering and evaluation are central here, together with well-designed tools to understand the impact, inform choices and guide continuous improvement.

4.2.1 Monitoring, and evidence- and data-gathering mechanisms

Vision and purpose are always the crucial starting point. The development of monitoring data and evidence should be in service to these. What evidence is needed to achieve this purpose, and what data can inform this evidence? Good sources of data alongside clear priorities together can help determine if policies to improve the well-being of specific groups of children are effective.

A system-wide data collection framework⁴² can in turn ensure the availability of and ease of access to data and information related to children's well-being and inform policy decision-making over time.

This infrastructure should assess both *outcomes* and *policies*:

- Track children's well-being outcomes at regular intervals, including trends over time, and identify risks and protective factors in children's lives (i.e., factors that increase the likelihood of negative or positive outcomes), as well as emerging challenges for children's well-being.
- Track the effectiveness of policies that affect children either directly through their targeting, or indirectly through their families and parents, and through their communities, home, school, social or material environment.

This data infrastructure should also draw on an increasing range of data *types*:

- Comparative data are increasingly in use: for example, PISA and HBSC (Health Behaviour of School-Aged Children) data for adolescents, Children's Worlds and EU-SILC data for children in middle childhood, International Study on Early Learning and Child Well-Being for younger children.
- Longitudinal studies on cohorts of children help to better identify developmental paths and inequality dynamics that emerge very early in childhood.
- Administrative data and cross-referencing with survey data open important possibilities for extracting information useful for steering policies for children.

There is more to be done, as OECD countries are not making full use of the data potential available, or they lack the infrastructure to extract these data on a regular basis. For example, in **France** a recent report highlights the need to set up a real data infrastructure focusing on children's living conditions and development.⁴³ This is inevitably an ongoing journey. In **New Zealand**, the 2019 launch of the Child & Youth Well-Being Strategy was followed by the development of indicators to monitor the economic, emotional, relational, and cognitive well-being of children.⁴⁴ However, initial work on these indicators revealed the need for more in-depth reflection on the Child Well-Being framework to guide the collection of relevant data and indicators for children of different ages.⁴⁵

Further examples of evidence and data:

In **Ireland**, the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth works with relevant stakeholders using an Indicator Set to inform progress on the five national outcomes of the Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures framework. [See more in Annex 1K.](#)

In **Iceland**, accountability and monitoring for the WGA-WNA approach on children's prosperity is held with the National Agency for Children and Families, a central advisory centre, and the National Supervisory Authority for Integrating Services in the Interest of Children's Prosperity, who supervise the quality and integration of welfare services. Tools to support the Approach include a Dashboard on Children's Prosperity, Economic Impact Assessment, and the Child Friendly Iceland policy. [See more in Annex 1L.](#)

In **Scotland, UK**, the concept of well-being is outcomes-focused, as part of the Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) national approach. [See more in Annex 1N.](#)

The Child-Friendliness Index of **African** Governments ranks 52 African countries using a common set of indicators related to child well-being, for cross-countries comparison. The index is centred around three central child rights and well-being indicators: protection, provision, and participation. [See More in Annex 1U.](#)

In Wales, the **Welsh** Government has embedded child well-being and SDGs by reimagining children's rights through the prism of the Sustainable Development Goals. [See More in Annex 1V.](#)

4.2.2 Tools to understand impact, inform choices and guide continuous improvement

Understanding the impact of policies and programmes, of expenditures and services, and of regulations and administrative rules on the key determinants of child well-being, is essential. Tools that measure impact can provide these critical insights.

Impact Assessments (IA) come in a variety of forms and applications. Most recent applications have been utilised to assess the impact of global and national objectives on environmental degradation and climate change. Child Impact Assessment is a process used to assess policy proposals against a set of principles, most commonly child well-being indicators or children’s human rights. The exact form of Child Impact Assessment that is most appropriate is determined by the question it seeks to answer, as outlined in Box X. These insights can help policies, programmes, and legislation to be ‘adjusted to mitigate or remove any negative impacts and, where possible, to maximise benefits.’⁴⁶

Impact Assessments are a key tool that can contribute to the understanding of the relative importance of policy and programmes and expenditures. Where quantitative assessments are feasible, comparison can be more easily undertaken, although it is crucial to also embrace the non-quantitative analyses into the thinking. The understanding of the impact and of the comparisons may be more complete with more perspectives being embraced, though the comparison may become more complex.

Box: Key forms of Child Impact Assessments

The choice of *Child Impact Assessment (CIA)*⁴⁷ that is adopted will vary according to the nature of the Vision that the collective partnership is seeking to prioritise.⁴⁸ CIAs are framed in many ways, based on various underpinning frameworks and mechanisms (for example *broad, narrow, specifically focused on rights or goals, or regulations*). The main forms below can be used in isolation or collaboratively:

Assessment	Characteristics
Child Impact Assessment (on a narrow policy area)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Where child well-being is narrowly defined - perhaps as a particular concern in a child poverty initiative focused on the more economic dimensions of well-being – then a narrower IA is appropriate. ➤ Example: the UK’s Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (CAFCASS) Child Impact Assessment Framework, used to assess how children experience parental separation.
Child Well-Being Impact Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ If the political priority is deemed to be the overall well-being of the child, embracing the economic, social, cultural, and environmental well-being of the child, then a broad-based CIA will be necessary ➤ Based on developed or established Child Well-Being Indicators ➤ Example: Scotland, UK’s Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC)
Child Rights Impact Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ In some nations, the political priority may be identified to reflect an international obligation, such as children’s human rights. ➤ The CIA would be most appropriately focussed explicitly on these goals or rights. ➤ Based on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the UN’s Guiding principles on Human Rights Impact Assessment of Economic Reforms.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Can be used as a checklist of rights or assessing the impact of a policy or programme on specific children’s human rights. ➤ Example: New Brunswick, Canada’s CRIA Checklist Example: Short, medium, and long-term impact on children: EU-UNICEF Child Rights Toolkit
Child Rights and Well-Being Impact Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Combines indicators from children’s rights and well-being ➤ Example: Scotland, UK’s CRWIA on the Young Carer’s Grant (YCG)
Child Regulatory Impact Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ If the focus is more narrowly on the regulatory frameworks adopted by a nation, then the IA may focus on those regulations in a <i>Regulatory Impact Assessment</i> (RIA). ➤ Uses a regulatory framework to assess proposed policy and legislations impact on children, considering proposed governance regulations. ➤ Example: Flanders, Belgium’s JoKER
Child Impact Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>Ex post</i> assessments are <i>de facto</i> evaluations of the effectiveness and impact of a programme or a configuration of programmes. ➤ The expectation is that regular evaluations lead to reformulated objectives and strategies towards more meaningful CIA, leading to a more coherent and integrated approach to child well-being.

[See more on Child Impact Assessment in Annex 10](#)

A variety of applications

A narrowly-defined CIA can give valuable insights swiftly: UNICEF and Save the Children UK – The Privatisation of the Electricity Sector in **Bosnia** and **Herzegovina**.

In 2006-07 UNICEF and Save the Children UK developed and piloted a CIA to assess the potential (negative) impact of privatisation of electricity sector on children in poor and disadvantaged social groups in **Bosnia** and **Herzegovina**. Utilising both quantitative and qualitative analyses, the CIA statement found that suggested household strategies to respond to price increases would negatively affect (both in the short and long period) children’s access to health, education, and social protection.

The CIA assessed not only the effects of energy policy (privatisation) changes on education, health and child protection service-providing agencies, but also the impact on children within the household. The CIA suggested that ‘even a modest electricity price increase’ would ‘deteriorate the provision of services to children.’ Furthermore, household coping strategies would include children’s engagement in paid and household work, reducing access to education, health and leisure activities.⁴⁹

A CIA can enhance children’s participation in decision-making: **Scotland**, UK’s Children’s Rights and Well-Being Impact Assessment (CRWIA)

In **Scotland**, CRWIA provides ‘the most direct opportunities for children to engage with government in the development of law and policy’.⁵⁰ It allows ministers to take the views of children into account, complementing other forms of children’s participation such as individual consultation responses or activism through the Scottish Youth or Children’s

Parliament. The Scottish CRWIA process engages eight child well-being indicators, as well as children's human rights as outlined in the UNCRC.

Scottish Ministers may utilise CRWIAs as an implementation tool to meet their formal requirements under the Scottish Ministerial Code, which include 'to develop law and policy that progresses UNCRC requirements in Scotland...' and 'to take relevant views of children into account in deciding whether a proposed law or policy will impact the well-being of children...'⁵¹ Accordingly, relying on a set of indicators is another model for CIA. However, limitations in Scotland include Ministers conducting poor quality assessments and lack of ex post evaluation of CRWIAs.

Cost-benefit analysis: an element of Child Impact Assessment

One important tool that can contribute to a wide range of types of *Child Impact Assessment* is cost benefit analysis (CBA). CBAs may capture the net benefits of any intervention, whether policy, programme, expenditure or regulatory. Equally, CBAs may capture the economic, social and environmental impact of an intervention on child well-being. While there remain concerns about the challenge of conceptualising and measuring the application of CBAs, they remain an important factor to assess the value of interventions.

While recognising the ongoing challenges of budget setting and changes in political leadership, programme design for child well-being must be appropriately and sustainably funded. Consequently, the design of programmes to enhance child well-being must be undertaken in tandem with discussions of medium-term resource availability. In '*making the case*' for investment in the future of children, establishing the value of investment - identifying the economic and social value to society through high-quality evidence and data - can provide significant strength to '*the case*.'

Such evidence needs to cover a breadth of analysis⁵² that is often overlooked, drawing on four dimensions of specific interest:

- *The scope of the benefits*: the economic and social value that *directly* accrues to the child from their own enhanced well-being and, additionally, the wider economic and social value that flows to the broader community and society. To the extent that the well-being of the child is a powerful, albeit indirect, determinant of many other key objectives of government, and society more broadly, the value goes well beyond the narrow benefit to the child.
- *The time horizon*: the more immediate net benefits that accrue in the short term and, additionally and most importantly, those that accrue over the very long-term as a child matures into adulthood.
- *Benefits and reduced costs*: the positive benefits that accrue, in addition to the substantive savings, or reduced costs, to society of enhanced child well-being, notably over the longer term.
- *The preventative and restorative*: the focus of the investment on the chain of causality in the determination of child well-being, according to whether the investment is primarily focused on preventative or mitigative and restorative outcomes.

One excellent example of how this form of analysis can provide invaluable evidence to underpin the *Case* for interventions to enhance children’s well-being is provided by the World Bank (2021), on ending violence in schools. The report states violence in and around schools negatively impacts educational outcomes, and also results in a heavy societal price, with an estimated \$11 trillion loss in lifetime earnings (See More in [Annex 5: World Bank on Violence in and around Schools.](#)) They found that:

- Cost-benefit analyses suggest that promising interventions have high benefits to costs ratios.
- Early childhood interventions are essential to prevent violence in and around schools, and often have high returns.
- In primary schools, programmes which help children to improve their social and emotional skills also have high returns.

Undertaking Child Impact Assessments in a crowded policy environment

While CIAs are a critical tool for horizontal coordination, the use of CIAs in a crowded policy environment is challenging. Competition for resources in government often comes from the desire of governments to pursue multiple ambitious objectives. Several IAs themselves may already be in use, such as environmental impact assessments, regulatory assessments, and gender assessments. This requires the systematic prioritisation of objectives for the government, and analysis to inform the allocation of scarce resources.

Governments may wish to undertake an ambitious number of CIAs to inform policy and expenditure decision-making on various new and innovative programmes under consideration. CIAs may also be used regularly to assess resources allocated to existing programmes. However, this approach is unfeasible in this idealised form. Governments rarely have sufficient resources to undertake such a comprehensive task. To uphold the value of CIAs - against the risk of overwhelming and exhausting government ministries and agencies – there must be a robust and reasoned selection of programmes assessed to the desired quality. Programmes typically need to be analysed in groups or configurations, given the interdependence of programmes relevant to child well-being, and the mutually reinforcing role that policies typically play.

Two forms of prioritisation are key:

- Prioritisation between all high-level outcome objectives of government – specifically, the prioritisation between child well-being outcomes and other prevalent national priorities, such as climate change, health, etc.
- Prioritisation between different policy and expenditure programmes *within* a specific outcome, such as those specifically relevant to delivering child well-being.

Several practical considerations which may guide the definition of a national programme of child impact assessments, include:

- Within national government, what is the established priority of child well-being, and how can this be enhanced through CIA?
- Which programmes have the greatest potential, in line with existing national and global priorities?
- Which programmes are seen to have – at scale – potential to have the greatest impact?
- Where would CIAs be most likely to inform broader thinking to improve policy and expenditure?
- How should commissioned CIAs be guided to reflect the differentiation between programmes that *directly* bear on child well-being and those that impact *less* directly?
- How are the CIAs selected to reflect the political and societal balance between preventative and mitigative ambitions?
- How can CIAs for potential new programmes be conducted early in the process of programme selection, for greatest impact?
- How can CIAs effectively assess the stock of expenditure, as crucial as reviewing choices for the allocation of marginal spend or for new programmes.
- What is the status of the CIA? Should essential CIAs be designated as a requirement or prerequisite for the ultimate adoption of the programme and subsequent resource allocation? What is deemed to be a good and acceptable finding, or a poor and unacceptable finding, of the CIA? How does the government *ex ante* define this? This consideration is critical to the value of adopting a CIA approach as, without it, the integrity of the analysis will degrade markedly as the exercise is reduced to a weak and largely meaningless tick-box exercise and not provide the required insight.
- What process is in place for the CIA to feed back into further rounds of programme design, especially where the CIA suggests that the proposed programme is inadequately supporting or promoting child well-being, or undermining the fundamental child well-being objective?

Many, if not all, of these considerations must be the subject of political judgement at the highest level, to determine the criticality that is placed on these insights. Arguably, the investment in CIAs is more than repaid if they significantly enhance the selection and subsequent design of interventions.

In **New Zealand**, the Well-Being Budget 2019 embraced tough decisions about the national definition of *well-being* and the prioritisation of budgetary programming. It did not attempt to prioritise everything. Instead, the New Zealand Government set out five priority areas: mental health, child well-being, supporting Māori and Pasifika populations, building a productive nation, and transforming the economy. Budget prioritisations were similarly prioritised to these five areas. Additionally, the budget recognises that progress on well-being requires a holistic approach. Bhutan and the United Arab Emirates have also pursued similar strategies.⁵³

Methodical considerations

Regardless of the type of CIA, there are methodological considerations when designing a CIA:

- Should CIA be applied to all policies, programmes, expenditures, and regulations or only to those that make a substantial impact on children?
- In the case of selected CIAs, how would proposals be screened?

- What type of data will be required to assess child well-being? Are there available child-specific, comprehensive, and disaggregated data or the resources available to difference groups of children?
- How can the meaningful participation of those children and their family be ensured?

KEY POLICY MESSAGES for Evidence and Learning

Develop a data framework for monitoring. A data framework for monitoring child well-being outcomes and policies must be in the service to the vision and purpose of the outcome, to assess both outcomes and policies. A system-wide data collection framework can ensure the availability of and ease of access to data and information related to children's well-being and inform policy decision-making over time. Adapting these to well-being requires drawing upon a wide range of evidence and data across complex systems. Draw on an increasing range of data types, making full use of the data potential available. Build the infrastructure to extract these data on a regular basis.

Pursue learning from a range of analysis approaches. Impact assessment to inform decision-making will be imperfect, and so the process of learning is a top priority. Case studies and targeted analyses can play a powerful role in making the case to the political leadership in their resource allocation roles. And illustrative and demonstration analyses have a critical role to play in demonstrating how systems work and how effective are the key pieces of those systems.

Prioritise Child Impact Assessments even in crowded policy environments. This requires prioritisation of children well-being between all high-level outcome objectives of government, as well as prioritisation between different policy and expenditure programmes *within* a specific outcome. Done well, Child Impact Assessments can capture the breadth of impact of expenditure programmes and policies – both individually and collectively - on the key outcomes that have been identified to define child well-being.

Embark on meaningful cost-benefit analyses. A key element of a Child Impact Assessment, cost-benefit analyses are important to assess the value of interventions, despite the challenge of conceptualising and measuring their application for child well-being. These findings can contribute to the sustainability of WNA to child well-being in the long-term.

Build on the work already underway to make progress. *In countries in which child well-being is emerging,* governments need to develop analytical capacity by clarifying the purpose of policy measurement. *In countries with consolidated child well-being strategy,* governments should apply effective child impact assessment and ex post evaluation for understanding how a specific policy measure affect child. Data, information, and evidence trigger processes of learning of what works in child well-being. *In countries where regulatory impact assessment relies on cost-benefit analysis,* governments should prioritize child well-being by adopting lower discount rates favouring investment in future generations. *In countries where regulatory impact assessment relies on methods other than cost-benefit analysis,* governments should prioritize child well-being by integrating this specific impact test into social inequality and disadvantaged social group tests and other forms of social impact assessments.

4.3 Pillar 3: Resources

Well-designed resourcing to ensure both the necessary human skills and the financial resources for programmes, is essential. Inadequately funded programmes may not only fail to deliver the outcomes for which they are designed but create additional adverse impacts on well-being if poorly or partially implemented.

4.3.1 Institutional budgeting frameworks and mechanisms

The allocation of scarce resources, and the associated budgeting processes, are critical to securing the vision for child well-being. While financial resources are by no means the only determinant of progress, they invariably play a vital role. And so, how the level and allocation of resources to programmes and policies that impact on the key outcomes for children are determined is crucial. Governments must consistently mobilise the appropriate financial resources to secure the vision.

These processes are typically informed by a variety of mechanisms and frameworks which play a key role in *making the case* to the national political leadership. High quality budgeting that addresses the well-being of children rests heavily on the underlying knowledge and insights that inform this process.

Understanding impact and progress

Impact and progress in advancing child well-being can be identified and measured with varying degrees of specificity: quantitative and qualitative *indicators of progress* to measure progress; *indicators of progress against pre-determined targets* – such as established milestones; and *impact assessments* – both *ex ante* and *ex post*. Furthermore, measurement may facilitate comparison between competing and alternative programmes of intervention. Therefore, assessment of impact and progress should entail all which impacts, both directly and indirectly, on child well-being.

These forms of assessment can be tailored to not only a wide range of dimensions of child well-being but can also provide valuable insight into the impact on more specifically defined communities of children. For instance, in responding to the global commitments to the *UN Agenda 2030* and to the related *Sustainable Development Goals*,⁵⁴ understanding the impact on the most disadvantaged groups of children – notably on those *left behind* and *furthest behind* - has become even more important.

- Resourcing the WGA and WNA programmes to address the long-term challenges:

While budgets necessarily are constructed by national governments typically over 3–5-year horizons, and political change is a reality that of course must be recognised and accepted, the principle of appropriately and sustainably funding the full configuration of programmes and policies that are adopted is crucial. (See 4.2.2).

To the extent that the economic and social value to society as a whole is identified more explicitly, as a crucial element in *making the case* for investment in the future of children, the broader the support for the promotion of children's well-being, and the greater the sustainability of the necessary resourcing, that would be anticipated. This means establishing the value of public expenditures directed towards children's well-being, through the identification of the economic and social benefits of such investment. This can enhance the sustainability of the effort when the breadth of the value of the effort is better understood.

Budgeting to deliver child well-being in a whole-of-government (WGA) - whole-of nation (WNA) approach is very complex, given the high degree of multi-sector mutual dependence. Multi-agency budgeting and funding have an important part to play here, especially where programmes for child well-being demand collaboration and highly coordinated implementation.

In **Mexico**, child budgeting has been incorporated since 2007. Each Ministry is required by law to submit reports on spending on childhood, applying a methodology created by country authorities and UNICEF. Post-incorporation of child budgeting, federal spending on children grew from 5.28% of GDP in 2008 to 6.27% in 2011.

Systematic mechanisms and tools can provide insight into the operations of programmes and processes, see child well-being impact assessments (4.2.2). Identifying the scale and quality of the gross impact, the costs of undertaking the specific interventions under discussion, the scope of the analysis, and the net benefit to the child and to broader society are common goals.

The challenges

All aforementioned approaches face significant challenges. Creating administrative, or other systems to specifically *capture the evidence and data* that inform analysis is not easy. *Attribution* is an ever-present challenge in at least two ways: firstly, the identification of which quantitative determinants are most critical in driving a particular enhancement in child well-being is often hard to establish; and, secondly, a given policy or programme – with its associated expenditure - is typically developed to address multiple outcome goals, and defining the share of this spend to attribute explicitly to child well-being is both conceptually and practically extremely difficult and, indeed, to a large degree, subjective.

Some common mistakes can be easily avoided, including *adding up* big programmes of expenditures as if they are solely designed to address child well-being, or *ignoring* other programmes which are indirectly about children but relevant, nonetheless.

The reality of analysis

Analysis of impact is therefore indicative rather than scientific, based on estimation and modelling rather than fact. Nonetheless, it has a key role to play in informing the nature and potential scale of impact of programmes and policy.

Impact assessment to inform decision-making will be imperfect and so, the process of learning is a top priority. Refining and adjusting programmes as more knowledge become available is exceptionally important, to secure the outcome goals more readily and to direct scarce resources to their best use.

The scale of the task can be daunting as the detailed analysis of new and existing programmes and policies is a major task. The idealised approach of ranking all potential programmes and configurations according to their net benefit to child well-being is fanciful: no government will ever find the resources to undertake such a comprehensive task.

However, the role of illustrative and demonstrative analyses should be valued highly. These have a critical role to play in demonstrating how systems work. Case studies and targeted analyses of this sort can play a powerful role in *making the case* to the political leadership.

Budgeting for children's well-being

Understanding the impact of existing programmes and policy, and the progress towards targeted objectives are central to a child well-being approach to budgeting. The key question begins with the purpose: *What is the purpose of this analysis, and how is it used to greatest effect?*

A child well-being budget can have many fundamental purposes, including: *providing clarity* on the allocation and priority of a nation's highly contested resources; *informing the debate* on the level of resources which may be allocated for child well-being; *clarifying* the necessity of programmes and funding to deliver child well-being; *providing the foundation* for radical forms of child budgeting in a collaborative WGA-WNA approach, where there is a greater probability of more coherent and mutually reinforcing policies.

Ultimately, in every nation, the resources allocated through the budgetary process will be determined by the political priorities of the ruling administration, captured by international and national agreements and commitments. How these priorities are settled is, of course, the crucial question, and budgetary evidence both influences and reflects this prioritisation.

Establishing a budgetary priority for child well-being is therefore a continuing necessity: few priorities today are immune from reprioritisation processes tomorrow.

Challenges to the longevity of child well-being budgeting include seeking to align resources that can deliver outcomes, turning rhetoric into serious action for continuing funding, and ensuring indicators of progress catalyse and facilitate further budgetary allocations, especially considering new emerging national policy priorities.

The UNCRC context

Under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) countries must take '*all appropriate legislative, administrative and other measures* to implement all the rights recognised in the Convention.'⁵⁵ In 2016, *General Comment 19* on public budgeting for the realization of children's rights⁵⁶ set out several key concepts of direct relevance to the importance of budgetary factors in pursuing the well-being of children:

- Reaffirming the notion of *progressive realisation* in relation to economic, social, and cultural rights such as the rights to nutrition, clothing, and housing. Especially relevant in the context of COVID, 'regressive measures may only be considered after assessing all other options and ensuring that children are the last to be affected...'⁵⁷
- To comply with these rights in international law, it must be shown that the rights have been progressed using the concept of the *maximum extent of available resources*.⁵⁸ This means generating, allocating and spending resources in a way that is effective and efficient for the realisation of children's human rights.⁵⁹

BOX: Child rights-based principles for budgeting:

Child rights-based principles for budgeting

Public budget decision-making should be:

- **Effective:** states should implement policies that are effective in realising children's rights in their national context and monitor impact to ensure this is true for all children.
- **Efficient:** policies must ensure value for money and respect, protect, and fulfil children's rights.
- **Equitable:** resources should be allocated to address inequalities and promote equality.
- **Transparent:** the budgeting exercise must be transparent and open to scrutiny, including by children with the use of appropriate materials.
- **Sustainable:** resources should be used to further current and future children's rights and aim at a progressive realisation of all rights.

In addition, all decision-making must respect and further children's human rights in the light of the UNCRC Committee's General Comment on Child Rights Budgeting, and include:

- **Non-discrimination (art. 2 UNCRC)** – the budget must not negatively affect or ignore certain groups of children as well as work to address inequalities.
- **Best interests (art. 3)** – states should conclude child rights impact assessments at each stage of the budgetary process to ensure children's best interests are a primary consideration in its development.
- **Right to life, survival, and development (art. 6)** – states should consider in all budget decisions what is required for all different groups of children to survive, grow, and develop.
- **Right to be heard (art. 12):** children must be meaningfully involved in all stages of budgeting.⁶⁰

Progressive realisation and *maximum extent of available resources* are important principles that provide clarity of direction, and a clear yardstick against which to test budgetary decisions. While these are non-specific, loosely defined and necessarily in need of interpretation - not least in a context of the many high-priority and competing objectives of every government - they are nevertheless a stark ambition for every nation, as they determine resource allocations for the totality of their national ambitions. Measures to ensure *progressive realisation* include increasing *fiscal space*: that is, space in budgets which allows for greater flexibility in providing resources that adhere to the key medium-term strategic objectives of government and the highest priorities.⁶¹

Importantly, the UNCRC and especially General Comment 19⁶² provide a major element of the *Case* presented to political leadership within budgetary discussions, strongly supported by other evidence of the value and impact of targeted investments primarily towards child well-being within the wider national vision.

Judging child well-being and budgetary priorities

In determining the appropriate prioritisation of government expenditure, and the deployment of resources for child well-being, it is important to focus on both direct and indirect spend. A superficial prioritisation of direct budgets may indeed be an ineffective way to advance children's human rights and well-being. The maximization of the net benefit in both the immediate term and

the medium- to long-term is the key concern. Even with good sources of data, judging this overall picture can be exceptionally difficult. For example, in times of fiscal constraint or austerity, prioritising the economic activity and employment of adults in families with children may be deemed of greatest net benefit to child well-being to protect children's access to health, education and housing.

While this may seem to be a false rationale for the direction of expenditures away from child well-being, the determinants of child well-being are immensely complex given children's heavy dependence on adults for the realisation of their rights and well-being. Therefore, budgets should continuously refine and reprioritise resource allocations, not solely at the increment of available resources. Comprehensively reassessing by analysing *all* spend is key to prevent the misaligning of priority outcome objectives of government.

Child well-being budgeting: the key questions

- Is the Approach to child well-being budgeting well-defined?
- How comprehensive is it, moving away from a fragmented and partial analysis?
- How good is the quality of the budgeting approach?
- What use is made of the analysis of progress and assessments of impact to enhance the Approach to child well-being?
- How is it integrated into the critical WGA and WNA approaches?

4.3.2 Human resources for delivery

Human Resources for a Children's WGA-WNA Approach

Effective implementation of a WGA-WNA approach rests not only on the nominal integration of different arms of government and of civil society, but on the efficiency and effectiveness with which they combine to work together. It additionally hinges on the skills and professionalism of those delivering the policy and services that the joint strategy has defined and which expenditure allocations support.

A focus on the people and their skills to fulfil their roles, through recruitment, training, and coaching, is a key component of the WGA-WNA Strategy. These include:

Leadership skills

These are key to the successful design, management, sustainability, and effectiveness of any WGA-WNA approach, where children's outcomes, and the distinctive nature of child well-being remain at the front of their minds. Leaders within a WGA and WNA complex change process have held a perspective well beyond their own systems⁶³ and anticipate unpredictable and messy journeys; they support leadership and collaboration to emerge at all levels⁶⁴, and demonstrate a values-led approach in which shared goals inform a clear story that helps to make sense of the complexity. Leadership practice case studies in complex systems change abound.⁶⁵

Engagement skills

Valuing the contribution of all, within and outside of government – including those with lived experience – contributes to an effective support of the commitment, design, and delivery Phases of this approach to achieve children's well-being. The relational, adaptive skills required of systems leaders⁶⁶ to engage across professional and institutional boundaries are particularly important in this distinctive task, where engaging with children, their families, and carers, as well as non-

governmental partners will strengthen the effectiveness, and secure the credibility of, this long-term effort.

Administrative skills

These will help to coordinate and provide direction to the integration of the many key partners into a coherent and effective collective form. The entire WGA-WNA approach will only succeed if the coordination of the partnerships upon which the Approach is founded is of a high quality, sustaining the excellence of the interaction with its shared vision and collegiate understanding and collegiate working to deliver the agreed strategy - over a significant period. The skills of administering, convening, motivating, cohering, and sustaining are indispensable.

Policy design and implementing skills

Located principally across a range of ministries where an *understanding of child well-being* will be essential, including in:

- Those *ministries with key policy responsibilities*, especially those that are less familiar with the mechanisms and channels through which their work impacts on child well-being, and who have over decades focussed on other priorities and on other communities and groupings in society apart from children. Skills in relationship-building and engaging a wide range of stakeholders including for some, the ability to engage with children, are all important skills in this work.

- Those *implementing service delivery policy*, often located in regional and provincial and local government, and in the many delivery bodies within broader civil society. The professional skills of the workforces with direct responsibility for the implementation of programmes and for the interaction with the primary beneficiaries – the children themselves and their families – are critical to the delivery of the programmes, and therefore necessarily a top priority for every government.

Analytical skills

Teams with responsibility for the gathering of evidence and data, together with its analysis, that timeously inform both:

- The design and selection of programmes, whether drawn from national or international or theoretical sources; and

- The monitoring and evaluation and, very importantly, the feedback and redesign of enhanced programmes as new evidence and data emerge.

Technical skills, as well as an openness to new possibilities, are both necessary. As is the valuing of quantitative approaches alongside qualitative methods for a more nuanced understanding of both policy and its implementation, particularly for marginalised groups.

Building capacity in each of these fields is crucial as, without such skills, the development of a *Children WGA-WNA* will be significantly weakened, rendering the Approach far less powerful in its capacity to develop and sustain a relatively complex delivery design and delivery structure.

4.3.3 Tools for Implementation

The gap between policy making and the practices that make these policy intentions real in children's lives can be stubborn, and the delays in implementation are well-known. Where these policies depend on others to deliver a service to children—for example, a professional workforce—this gap is at its most challenging to close. This is because the efficacy and effectiveness of delivering a service is less predictable when the delivery is not primarily a technical function, but rather, one that is predominantly dependent on the human dimension. Many public services workforces contribute to policy intentions to improve children's well-being; drawing on implementation tools realises the intended outcomes of policy more quickly. These can be supported by government for improved effectiveness.

Closing the implementation gap

There are several implementation methods and frameworks⁶⁷ that can be useful to guide a process of change, suited to a range of policy purposes and contexts. For success, any implementation strategy must be selected and adjusted to the innovation and context.⁶⁸ The key is to identify which and remain committed to its application.⁶⁹

- Some frameworks pay particular attention to the selection and deployment of the workforce, and to the maintaining of the design of the practice or policy. These frameworks equip government to be more confident that the intended outcomes which are dependent on public service delivery reflect the policy intention and are effectively secured and sustained.
- 'Intermediary bodies'⁷⁰ are organisations that act as brokers between government and agencies in support of the policy implementation process, giving advice to public services on the methods, facilitating cooperation, sharing knowledge and resources, and nurturing innovations. These are valuable actors in facilitating the intended policy outcomes. They can also be an important conduit back to government as a feedback loop, for policy-makers to understand the consequences of their policies and can help to inform better policy-making earlier and throughout in the process.

Selecting a relevant and adaptable method, and supporting the best infrastructure supports, to guide the design and process of policy implementation to achieve children's well-being forms a key part of the success of WGA and WNA approaches.⁷¹

KEY POLICY MESSAGES for Resources

Design appropriate long-term resourcing levels. Well-designed and appropriate resourcing is essential, to enable the necessary human skills and financial resources to deliver the collectively designed programmes. Multi-agency budgeting and funding have an important part to play, especially where there are programmes demanding significant joint working and a need for highly coordinated implementation.

Determine tools for understanding and measuring impact and progress. Adopting systematic mechanisms and tools is needed to assess the impact and effectiveness of programmes; both quantitative and qualitative tools can provide important insights. Estimation and modelling have a key role to play in informing the nature and potential scale of impact of programmes and policy; these are invaluable and require careful planning because analysis of impact will be indicative rather than scientific.

Establish a budgetary priority for children's well-being. The design of budgeting systems for child well-being must reflect the key questions that the WGA-WNA is seeking to address. In general, budgets should look at the stock of spend in reassessing and refining the prioritisation of resource allocations, and not at the margin; establish a budgetary priority for child well-being, ensuring measures for the progressive realisation including increasing fiscal space.

Secure the range of human resources that correspond with the specific roles needed. Recruit, train, and coach skilled people suited to their roles for an effective implementation of a WGA-WNA approach; this hinges on leadership; engagement; administration; policy design and implementing; and analysis.

Determine the implementation methods suited to the policy purposes and contexts to guide the process of change. Identify valuable intermediaries to act as conduits back to government, to inform better policy-making throughout the process.

4.4 Pillar 4: Sustainability

The resilience and sustainability of programmes to enhance children's well-being are critical to securing child well-being. Inherent in the distinctiveness of this whole-of-government (WGA) approach – and governments' role in supporting a whole-of-nation (WNA) approach – is the notion that improved children's well-being demands an inter-generational horizon. Moreover, a sustained commitment over time is expected to increasingly encounter challenges, of which some can be anticipated in the early thinking and action.

4.4.1 Commitment of broader society and a shared vision for child well-being

Sustaining the political and societal commitment to the advancement of child well-being is a challenge in every nation. Competing objectives and scarce resources, and the inevitable and frequent emergence of new national challenges and priorities, will always create pressures in this respect.

Securing the interdependent commitments across different groups can form the base for sustainability of the shared vision. There are three key aspects:

- Communities sustain a shared policy agenda

The commitment of broader society and its perceptions of the importance of child well-being is key to sustainability of the WGA-WNA approach, driving current political thinking across electoral cycles⁷². A systematic evidence and data-gathering framework, which embraces meaningful engagement and accountability mechanisms, is crucial to establish credible messages, proactively and regularly shared with broader society.

- Engaging communities

Sustaining a high priority to the advancement of child well-being is reliant on the support and engagement of communities. A WGA-WNA approach creates an empowering platform for communities to support child well-being, contributing again to sustainability.

In essence, an Approach that reaches beyond government structures is fundamental to sustainability, as the drawing in of the key actors and contributors in civil society to form a shared agenda of action can only strengthen the basic commitment of society over the medium- to long-term.

- Sustainability through political commitment

An underlying political commitment is central to the sustainability of the **Framework**. A sustainable model of collective leadership is key to catalysing collective working across the nation, drawing on central government's convening power and resources.

Central government, as the primary determinant of policy direction, must articulate the significant economic and social benefits from investing in improving child well-being (see Pillar 2). The role of government in making the case – based on value to the child and the whole of society -- for continuing, sustained prioritisation of child well-being to key political leaders and other leaders of civil society, is crucial.

The emergence of counter incentives should be anticipated and addressed, including the inevitable advent of new political priorities and the distraction of key Ministers and Administrators for periods of time.⁷³

4.4.2 Nurturing collective leadership in sustaining pro-active participation and momentum

Integral to this underlying commitment within a WGA and WNA approach is the indispensable prerequisite to establish strong and effective collective leadership across the nation. Retaining the pro-active participation of all the partners to the Approach, and sustaining their participation over long periods of time, is critical to successfully improving and promoting children's well-being.

Anticipating and addressing the emergence of gaps are important strategic investments. These may include: the absence or departure of contributors from the collective Approach, especially where other contributions are contingent on these partners; the inevitable challenges of synchronisation or sequencing of the steps when the contributors are based in many organisations; and the gaps in programmes and policies that detract from the overall delivery.

This collective leadership should generate momentum and energy and seek to periodically reinvigorate the Approach to maintain cohesion and focus throughout the cycles of policy implementation to avoid relapsing into less effective delivery mechanisms.

Holding onto the clarity about which bodies in the collective grouping have responsibility for which specific programmes and policies is needed—but retaining this collective responsibility for the achievement of the totality of the outcome objectives throughout the bumpy journey of learning is essential for the successful delivery of these commitments long-term.

4.4.3 Formal and informal mechanisms to the WGA and WNA approach

Sustainability needs both formal and informal networks that define both the governance and management of a WGA and WNA over the long-term. Sustaining formal mechanisms of coordination and collective implementation will always be critical, but the informal mechanisms will also play an equally valuable role over the long-term. These are the mutually supporting informal networks, especially amongst those involved in the operationalisation and delivery of the WGA and WNA approach.

Equally, the stability of the programme and policy environment is also needed to provide continuity. The channels needed to advance children's well-being is complex and naturally subject to significant lags in securing the desired impacts. In this context, stability is at a premium. That said, institutional structures, and programmes and policy, will all need to adjust and change. New knowledge, insights and learning should lead to new and innovative approaches, but they need to be introduced in a coherent manner that is highly sensitive to the implications of transition.

4.4.4 Strategic foresight to embed resilience to manage major external shocks

External shocks come in many forms and with varying intensity, from both within and outside of a nation, as COVID-19 has powerfully demonstrated. Maintaining the continuity of core programmes and policies is a huge challenge in these contexts, sometimes due to the economic costs of shocks and subsequent financial stringency that typically follow; sometimes on account of the setbacks in children's well-being because of the shock; and sometimes the continuity of service delivery becomes nearly impossible or damaged by the external shock. COVID-19 has clearly demonstrated these perspectives in the starkest terms.⁷⁴

As resources come under far greater pressure, building the case for maintaining financial support will be strengthened by the evidence in support of the prioritisation of child well-being interventions. Key to this is being clear about the likely costs to child well-being, and the implications of failing to preserve programmes and policies—implications both for children, and for wider society.

The resilience of delivery systems presents a very different form of challenge. As COVID-19 revealed, the programmes to support children in adversity were seriously disrupted because of the response in most nations to the health risks and impacts of the pandemic.⁷⁵ Children were restricted to their home environments for lengthy periods, with the greatly reduced visibility of some children with the greatest risk to their well-being raising significant concerns.

Designing systems that retain the visibility of children during such shocks – with mechanism and channels of communication being designed to withstand such abnormal events – and that insulate the service delivery to the maximum extent possible from the shock is just one example of the importance of resilience in this regard.

Governments' systematic and embedded use of strategic foresight in the design of resilient systems within its WGA and WNA can build greater collaborative, anticipatory capacity, and enables and informs systems design for children's well-being that contributes to an increased resilience to shocks.⁷⁶

Strategic foresight is a systematic approach which identifies a range of plausible, potential futures and their likely impact, identifying key implications for policy today. The use of strategic foresight helps strategists and decision makers to spot signs of impending future change and to broaden and develop the perspectives that they would draw on automatically and intuitively.⁷⁷

In informing policies and programmes designed to achieve children's well-being, the use of strategic foresight can help mitigate against external shocks such as the Covid-19 pandemic, through generating insights into underlying and particularly powerful drivers of change, helping to shape robust, innovative future systems and policy.

KEY POLICY MESSAGES for Sustainability

Establish an inter-generational horizon. The resilience and sustainability of programmes to enhance children's well-being are critical to securing child well-being. Given the scale and nature of the challenge, identifying an inter-generational horizon for the strategy is necessary.

Anticipate shocks and deploy strategic foresight to embed resilience. Attempting to anticipate and build resilience in the context of the major challenges and shocks that might be expected over a long-term horizon, is an important, though difficult, step. Strategic foresight is crucial to the embedding of resilience to manage major external shocks.

Commit government and encourage parliamentary leadership. As the body with the greatest convening power, and the greatest resource capacity, central government – and the top leadership within its governance, and notably the National Cabinet – must visibly and consistently demonstrate a powerful commitment.

Sustain collective leadership. Integral to this Approach is the indispensable pre-requisite to establish, nurture and sustain strong and effective collective leadership and partnership across the nation, drawn from all the key parties that can contribute, and can benefit from, the advancement of children's well-being.

Nurture the commitment of broader society. The commitment of broader society and its perceptions of the importance and fundamental value of children's well-being are the key to sustainability. Building this commitment is therefore a top priority. An Approach that reaches beyond government structures is fundamental to sustainability, as the drawing in of the key actors and contributors in civil society to form a shared agenda of action can only strengthen the basic commitment of society over the medium- to long-term.

Regularly make the case for investing in the well-being of children. This is a continuing imperative. Resources – both financial and human – will always be under serious pressure in every nation and presenting increasingly better evidence and understanding of the value of investing in children must be a top priority to sustain progress. Resourcing will always need to align closely with the programmes that have been adopted by the WGA and WNA partnership to address the long-term challenges. The principle of appropriately and sustainably funding the full configuration of programmes and policies that are adopted is crucial.

Sustain the infrastructure and operationalisation. Sustaining the formal and informal structures that create the mechanisms for intensive partnership and collaborative working is indispensable. This needs to be initiated by government and retained as one of their top priorities.

5. Implementing: A Coherent Framework

5.1 Action Phases within the Approach

Securing a successful whole-of-government (WGA) and whole-of-nation (WNA) approach is fundamentally built on the 4 Pillars above. Effectively applying the Pillars is a highly dynamic process; the phases, priorities, emphases, and actions will change throughout as programmes and policies of intervention are taken forward.⁷⁸ This Approach needs to be seen as a cyclical system and one with many phases: a process throughout which there are different priorities. It also needs to be highly responsive as new learning and evidence emerge and as the approaches are refined to reflect these insights, to continuously improve this strategic Approach. Over time, applying these Pillars to the changing context needs to be revisited through inter-related Action Phases to achieve and maintain improvements which lead to children's well-being.

Ensuring the capacity to adapt throughout these dynamic Phases will accelerate progress and maximise the impact and better achieves the end goal of children's well-being.

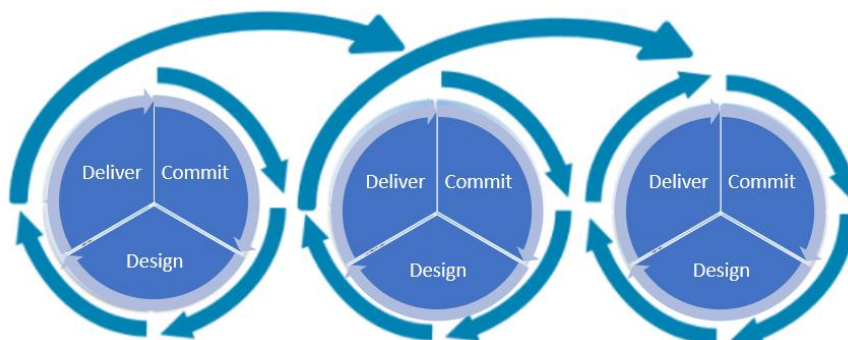


Figure 6: Adapted, based on NIRN and Wiley sources⁷⁹

Here, several transitions are isolated to demonstrate the necessary dynamism in the system. The continual *Action Phases* can be seen as Committing, Designing and Delivering:

- *Commit* to WGA and WNA principles to achieve child well-being and agree to the activities needed to establish a shared policy agenda and maintain a high-level commitment.

From visioning partnerships to operations partnerships

The nature of the partnerships across government and wider civil society, and their priorities, will evolve throughout this journey as the sustainability of delivery and the commitment of resources are tested over time.

For example, the essential political and administrative commitment may initially be focussed on the ultimate vision and objectives of policy, and while this must be retained, as the journey progresses, that commitment will shift to a focus on the operational delivery of the agreed strategy.

From strategic leadership to technical leadership

The forms of integrated and collaborative working also evolve. Initially, the integration of the most senior leadership of the participating partner organisations in the WGA and WNA approaches into a core top leadership team is the priority. The signals emanating from the top are a pre-requisite for the understanding of the vision to permeate their respective bodies.

However, as the Approach moves towards the design and subsequently deliver phases, the emphasis falls upon the Directors of these bodies who can lead the operationalisation of integration in these distinct phases. While the collective leadership and inspiration of the most senior leaders cannot waver, and their continuing involvement is critical, the detail of implementation must be led by those with the expertise and time.

- *Design* high quality interventions and redesign these further as new evidence and data are fed into the process. Apply WGA and WNA principles to the design of policy and programmes.

From evidence and data for design to evidence and data for improvement

In the earliest stages of the partnership working towards a deliverable strategy, the evidence base plays a crucial role in informing the discussions about the best available choices; the configuration of interventions can ultimately be drawn from this evidence. And so, mobilising these forms of evidence at the outset is a priority here.

- *Deliver* these policies, programmes, and services through pro-actively adopting WGA and WNA principles.

In the later phase of Delivery however the emphasis may evolve to place a higher priority on the monitoring and evidence gathering from the interventions themselves, to inform the feedback and the continuous improvement of programmes.

The OECD data framework⁸⁰ and formal processes are critical for the measuring, evaluating, and monitoring of interventions; this is the fuel that drives future cycles of improvement (See: Pillar 2: Evidence and Learning).

5.2 Adapting Pillar-focussed actions with each new Phase

Each Pillar will vary in its emphases across the phases, as will the tasks associated with them over time as programmes and policies of intervention are being determined and taken forward.⁸¹

The choice of a Pillar's focus and related actions evolve as the interventions move forward within WGA and WNA approach; these are summarily set out in Figure 7. (A detailed version can be found in [Annex 6](#).) This Figure provides an indication of *how* a government might look to operationalise WGA and WNA approaches, defining the components for each of the Pillars and planning how these pillars are interpreted as the Approach is taken collectively forward.

	Phases:	Commit	Design	Deliver
Pillars:	Pillars: Key Components	Agreeing the principles for a Whole-of-Nation and Whole-of- Government Approach	Applying the principles for a WNA & WGA to the design of policy and programmes of service delivery	Pro-actively adopting the principles for a WNA & WGA in the delivery of policy and programmes of service delivery
Integration: Building the integration and coordination of our institutions and collective leadership and delivery	Sustained political commitment to Children's Well-being, and Leadership	Defining and maintaining clarity in the collective commitment of Government and civil society to the vision and key outcomes. Identifying the key groupings and communities of children.	Translating commitments and strategy into deliverable and ambitious programmes and policies that are sufficient to deliver the outcomes.	Exercising strong leadership to maintain clear oversight of the programmes of delivery.
	Institutional frameworks and mechanisms for horizontal and vertical integration and coordination.	Building the understanding, motivation and goodwill for horizontal and vertical integration collaboration.	Designing the necessary frameworks to enhance integration and coordinated effort and joint operations. Defining the responsibility and roles of all the partners whose contributions are critical.	Effective implementation, founded on clarity of responsibility and role, and intense and continuous operational collaboration.
	Institutional frameworks and mechanisms for dialogue and engagement within Government and between Government and Civil Society.	Identifying all the key potential contributors to the successful achievement of the outcomes, including those who should contribute, and those benefitting from future progress.	Designing frameworks and mechanisms for dialogue and engagement.	Operating the crucial mechanisms for engagement to ensure highly effective communication, interaction to optimize mutual implementation, and identify the weaknesses of the collective delivery.
	Channels for engaging with those with lived experience.	Identifying the key potential groupings and communities of children, as noted above, and how to interact with them.	Designing channels to facilitate dialogue and engagement that can enhance the design of policies and services.	Seeking real-time feedback on the value and effectiveness of implementation for these key groupings.
Evidence and Learning: Gathering the understanding to drive continuous improvements	Institutional frameworks and mechanisms for monitoring, data and evidence gathering and evaluation.	Agreeing key programmes and evidence upon which to focus.	Designing mechanisms to collect primary data and evidence.	Gathering the evidence consistently to the highest quality.
	Tools to understand impact, inform choices and guide continuous improvement	Adopting tools for <i>ex ante</i> and <i>ex post</i> analysis of impact.	Testing options for their <i>ex ante</i> rates of economic and social return and impact.	Estimating real-time and <i>ex post</i> rates of return and impact, with feedback.
Resources: Identifying the human and budgetary resources that are necessary	Institutional frameworks and mechanisms for budgeting	Developing a budgetary coherence between all the partners.	Identifying the necessary budgetary resources that the policies and service delivery choices entail.	Ensuring resourcing is timely and as planned, and efficiently and effectively deployed. Introducing incentives.
	Human capital for delivery	Agreeing the nature, quality and quantity of the professional skills to ensure the delivery of the strategies.	Identifying how these skills will be secured and financed for all the delivery partners.	Ensuring that delivery is not impeded by skill shortages.
Sustainability: Securing a medium-term commitment	The resilience and sustainability of programmes to enhance children's well- being	tbc	tbc	tbc

Figure 7: Securing the Outcomes for Children's Well-Being: Framework for a Whole-of-Nation and Whole-of-Government Approach

Box 5.1. Reviewing and Amending Policy Frameworks - Ireland: 'Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures' Framework Mid-Term Review

In Ireland, the Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures WGA for child well-being was initially conceptualised as a high-level, strategic, wide-ranging policy framework. However, after a mid-term review, the focus of the approach was narrowed due to implementation weaknesses. In addition, after a lack of sustained political commitment, leadership for the initiative shifted and included further engagement with government departments and the NGO sector. [See more in Annex 1R.](#)

Integrated policy configurations

Designing integrated configurations is crucial. Three important examples illustrate this point, from across the range of outcome objectives and potential policy areas:

- The promotion of childcare for parents in families with poor levels of child well-being
- The elimination of institutional care for children without parental care
- The termination of children in contact with the law

Each demonstrates starkly how excellent policy can be undermined if the necessary accompanying programmes and policy are not in place at the appropriate time and designed in the appropriate manner to support this key policy. The institutional integration both facilitates the understanding of the interdependencies and linkages and provides the institutional framework within which the configurations can be most effectively designed and then implemented.

Not only is the impact on children significantly undermined and diminished by piecemeal programme design, but such fragmentation is also inefficient and a serious misuse of highly scarce public resources, whether financial or human.

5.3 Anticipating the challenges in delivering a Whole-of-Nation Approach

While unexpected challenges to the integrity and effectiveness of this Framework will clearly arise over the long-term, there are many challenges that might be anticipated. Contingency thinking can be applied early. Acknowledging these challenges early can help to develop early warning mechanisms to raise awareness of emerging concerns.

These include:

➤ *Retaining participation*

Retaining the pro-active participation of all the partners to the Approach, and sustaining their participation over long periods of time, is critical to successfully improving and promoting children's well-being.

➤ *Anticipating gaps*

Anticipating and addressing the emergence of gaps are important strategic investments. These may include for example: the absence or departure of contributors for the collective Approach, especially where other contributions are contingent on these partners; the inevitable challenges of synchronisation or sequencing of the steps when the contributors are based in many organisations; and the gaps in programmes and policies that detract from the overall delivery

Often, the re-emergence of fragmentation and silo approaches are exacerbated by seemingly mundane challenges, such as the turnover of key staff in pivotal roles in the collaborating institutions, or the diversion of the collective leaders into other governmental and social priorities.

Acknowledging the reality of these serious potential challenges to the sustaining of a WGA and WNA Strategy over many years – if not decades – is the first step. Identify ways to address the risks of regressing back into these former, less impactful ways of working in the earliest stages.

➤ *Building incentives*

Designing an effective incentive structure at the organisational level and at the individual level will motivate the behaviours that are necessary for the Approach⁸² and, notably, these should also challenge the apparent default position that is often observed to fall-back into fragmented patterns of working in which the narrow interest of the division or ministry is prioritised over the more outward looking collective priorities.⁸³

➤ *Anticipating counterincentives*

The emergence of counterincentives should be anticipated and addressed, including the inevitable advent of new political priorities and the distraction of key Ministers and Administrators for periods of time.

6. Final Reflections

The gap is widening between our aspirations for children, and the reality that many children face. Supporting children's well-being is complex and requires a multi-faceted response from governments. This cannot be achieved through agencies' efforts within singular mandates. A WGA approach for children's well-being demands government leadership and action to initiate, catalyse and coordinate aligned and integrated efforts. This needs to be informed by the *distinct* nature of children – their needs, rights, and evolving capacities, as well as their circumstances. This WGA approach must also convene and motivate national non-governmental partners to inspire a whole nation's effort. In doing so, a WGA plays a key role in inspiring, facilitating and accelerating a whole-of-nation approach, to ensure the effective delivery of programmes on the ground, essential to achieving the distinctive and long time-horizon for children's well-being.

Addressing these challenges, this paper outlines a Whole-of-Government Framework for Child Well-being: a strategic approach to secure the vision for children over the long-term, one which all nations aspire to achieve. This Framework is built on **four Key Pillars** for governance, which form the foundation for securing a successful WGA approach: integration; evidence and learning; resources; and sustainability. Effectively applying the Pillars is a highly dynamic process; it is cyclical, responsive and has many phases. The WGA Framework's **Action Phases** apply the changing priorities, emphases, and actions throughout the approach, as programmes and policies of intervention are taken forward. Together, these Pillars and Action Phases are central to establishing an integrated and collective Whole-of-Government Framework for Child Well-being for a whole nation to effectively respond to, nurture and sustain the well-being of children.

Annexes

1. Lessons from Practice

The following boxes are referred to in the body of the text. The numbering refers to the section to which the example is associated.

A. Gender Mainstreaming: Finland's Government Action Plan for Gender Equality 2016-19

Finland's whole-of-government approach to gender mainstreaming is outlined in its **2016-2019 Government Action Plan for Gender Equality**.

The Action Plan has roots in Finland's various commitments to instruments, not limited to: the Convention on the Eradication of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Istanbul Convention and Finland's 2011 Report on Gender Equality.

Relevant experts and key stakeholders in collaboration with Government Ministries led the Action Plan's creation. Together, they developed 30 measures across six key areas, which cover all Finnish Ministries.

Responsibility for coordination of the Action Plan falls primarily with the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health. However, coordination requires extensive inter-ministerial collaboration and commitment. As such, a Working Group supports and monitors the implementation of the plan.

The Strategy covers six key policy areas related to gender equality:

- Labour market equality
- Reconciliation of work, family, parenthood
- Gender equality in education and sports
- Intimate partner violence and violence against women
- Men's well-being and health
- Decision making that promotes gender equality

Finland's strategy sets objectives for each based on medium- and long-term goals, and utilised various tools such as ensuring ministries assess the gender impacts of activities.

The 2016-19 Government Action Plan led to Finland's 2019 Government Programme on Gender Equality, and subsequently the 2020-2023 Government Action Plan on Gender Equality.

Sources:

[Fast Forward to Gender Equality, OECD](#)

[2016-19 Government Action Plan for Gender Equality, Finnish Government](#)

B. Climate Policy: Canada's Greening Government Strategy

Canada's '**Greening Government Strategy**' supports the government's commitment to net-zero by 2050.

The strategy supplements Canadian sustainability targets within various instruments such as the Paris Agreement on climate change, and the Pan-Canadian Framework on Clean Growth and Climate Change. It is also consistent with Canada's commitments to the Sustainable Development Goals and the Canadian Federal Sustainable Development Strategy.

The Canadian strategy calls on government action to reduce emissions, as well as increasing climate-resilient operations. The strategy ensures that on top of attaining net-zero, Canada reduces its environmental impact beyond carbon, on waste, water and biodiversity.

Leadership of the **'Greening Government Strategy'** is based in the Centre for Greening Government, as part of the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat.

The whole-of-government and whole-of-nation approach to greener governance in Canada includes commitments on:

- Net-zero emissions by 2050
- Mobility and fleets
- Real property (reduced water consumption and waste)
- Procurement of goods and services
- Policies
- Engagement
- Oversight and performance management

Some measures have direct effect on increasing the environmental conscious of individuals and departments, including measures to increase flexibility for low-carbon, remote working and including 'greening priorities' into the responsibilities of senior government officials. Accountability and sustainability of the Canadian strategy is ensured through oversight and performance management tools, based on principles of transparency and open data.

The strategy also incorporates various implementation tools based on further training and environmental awareness of public service employees, including **climate change risk assessments** and methods to share best practice and lessons learned across the government.

To engage wider society and the **whole-of-nation approach**, strategy provisions include objectives to collaborate and establish community partnerships between provincial, territorial and municipal governments, indigenous peoples, the private sector, academia and civil society.

Sources:

[Greening Government Strategy, Canadian Government](#)

Governing Green: Gearing up government to deliver on climate and other environmental challenges, OECD

C. New Zealand: Child Wellbeing and Poverty Reduction Group, Units and Ministers.

In 2018, New Zealand's Prime Minister, Jacinda Arden, became Minister for Child Poverty Reduction. Responsibility for New Zealand's Child Wellbeing and Poverty Reduction Group and strategy sits with the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet. Established in 2018, it consists of 2 units:

Child Wellbeing Unit:

The Child Wellbeing Unit leads the development and implementation of New Zealand's first Wellbeing Strategy for children and young people. The Strategy sets out the actions the Government intends to take to improve the well-being of all New Zealand children – now and in the future. The Unit's role is to:

- oversee the implementation of the Strategy, including managing statutory, Cabinet and public reporting requirements
- seek input and advice from a range of individuals, groups and agencies, including children and young people, Māori and other stakeholders.
- consider the interests and needs of all children and young people, with a particular focus on child poverty and socio-economic disadvantage and those with greater needs
- provide advice on the policies and actions intended to improve the well-being of all children and young people and lead or coordinate cross-agency advice on the five priority policy areas under the Strategy

Child Poverty Unit:

The Child Poverty Unit supports the Prime Minister, Jacinda Arden, as Minister for Child Poverty Reduction. The Unit's role is to:

- support the implementation requirements of the Child Poverty Reduction Act 2018
- support agencies to implement the legislation
- work with others to identify actions and policies for reducing child poverty
- provide advice to Ministers on child related matters
- work closely with the Child Wellbeing Unit on poverty-related aspects of the Strategy.

New Zealand's three-year child poverty targets from the Child Poverty Reduction Act 2018 led to:

- 22,400 fewer children experiencing material hardship
- 45,400 fewer children in low-income households on after-housing costs measure
- After-housing costs target achieved a year ahead of schedule

Source: [Child Poverty Reduction, New Zealand Government](#)

D. Spain: Gender Mainstreaming--Strategic Plan for Equal Opportunities 2014-16

Spain's Gender Mainstreaming Strategic Plan includes a clear governance scheme, with three disparate types of agents:

- Responsible Agents: Each ministerial department, and particularly the Ministry for Health, Social Affairs and Equality, is responsible for the implementation of the plan in its relevant area.
- Support Agents: Equality units of each Ministry are responsible for facilitating and ensuring that line ministries are following the Strategic Plan and advancing gender mainstreaming.
- Co-Ordination Agents: The General Directorate for Equal Opportunities and the Women's Institute are responsible for the preparation, monitoring, and evaluation of the plan, as well as holding responsibility for co-ordinating the equality units and general plan co-ordination.

Source: OECD, Fast Forward to Gender Equality

E. The Netherlands: Mandatory Quality Requirements and Review Bodies

The Netherlands have had Mandatory Quality Requirements on all new legislation and policy since 2011. All policy and regulatory proposals must meet these quality requirements.

For many Mandatory Quality Requirements, there are assessment bodies within Dutch Ministries which must consider the proposed policy within their area of review, such as:

Effects on Gender Equality	Ministry of Justice and Security
General Guideline on Societal Cost-Benefit Analysis (SCBA)	No review
Business Impact Assessment	Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate Policy

Source: [Netherlands Regulatory Impact Assessment, OECD](#)

F. South Korea's Hope Start Programme

Direct or indirect financial assistance alone cannot resolve child poverty. In 2007, the Ministry of Health and Welfare launched Hope Start in sixteen areas, incrementally expanding, to address intergenerational poverty. Taking over from a private collaborative of organisations, the Ministry of Health and Welfare provided educational and welfare services so that all children have a 'fair start line.'

The MoHW is responsible for implementing Hope Start – a programme expanded from a private collaboration called the We Start movement. The support team for Planning and Educational programmes include specialists in welfare issues who advise on selecting locations, etc. They designed an 'integrative welfare service programme' – making a package of health, welfare, and education available to children and families.

Hope Start teams can also request use of external social welfare facilities, nurseries, hospitals and health clinics, and NGOs. The programme is available to pregnant women in low-income households and children under 12 in vulnerable areas. Specialist teams regularly visit families and provide medical and educational services for families, and job training and employment opportunities for guardians.

The programme emphasises prevention of problems in nutrition, emotional development, and social skills using an integrated approach.

Source: Kim, S. (2010). Collaborative Governance in South Korea: Citizen Participation in Policy Making and Welfare Service Provision. *Asian Perspective*, 34(3), 165–190. <https://doi.org/10.1353/apr.2010.0017>

G. Vienna, Austria: Children and Youth Strategy 2020-2025

Vienna, Austria introduced the *Werkstadt Junges Wien* (Repair Shop Young Vienna) project in 2019. The aim was to design a large-scale participatory process to develop a strategy for children and young people in Vienna, which would consider more the rights and well-being of Vienna's rapidly growing young population.

Children and young people were tasked with an 'assignment,' – to perform a 'service check' on the city of Vienna and collate their views on the following questions:

- What should Vienna get a medal for?
- What needs to be repaired?
- Which ideas for solutions do children and young people have?
- What are their "care instructions" and visions for the future of the city?

The young participants were entirely free to choose the issues they wanted to address. The project team tapped into the city's broad network of civil society institutions, from schools and youth clubs to immigrant rights groups and homeless shelters.

The city created a basic training for each of these institutions to conduct the workshop on their own time, at their own pace, and in their own language – the workshop toolbox was made available in 174 languages.

The programme hosted 1,309 workshops reaching 22,581 children and young people over the course of 2019.

Results from children and young people's 'medals,' repair notes and suggested solutions were paired with commitments from the city of Vienna to improve cooperation with children and young people, and to investigate new suggested policies, objectives, and commitments on areas like nature and the environment, opportunities and future, and health and well-being.

After the Vienna-wide process, the Strategy outline includes plans for district-wide participation, citing high levels of interest from municipal districts to increase levels of children's advisory boards, youth forums, participation events, consultation events, and children's parliaments all over Vienna.

Timeline:

- Workshops
- Evaluation
- Definition of major topics and goals for the Vienna Children and Youth Strategy by a Children and Youth Advisory Board
- All departments and agencies of the City of Vienna collect existing and recommend new measures
- A children and youth conference discussed first draft of Children and Youth Strategy
- Vienna City Council adopts Children and Youth Strategy
- Start of implementation and monitoring by children and young people

Source: [Child and Youth Strategy, Vienna, Austria](#)

H. New South Wales, Australia: Strategic Plan for Children and Young People

New South Wales Government launched their whole-of-government Strategic Plan for Children and Young People in 2016. As part of developing the Plan, the Office of the Advocate of Children and Young People consulted with more than 4,000 children and young people right across NSW.

The Plan aims to ensure children and young people in NSW are safe, connected, respected, have opportunities, are healthy and well, and have a voice in decisions that affect them.

The Advocate for Children and Young People is responsible, under legislation, for developing the three-year whole-of-government strategic plan.

Since 2016, the NSW Government have created a Youth Advisory Council of 12 young people between the ages of 12-24, who meet every 4-6 weeks. The Government have also conducted several consultations on young people's lived experience, including a consultation on the experiences of care experienced young people and young people with disabilities.

Source: [Strategic Plan for Children and Young People, New South Wales Government, Australia](#)

I. Japan: 'Special Youth Rapporteurs'

The Japanese Cabinet Office appoints students as 'Special Youth Rapporteurs.' These students help to inform government planning, legislation and regulations related to children and young people. The Special Youth Rapporteurs are asked to give their opinion on the government's thematic priorities, which are selected by the Cabinet Office.

Their inputs are then shared across relevant ministries and government agencies and are published online on the website of the Cabinet Office.

Source: Governance for Youth, Trust, and Intergenerational Justice, OECD

J. Scotland: The Promise

In 2016, Scotland's First Minister announced an independent review of the system of alternative care for children in relation to its underpinning legislation, practices, culture, and ethos.

The Independent Care Review's aim was to identify and deliver lasting change and improve children's experiences of care and their well-being.

This was a collaborative, participative endeavour, with over 5,500 children and adults having engaged with the Care Review. With them, organisations, institutions, public bodies, and community groups across Scotland, with Scotland's First Minister, came together and pledged to #KeepThePromise. The Care Review led to the publication of 7 key reports in 2020, and the establishment of The Promise, an independent organisation commissioned to support services to realise the recommendations of the Care Review.

Based in the UNCRC, The Promise advocates for the participation of persons with care experience in the delivery, inspection, and continuous improvement of services and of care. Part of this includes deploying participative guidance and criteria when developing policy and academic research.

Source: [The Promise Scotland](#)

K. Ireland: Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures Indicator Set

Ireland's Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth works with relevant stakeholders using an **Indicator Set** to inform progress on the five national outcomes of the '**Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures**' framework (see BOX), and its constituent strategies.

The dashboard includes over 100 indicators, including summary level data on each indicator and information on data sources. The indicators help identify key issues and questions for further exploration and explanation as part of Ireland's framework for children and youth and can be used as a resource base for all with policy agendas relating to children and young people. The indicators can also be grouped together in terms of specific policy area, age groups, and population groups.

BOBF indicators:

- Help to track progress towards outcomes
- Assist in identifying trends
- Contribute to priority setting or resetting
- Inform policy formulation and service provision
- Provide for international comparisons, where possible.

The indicator set represents a significant resource to support the policy framework and the work of Government Departments and others involved in the implementation of BOBF. It provides a broad picture of:

- How children and young people in Ireland are faring in terms of how active and healthy they are
- The extent to which they are achieving their full potential in learning and development
- How safe and protected they are from harm
- How economically secure they are
- How connected, respected and engaged they are in society.

Source: [Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures: The National Policy Framework for Children and Young People 2014-20](#)

L. Iceland: Accountability and Sustainability of Children's Prosperity

Iceland has created a National Agency and National Supervisors Authority as part of integrating Icelandic initiatives on Children's Prosperity which contribute to the accountability and sustainability of the initiative.

The National Agency for Children and Families is the central advisory centre which oversees all activities based on legislation for children's well-being and supports the provision of services for children's prosperity. It provides a toolbox of resources and can also support work on certain individual cases. The National Agency also oversees data and digital solutions which support the integration of services.

The National Supervisory Authority for Welfare for Integrating Services in the Interest of Children's Prosperity supervises the quality of welfare services and the integration of those services across Iceland. It has an Inspectorate who investigate claims and utilise proactive supervision to secure children's prosperity.

Source: Integration of Services in the Interest of Children's Prosperity, Government of Iceland, Ministry of Social Affairs

M. Iceland: Tools to Support Whole-of-Government Approach to Children's Prosperity

Iceland's Government utilise several tools to support its whole-of-government, integrated approach to children's prosperity. These span across children's human rights, economic impact and solidifying the participation of children in policy.

Dashboard on Children's Prosperity

- The Dashboard has 5 dimensions based on UNCRC general principles: education, equity, health and well-being, security and protection, and social participation.
- Information is used to prioritise projects and funding, as well as in contributing to data which informs policy development.

Economic Impact Assessment

- A third-party economist evaluated the cost-effectiveness and economic impact of Iceland's agenda for child prosperity.
- Long-term, the legislation was valued to be cost effective and would even yield returns on par with the most profitable investments the Icelandic government has made.
- By 2070, returns should reach 11%.
- The Children's Prosperity Act has no negative environmental impact and has a positive impact on children and families, leading to the increased overall well-being and prosperity of the nation.

Child Friendly Iceland

- Child Friendly Iceland is a global policy on the implementation of the UNCRC, which includes policy on greater participation of children, and a framework for the institutionalisation of CRIAs.
- The consultation for Child Friendly Iceland began in June 2020.

Source: Integration of Services in the Interest of Children's Prosperity, Government of Ireland Ministry of Social Affairs

N. Scotland: Outcomes Framework and Indicators for Child Well-Being

Scotland's national approach to improving the well-being and life chances of children and young people is GIRFEC – Getting It Right for Every Child. It applies to both children's services and other services which affect children and young people, with all services required to safeguard, support and promote the well-being of children in an integrated and efficient manner, under the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.

Scotland uses a set of interconnected indicators which focus on the whole child, sometimes referred to as SHANARRI, which were developed with recognition of the UNCRC. The indicators are:

- **Safe:** Protected from abuse, neglect, and harm by others at home, at school and in the community.
- **Healthy:** Having the highest attainable standards of physical and mental health, access to suitable healthcare, and support in learning to make healthy and safe choices.
- **Achieving:** Being supported and guided in their learning and in the development of their skills, confidence, and self-esteem at home, at school and in the community.

- Nurtured: Having a nurturing place to live, in a family setting with additional help if needed or, where this is not possible, in a suitable care setting.
- Active: Having opportunities to take part in activities such as play, recreation and sport which contribute to healthy growth and development, both at home and in the community.
- Respected: Having the opportunity, along with carers, to be heard and involved in decisions which affect them.
- Responsible: Having opportunities and encouragement to play active and responsible roles in their schools and communities and, where necessary, having appropriate guidance and supervision and being involved in decisions that affect them.
- Included: Having help to overcome social, educational, physical, and economic inequalities and being accepted as part of the community in which they live and learn.

Source: [Child and Young People \(Scotland\) Act 2014](#)

O. Child Impact Assessment

New Brunswick, Canada

New Brunswick, Canada includes a check list of all rights in the UNCRC in the assessment format, split based on guiding principles (non-discrimination, best interests of the child, etc.) and provision (adequate standard of living, implementation of rights, aims of education, etc.)

Source: [Child Rights Impact Assessment, New Brunswick, Canada](#)

EU-UNICEF

Child Rights Toolkit, Distinguishing effects on children of declining household incomes

Area	Short-Term	Medium-Term	Longer Term
Education	Falling attendance	Declining enrolment	Lower lifetime earnings for individuals with compromised education
	Worse performance	Increase in dropouts	Subsequent Generations do not attend school

Source: [Child Rights Toolkit, EU-UNICEF](#)

Scottish Young Carers Grant (YCG): Child Rights and Well-Being Indicators

The Scottish Government's Young Carer's Grant (Scotland) Regulation 2019 CRWIA supports the duty to give better or further effect to the UNCRC.

In 2016, the Scottish Government considered the introduction of a Young Carer's Allowance to provide extra support for young people with significant caring responsibilities. Officials gathered evidence from a range of sources to identify options for a Young Carer's Allowance. This included mapping existing provision, consideration of existing evidence and wider Scottish Government policies, discussions with Stakeholders in the Young Carer's Allowance Working Group, and a review of the responses to the Social Security in Scotland consultation. It was co-designed with children and young people through a Young Carers Panel which provided a platform for youth volunteers to take part in a range of research opportunities to help shape the grant.

The Young Carers Grant was announced in 2017 and engages a range of indicators to positively affect children's rights and well-being outcomes.

Source: [Child Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment Guidance, Scottish Government](#)

Flanders, Belgium Regulatory Child and Youth Impact Report (JoKER)

The Child and Youth Impact Report, or JoKER for short, assesses the effects of new regulations on children and young people. Every time a minister submits a draft to the Flemish Parliament that affects the interests of persons under the age of 25, that draft must be accompanied by a JoKER.

The decree obligation to draw up a child impact statement (KER) has existed since 1997. Since 2008, this KER has been extended to a JoKER. JoKER utilises a Regulatory Impact Assessment form, and is completed using a Government Impact Analysis template, alongside the JoKER manual.

The Flemish Minister of Youth, who is responsible for the coordination of the rights of the child, monitors compliance with the obligation and reports on impacts on children and young people. In addition, the Department of Culture, Youth and Media provides advice on the JoKER within twelve working days of the request for the legislative and linguistic advice.

The Flemish Parliament and the advisory councils are free to monitor whether a JoKER requirement has been drawn up, and to make use of the information contained therein. Written questions are regularly asked about the JoKER and advice from the Children's Rights Commission and the Flemish Youth Council often refer to it.

Source: [Ministry of Youth, Flanders, Belgium](#)

P. Child Budgeting: Mexico

Mexico was one of the first states to incorporate child budgeting in 2007.

Each Ministry is required by law to submit reports, within the framework of the budget process, on spending on childhood, applying a methodology that was agreed between the country's authorities and UNICEF. Reporting exclusively relates to the Federal Budget and does not extend other forms of municipal governance.

Each ministry must:

- Measure criteria to consider if spending affects children if any of the following conditions are met:
- The objectives directly promote children's human rights
- The policy is designed with children's human rights and well-being in mind
- The objective strengthens children's human rights
- Consider whether this is totally or partially
- Once expenses have been estimated, Ministries must construct indicators to give them meaning – such as on GDP, total spending, or spending per child.

Mexico's child budgeting initiative also considers types of spending:

- Specific spending: expenses which directly benefit children, like teachers, paediatricians)
- Agent spending: strengthening agents to act on behalf of the child, like teacher training, mothers accessing labour market
- Expanded spending: to serve vulnerable population groups.
- Expenditure on public goods: to meet specific needs of children, for example, a park.

Federal spending on children grew from 5.28% of GDP in 2008 to 6.27% in 2011, representing 31.27% of programmable spending. 92% of that corresponded to specific spending and agent spending.

Source: ['Measuring Budget Investment in Childhood: Methodological proposal and first results in Spain.'](#), UNICEF

Q. Iceland: Integration of Services in the Interest of Children's Prosperity

In 2018, Iceland's Minister of Social Affairs and Children hosted a national conference on early intervention in the interest of children and called for scrutiny on the existing systems, and suggestions for change and innovation. The Minister facilitated conversation between systems, stakeholders, experts, and politicians, but also with users of the system, families, and children themselves on how the systems should work.

After this process, various Ministers -Minister of Social Affairs and Equality, Minister of Health, Minister of Education, Science and Culture, Minister of Justice, Minister of Transport and Local Government - and the Icelandic Association of Local Authorities, signed a declaration of willingness as recognition that all parties would address obstacles between service providers improve services for children.

Iceland then put several administrative systems in place to ensure the declaration of willingness led to changed policy and practice.

- An inter-political committee was created, representing all parliamentary parties, to work on children's prosperity.
- A steering group on children's prosperity was created, tasked with creating legislative bills.
- Representatives from the Prime Ministry and Association of Local Authorities signed the declaration.
- All municipalities and schools in Iceland were invited to take part in preparations for legislative changes for children's prosperity.
- After great engagement, 8 subgroups on different matters for children's prosperity were created – where municipalities, state, schools, and individuals met and submitted their findings
- Iceland held a large conference to review the status of preparation for legislative change and plans for legislation were introduced.
- There was a comprehensive economic evaluation of draft legislation
- There was a public consultation forum on the proposed bill.
- Iceland then reviewed the relevant existing regulations and legislation regarding children's prosperity, in anticipation of proposing new legislation and revising existing legislation.
- Bills were then proposed to the Icelandic Parliament.

Source: Integration of Services in the Interest of Children's Prosperity, Government of Ireland Ministry of Social Affairs

R. Ireland: 'Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures' Framework Mid-Term Review

Ireland's **Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures** whole-of-government approach for child well-being is based in Ireland's commitment to the UNCRC.

At its inception, **Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures** was intended to be a high-level, strategic, wide-ranging policy framework.

The Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures framework had struggled to deliver specific commitments and make direct improvements to the lives of children and young people. After Phase 1 of the strategy, Ireland conducted a mid-term review before Phase 2 (2018-2020), to outline suggested improvements.

The review revealed that the strategy needed narrowed focus, and a greater degree of political commitment to attain success.

The need for a narrowed focus stemmed from a weakness implementing from Phase 1's complicated framework, spanning a huge range of commitments. However, the review found beneficial outcomes in those areas that had specific focus in Phase 1, such as child poverty. This pointed to the need for sharper focus and prioritisation.

Lack of sustained political commitment was also highlighted in the mid-term review. Some government departments and agencies were not adequately engaged with the strategy commitments. The mid-term review suggested strengthened government leadership to act as a key implementation driver, including suggestions for wider leadership and greater utilisation of existing government systems to support communication and advancement of key strategic priorities.

Considering the Mid-Term Review, Phase 2 of Ireland's *Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures* renewed:

- Leadership shift in the Consortium, engagement of more government departments, and the NGO sector.
- A succinct approach focusing on child poverty, child homelessness, mental health and well-being, prevention and early intervention, and the Early Years Strategy.

The mid-term review was supplemented by a mid-term survey, which sought the perspectives of key informants in the implementation process and the public. It focused on the status, progress and learning from the implementation process, as well as key activities since the onset of the framework.

Source: [Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures: The National Policy Framework for Children and Young People 2014-20](#)

S. Ireland's Participation Strategy for Children and Young People

In **Ireland**, the *Lundy Model* is the methodological basis for the incorporation of child participation across the entirety of Ireland's work with and for children, rooted in Ireland's Participation Strategy for Children and Young People.

In addition, Ireland has integrated child participation in the legislative framework, including in the Child and Family Agency Act 2013, which requires the consideration of children's views in planning and reviewing the provision of services and the performance of functions.

T. Luxembourg's ChiCo Conferences

In **Luxembourg**, 80 children aged between eight and twelve are engaged in annual conferences (ChiCo) to discuss democracy and children's rights. Organised by the Centre for Political Education, children discussed in small groups a range of topics and adults were supported to listen to them.⁸⁴

U. Child-Friendliness Index of African Governments

The African Child-Friendliness Index (CFI) is 'an empirical framework to measure, monitor, and analyse the performance of African governments in ensuring the dignity and rights of children.' This index is an important policy and advocacy tool which ranks 52 African Government's performance centred around three central child rights and well-being indicators: protection, provision, and participation. The CFI measures performance using around thirty indicators related to legal, policy, budgetary, and child well-being outcomes. Indicators include those on violence, education, health services, etc.

The results and ranking of countries using a child rights-based approach has become an important advocacy tool for civil society actors to maintain child rights and well-being goals, visions, and outcomes in the national priorities of African countries.

Source: [Child-Friendliness Index, African Child Policy Forum](#)

V. Welsh Government SDGs and Children's Human Rights

In Wales, a concerted effort has been made to guide public bodies towards implementation efforts which contribute to a more integrated approach, most notably in the integration of the Sustainable Development Goals and Children's Human Rights.

The Welsh Government has integrated their approach to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and child rights. The previously separate initiatives came together in legislation in the Rights of Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure 2013 and the Well-Being and Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. Measures for integration in Welsh Governance and public bodies for child rights include the addition of Ministerial obligations on due regard to the UNCRC, the use of Child Rights Impact Assessment, and the creation of a Welsh Child Rights Advisory Group. In highlighting children's rights and well-being into the Sustainable Development Agenda, Wales altered its Commissioner for Sustainable Futures to a Future Generations Commissioner, adopting a more intergenerational remit.

Source: [Welsh Government](#)

W. USA'S Governor's Children's Cabinets

In the USA, the National Governor's Association Center for Best Practice has developed a toolkit resource which encourages US Governors to adopt Children's Cabinets. Children's Cabinets are defined as "collaborative governance structures that seek to promote coordination across state agencies and improve the well-being of children and families." Strong Children's Cabinets support the coordination, integration, and efficiency of work across state and local governance levels, and strengthen partnerships with civil society, the private sector and children themselves.

At least 16 US states have Children's Cabinets, with integrated policies across several state officials and agencies, including health, mental health, and youth development. For example, Maine, USA, piloted some of the first integrated initiatives on case management in the development of Family and Systems Teams in 2003. Other long-standing Cabinets exist in states such as Louisiana and West Virginia.

The NGA Center for Best Practice's Guide to Children's Cabinets offers a step-by-step process for establishing a Children's Cabinet, as well as guiding principles and examples of good practice.

Source: [NGA Center for Best Practice](#).

2. Notes on a Whole of Government Approach

There are an array of studies exploring the WGA Approaches.

For example, the World Bank's [*How Countries Nurture Human Capital: Whole of government approaches.*](#)

Again, in the context of conflict, while this OECD paper (2006) does not emphasise the importance of the broader societal involvement in the challenges, it does focus explicitly on the importance of the full range of government involvement: [*Whole of Government Approaches to Fragile States \(2006\).*](#)

More recently, the OECD published an extremely thoughtful piece in: OECD (November 26, 2021). *Building Capacity for Child Well-being Policies.* 43rd session of the Working Party on Social Policy. OECD Centre for Well-Being, Inclusion, Sustainability and Equal Opportunity.

The familiar vision of the New Zealand Government is also a valuable exemplar of the *Whole of Government Approach*, as captured for example in the Institute for Government's (April 2016) [*Whole-of-government Reforms in New Zealand.*](#)

An insightful look at the concept and application of the WGA may also be found in: Colgan, A., Kennedy, L.A. and Doherty, N. (2014) *A Primer on implementing whole of government approaches.* Dublin: Centre for Effective Services.

Additionally, there are several studies which look at WNA Approaches in different environments.

For example, within the context of seeking to establish stability in conflict and post-conflict areas, the paper by Brett Doyle (Arthur D. Simons Center for Interagency Cooperation, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas) offers some thoughtful insights of relevance to all complex *Whole of Nation* thinking. *The Whole-of-Nation and Whole-of-Government Approaches in Action.* <https://thesimonscenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/IAJ-10-1-2019-pg105-122.pdf>

There are many studies that look at WNA Approaches in different environments. For example, within the context of seeking to establish stability in conflict and post-conflict areas, Brett Doyle (Arthur D. Simons Center for Interagency Cooperation, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas) offers some thoughtful insights of relevance to all complex *Whole of Nation* thinking in [*The Whole-of-Nation and Whole-of-Government Approaches in Action.*](#)

There are many similar terms to a *Whole of Nation Approach* that are fundamentally describing approaches to governance that are very closely related. For example, *Whole of State* is sometimes used to characterise systems seeking to embrace broadly similar goals. Equally, terms such as *collaborative governance* capture similar key elements, as reflected in the work of many academics, such as:

[Chris Ansell, Alison Gash](#) (2008). [Collaborative Governance in Theory and Practice.](#) Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory, Volume 18, Issue 4, October 2008. They define collaborative governance as:

“A governing arrangement where one or more public agencies directly engage non-state stakeholders in a collective decision-making process that is formal, consensus-oriented, and deliberative and that aims to make or implement public policy or manage public programs or assets.”

Kirk Emerson, Tina Nabatchi, Stephen Balogh. (2012). [*An Integrative Framework for Collaborative Governance*](#). *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, Volume 22, Issue 1, January 2012.

“We define collaborative governance broadly as the processes and structures of public policy decision making and management that engage people constructively across the boundaries of public agencies, levels of government, and/or the public, private and civic spheres in order to carry out a public purpose that could not otherwise be accomplished.”

The impact of governments’ own operations on their staff and those impacted by their direct corporate decision-making is a dimension of *Whole-of-Government Approaches* which is, for example, picked up in the context of the US Health sector in Daniel Dodgen’s (February 15, 2019) [*Whole-of-Government Approach: What It Means and How It Translates to Improving National Health Security*](#).

3. Note on the Multiple Dimensions of Policy Integration

Policy integration is a multi-dimensional concept. The first dimension regards the reasons of why governments around the world have started integrating their policies. Functionalist arguments are about the increased effectiveness of integrated policy approach in addressing crosscutting problems. An integrated approach has also the potential to reduce the policymaking inefficiencies and failures associated with duplications and contractions.⁸⁵ There is also a political function: an integrated approach to policymaking requires political choices of aligning policies to overarching goals that in turns requires a clear prioritisation of objectives. This alignment and prioritisation can be achieved through involvement of political and administrative levels of governance.⁸⁶

This latter aspect is about the second dimension: an effective achievement of policy integration sees both a horizontal and vertical integration. While horizontal integration, that is ‘the integration within and between policy sector’,⁸⁷ recalls concepts such as ‘whole-of-government’ and ‘joined-up government’, vertical integration is about the integration between levels of governance that for child well-being also involves private actors in the delivery of services.

The fourth dimension is about the conceptual varieties used by scholars and practitioners to define policy integration.⁸⁸ For instance, policy integration refers to the political and administrative efforts to coherently design policy measures adopted for different policy goals or develop a common vision for the future.⁸⁹ A less challenging task is to integrate a crosscutting policy issue such as child well-being in pre-existing policies. Whereas the first mode of integration has a substantive nature as involving the design and create interdependencies between different policy sectors and then coordinate them, the second mode is mainly procedural involving policy appraisal mechanisms such as impact assessments. Another way to arrange this conceptual varieties is to distinguish between policy integration (concerning the design of cross-cutting and encompassing policy instruments) and administrative coordination (that refers to the institutional arrangements for coordinating the decision-making of different administrative units and decision-makers).⁹⁰ Focusing on a processual approach, one can argue that policy integration can be achieved and sustained by designing and arranging policy frames, subsystem involvement, goals, and instruments of a cross-cutting policy.⁹¹

The fifth dimension of policy integration is about the different ways to achieve integration and coordination. Different degrees of policy integration and administrative coordination could be achieved by relying on incentive and inter-agency competition, hierarchy and leadership, positive

coordination, and spontaneous integration and coordination. Although this dimension is more related to administrative coordination rather than policy (design) integration, these institutional arrangements for coordination tend to encompass broader form of whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach. Another way to conceive this dimension is to refer to how coordination capacities can be achieved and enhanced. This leads to include other elements such as skills development and training, specification of output, and mission statements.⁹²

The sixth dimension of integration is about the complexity of arranging policy integration in an administrative context populated by several mechanisms and processes for administrative coordination.⁹³ Take for instance, the set of policy appraisals to be conducted for the sake of approving a regulatory proposal: The Dutch government has 20 tests to be conducted.

The final dimension is normative. When is appropriate to pursue and invest on policy integration for achieving a specific policy goal? This question relates to the desirability and feasibility of policy integration. Specifically, desirability is assessed by weighing of pros and cons of policy integration. Feasibility is a sub-dimension of desirability and revolves around its determinants: integrative capacity and leadership.⁹⁴

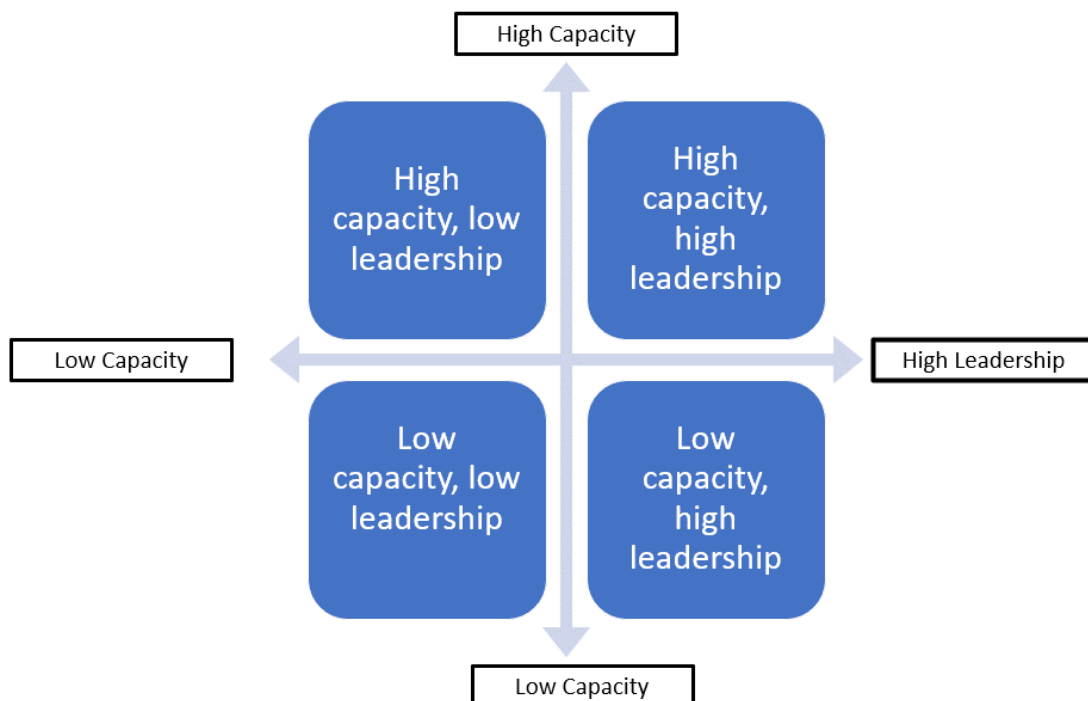
4. Notes on Four Types of Policy Integration

Scenario 1: Consider the most challenged scenario, represented by the bottom, left quadrant.

The first (negative) scenario for child well-being policy integration sees low integrative capacity and leadership. This would be normal starting point of many countries in which the concept of child well-being is only now emerging. This scenario is often likely when the calls for integration concern specialised policy subsystems with very distinctive expertise and different mode of gathering and producing evidence for policymaking. The expectation is that those countries by dint of political commitment both at the domestic and international policy arena would move to one of the next scenarios. Such efforts for enhancing integration should be focused on the most substantial (harmful) impacts on child well-being and the policy subsystems typically close to child well-being. In this specific context, political commitment through the definition of a vision, strategy, or plan for child well-being triggers a change to one of the successive scenarios.

Scenario 2: In contrast, the ideal scenario is represented by the top, right quadrant:

This scenario characterises governments with a high level of integrative capacity and leadership, making possible to achieve a full policy integration of child well-being into policymaking. In this scenario ‘an integrative policy frame emerges, all relevant subsystems are involved, there is a set of overarching, coherent policy goals as well as a consistent mix of policy instruments’⁹⁵. The expected outcome would be that child well-being would be prioritised over other policy objectives. This is the ‘type of integration that policy-makers and scholars generally have in mind when calling for concerted actions’⁹⁶.



This call for concerted action can generate political and administrative frustration if the policy integration starting point is the first scenario, or the natural policy fragmentation of policy expertise

and subsystem, and the present of similarly salient but contrasting policy objectives. Examples of full-fledged policy integration are sparse to solve any type of “boundary-spanning policy issue”.⁹⁷

Scenario 3: In between these two extreme scenarios, is the scenario of low capacity and high leadership (bottom, right quadrant); this represents symbolic integration as political leaders commit to a whole of government approach to tackle child well-being with limited administrative capacity’.

Symbolic integration tends to overlap with high-level political commitment takes the form of the parliamentary signatory of international and national agreements, national strategy and plan, political parties pledges without substantially making any substantial administrative change.⁹⁸ Because political commitment is less costly than developing administrative capacity, it is usually the crucial starting point. To achieve a sustained political commitment, child well-being requires to be recognised as a political priority deserving the same salience of economic and sustainable development, or the Health in All Policies approach. Furthermore, political commitment needs to be reinforced across changes of political majorities and executives and become mainstream in the national political discourse with all political parties agreeing of the importance to tackle child well-being as a boundary-spanning issue (See Pillar 4: Sustainability).

Scenario 4: The scenario of high capacity and low leadership (top, left quadrant) is when administrative capacity for integration is available, but leadership is lacking.

Over a long period of time and through constant efforts, integrative capacity can be developed. Various policy actors, stakeholders and institutions can engage in solving crosscutting issues by sharing information and through mechanism of collaborative governance. But without political commitment and leadership, this integrative capacity has a marginal impact and is limited to a certain level of integration in policy implementation and service delivery rather than affecting the quality of decision-making for solving cross-boundary issues. This is especially true for contemporary governance, as crosscutting issues conflict with other sectoral or crosscutting priorities.

5. World Bank on Violence in and around Schools

The World Bank (2021) observes:

The negative effects of violence in and around schools (VIAS) are widespread. Children's life is profoundly affected when they are victims or perpetrators of violence, with scars that last a lifetime. Violence in school affects virtually all aspects of a child's well-being, including especially mental health.

While there is no doubt that education is transformative, simply going to school is not enough. Real learning, the process of receiving and distilling information, of thinking and creating and producing and socializing, is less likely to happen if a child is scared or traumatized. Preventing violence in and through school is therefore a prerequisite for girls and boys getting the education they need and deserve, and acquiring the skills, knowledge and values that provide the foundations for strong and inclusive societies.

The case for investments towards ending VIAS is clear. Promising interventions to end VIAS are available and have large benefits to cost ratios. The findings from the study suggest that in addition to being a moral imperative, ending VIAS is also a smart economic investment.

This report demonstrates that violence in and around schools negatively impacts educational outcomes, and society pays a heavy price as a result, with an estimate (for 2019, pre-COVID) of \$11 trillion in lost lifetime earnings.

Cost-benefit analyses suggest that implementing interventions to prevent violence in and through schools from early childhood to secondary education is a smart economic investment. Rigorously evaluated programs and policies aimed at preventing violence at different levels of the education system show that action is feasible. The benefits of investing in preventing violence in and through schools is likely to far outweigh the costs.

In particular:

- **Cost-benefit analyses suggest that promising interventions have high benefits to costs ratios.** While these ratios are sensitive to assumptions used in the analyses, results suggest that reducing violence in and around schools is a smart economic investment. While most of the available analyses are from developed countries, programs should generate high benefits in developing countries as well if one presumes that results of a similar magnitude could apply.
- **Early childhood interventions are essential to prevent VIAS and often have high returns.** Cost-benefit analyses have been implemented mostly for centre-based interventions (typically preschools, although many programs also include home visiting, parenting advice, health and nutrition services, and referrals for social services). Such programs tend to have high returns on investment, with benefit to cost ratios ranging from 2.04 to 16.14.
- **In primary schools, programmes helping children improve their social and emotional skills also have high returns.** A recent synthesis of cost-benefit analyses for these types of programs suggest benefit to cost ratios ranging from 3.46 to 13.91 across interventions in baseline scenarios.

Source: World Bank, 2021

6. The Integrated Matrix

ANNEX Securing the Outcomes for Children's Well-being: Framework for a *Whole-of-Nation and Whole-of-Government Approach*

Pillars	Key Components	Commitment	Design	Delivery
		Agreeing the principles for a Whole-of-Government and Whole-of-Society Approach	Applying the principles for a Whole-of-Government and Whole-of-Society Approach to the design of policy and programmes of service delivery	Pro-actively adopting the principles for a Whole-of-Government and Whole-of-Society Approach in the delivery of policy and programmes of service delivery
Integration: Building the integration and coordination of our institutions and collective leadership and delivery	Sustained political commitment to Children's Well-being, and Leadership	Defining and maintaining clarity in the collective commitment of Government – and across a wider political spectrum - and civil society to the vision for children's well-being over the long term, together with the identification of the key outcomes and dynamic collective strategy to deliver the outcomes. Identifying the key potential groupings and communities of children whose well-being is the primary focus, notably including those <i>left furthest behind</i> and those who should be the target of programmes to address the <i>furthest behind first</i> .	Translating the <i>in principle</i> commitments and strategy into coherent, tangible, deliverable and ambitious programmes and policies that are sufficient to deliver the outcomes over the agreed time horizon. Identifying the critical choices and <i>options</i> , and selecting an agreed set of policies and programmes for collective implementation.	Exercising leadership to maintain clear oversight of the programmes of delivery, identifying the strengths and shortcomings in delivery, revisiting continuously the programmes to ensure optimal implementation.
	Institutional frameworks and mechanisms for horizontal and vertical integration and coordination.	Building the understanding, <i>motivation</i> and goodwill for horizontal and vertical integration collaboration.	Designing and setting up the necessary frameworks and mechanisms to enhance integration and coordinated effort and joint operations. Defining the responsibility and roles of all the partners whose contributions are critical to successful delivery.	Effective implementation, founded on clarity of responsibility and role, and intense and continuous operational collaboration.
	Institutional frameworks and mechanisms for dialogue and engagement within Government and between Government and Civil Society.	Identifying all the key potential contributors to the successful achievement of the outcomes, including those most directly and less directly should contribute, and those directly and less directly benefiting from future progress.	Designing frameworks and mechanisms for dialogue and engagement.	Operating the crucial mechanisms for dialogue and engagement as necessary to ensure highly effective communication, interaction to optimize mutual implementation, and identify the weaknesses of the collective delivery.

	Channels for engaging with those with lived experience.	Identifying the key potential groupings and communities of children, as noted above, and how to interact with them.	Designing channels to facilitate dialogue and engagement that can enhance the design of policies and services.	Seeking real-time feedback on the value and effectiveness of implementation for these key groupings.
Evidence and Learning: Gathering the understanding to drive continuous improvements in policy and services	Institutional frameworks and mechanisms for monitoring, data and evidence gathering and evaluation.	Agreeing key programmes and evidence upon which to focus ; both to inform the choices of policies and services, and to monitor the effectiveness and impact of these programmes.	Designing mechanisms to collect primary data and evidence.	Gathering the evidence consistently to the highest quality.
	Tools to understand impact, inform choices and guide continuous improvement	Adopting tools for <i>ex ante</i> and <i>ex post</i> analysis of impact, such as <i>Child Well-being Impact Assessments</i> and <i>Societal Impact Assessments</i> .	Testing options for their <i>ex ante</i> rates of economic and social return and impact, both to the child, the family unit, and the broader community and nation; embracing both the shorter and longer term net benefits of policy and services.	Estimating real-time and <i>ex post</i> rates of return and impact; feedback to inform policy and service delivery choices.
Resources: Identifying the human and budgetary resources that are necessary to realistically deliver the agreed strategy	Institutional frameworks and mechanisms for budgeting	Developing a budgetary coherence between all the partners – including between Government ministries, between all layers of Government, between Government and civil society partners - that includes budgetary systems to facilitate coordinated and coherent approaches and management of policies and programmes and service delivery, as necessary.	Identifying the necessary budgetary resources that the policies and service delivery choices entail. Confirming – within the constraints of Government and civil society planning horizons - that these resources will be available for the medium term programmes to enable the strategy to be effectively implemented as designed.	Ensuring resourcing is timely and as planned, and efficiently and effectively deployed. Introducing incentives to collective and integrated implementation, such as joint funding opportunities, joint , outcome-based performance rewards
	Human capital for delivery	Agreeing the nature, quality and quantity of the professional skills to ensure the delivery of the strategies.	Identifying how these skills will be secured and financed for all the delivery partners.	Ensuring that delivery is not impeded by skill shortages.
Sustainability: Securing a commitment that spans the medium term	The resilience and sustainability of programmes to enhance children's well-being	tbc	tbc	tbc

ENDNOTES:

¹ e.g. Leadership, vision, strategic frameworks, whole-of-government approaches, vertical and horizontal coordination approaches, use of governance tools, data and systems for mainstreaming, institutional capacities, which could be grouped in certain blocks

² The term 'children' is used throughout this Paper to describe all those under the age of 18 years, in line with the definition of a child within the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

³ Individual factors contributing to child vulnerability stem from cognitive, emotional and physical capabilities or personal circumstances, for instance age, disability, a child's own disposition or mental health difficulties. They can be invariable, such as belonging to an ethnic minority or having an immigrant background, or situational, such as experiencing maltreatment, being an unaccompanied minor or placed in out-of-home care. (OECD)

⁴ Environmental factors contributing to child vulnerability operate at both family and community levels. Family factors include income poverty and material deprivation, parents' health and health behaviours, parents' education level, family stress and exposure to intimate partner violence. Community factors are associated with school and neighbourhood environments. Environmental factors illustrate the inter-generational aspect of child vulnerability and the concentration of vulnerable children within certain families and communities. (OECD)

⁵ See previous frameworks and good practices on OECD Public Governance <https://www.oecd.org/governance/>

⁶ See: <https://www.oecd.org/wise/Measuring-What-Matters-for-Child-Wellbeing-and-Policies-Policy-brief-July-2021.pdf>

⁷ See: <https://www.oecd.org/wise/Measuring-What-Matters-for-Child-Wellbeing-and-Policies-Policy-brief-July-2021.pdf>

⁸ This point is picked up in the context of conflict: OECD (2006). *Whole of Government Approaches to Fragile States*. <https://www.oecd.org/dac/conflict-fragility-resilience/docs/37826256.pdf>

⁹ Brett Doyle (Arthur D. Simons Center for Interagency Cooperation, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas) *The Whole-of-Nation and Whole-of-Government Approaches in Action*. <https://thesimonscenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/IAJ-10-1-2019-pg105-122.pdf>

¹⁰ Chris Ansell, Alison Gash (2008). *Collaborative Governance in Theory and Practice*. Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory, Volume 18, Issue 4, October 2008. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jopart/mum032>;

Kirk Emerson, Tina Nabatchi, Stephen Balogh. (2012). *An Integrative Framework for Collaborative Governance*. Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory, Volume 22, Issue 1, January 2012. <https://academic.oup.com/jpart/article/22/1/1/944908>

¹¹ New Zealand Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. *Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy*. <https://childyouthwellbeing.govt.nz/resources/child-and-youth-wellbeing-strategy>

¹² OECD (July 16, 2021) *Governance as an SDG Accelerator: Country Experiences and Tools*

<https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/0666b085-en/1/1/4/index.html?itemId=/content/publication/0666b085-en&csp=34eb1c7117fbf0332cc7095e8ebdc1c0&itemIGO=oecd&itemContentType=book>

See chapter 1 for an insightful analysis of these points in the context of the UN Agenda 2030 SDGs.

¹³ OECD (July 16, 2021) *Governance as an SDG Accelerator: Country Experiences and Tools*

<https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/0666b085-en/1/1/4/index.html?itemId=/content/publication/0666b085-en&csp=34eb1c7117fbf0332cc7095e8ebdc1c0&itemIGO=oecd&itemContentType=book>

See chapter 1 for an insightful analysis of these points in the context of the UN Agenda 2030 SDGs.

¹⁴ World Bank (April 2019) *How Countries Nurture Human Capital: Whole of government approaches*. <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/708741555598903523/pdf/Human-Capital-Project-How-Countries-Nurture-Human-Capital-Sustained-Efforts-Across-Political-Cycles.pdf>

¹⁵ World Bank (April 2019) *How Countries Nurture Human Capital: Whole of government approaches*. <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/708741555598903523/pdf/Human-Capital-Project-How-Countries-Nurture-Human-Capital-Sustained-Efforts-Across-Political-Cycles.pdf>

¹⁶ See: <https://www.oecd.org/wise/Measuring-What-Matters-for-Child-Wellbeing-and-Policies-Policy-brief-July-2021.pdf>

¹⁷ While the focus is upon government rather than the broader nation as in this Paper, the Pillars are strongly supported by the World Bank (April 2019), *How Countries Nurture Human Capital: Whole of government approaches*. <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/708741555598903523/pdf/Human-Capital-Project-How-Countries-Nurture-Human-Capital-Sustained-Efforts-Across-Political-Cycles.pdf>

Many countries that have pursued continuity, coordination, and evidence in tandem have managed to achieve complete transformations. Whole of Government Approach In their efforts to build human capital, countries that have successfully managed to sustain efforts across political cycles, coordinate across government, and design policies and programs that use and expand the evidence base have been most effective in accumulating human capital, thereby reaping many lasting social and economic benefits.

These include countries like Singapore, the Republic of Korea, Japan, Ireland and Finland, to name a few. Many have managed to achieve significant transformations in just a few decades.

¹⁸ Tosun, J., & Lang, A. (2017). Policy integration: Mapping the different concepts. *Policy Studies*, 38(6), 553–570. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01442872.2017.1339239>

¹⁹ Peters, B. G. (2018). The challenge of policy coordination. *Policy Design and Practice*, 1(1), 1–11. <https://doi.org/10.1080/25741292.2018.1437946>; Candel, J. J. L. (2021). The expediency of policy integration. *Policy Studies*, 42(4), 346–361. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01442872.2019.1634191>

²⁰ Candel, J. J. L. (2021). The expediency of policy integration. *Policy Studies*, 42(4), 346–361. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01442872.2019.1634191>

²¹ Candel, J. J. L., & Biesbroek, R. (2016). Toward a processual understanding of policy integration. *Policy Sciences*, 49(3), 211–231. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11077-016-9248-y>

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- ²² Candel, J. J. L. (2021). The expediency of policy integration. *Policy Studies*, 42(4), 346–361, pages. 352-353 <https://doi.org/10.1080/01442872.2019.1634191>
- ²³ OECD Building Capacity for Child Well-Being Policies, WISE/ELSA/WP1(2021)10
- ²⁴ Crosby and Bryson (2014, 57) cited in Candel (2021).
- ²⁵ Hodgkin, R., & Newell, P. (1996). *Effective government structures for children: report of a Gulbenkian Foundation inquiry*. London: Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation. Cited by Payne Payne, L. (2007). A ‘Children's Government’ in England and Child Impact Assessment. *Children & society*, 21(6), 470-475.
- ²⁶ Candel, J. J. L. (2021). The expediency of policy integration. *Policy Studies*, 42(4), 346–361
- ²⁷ See Marguerit, D., Cohen, G., & Exton, C. (2018). *Child well-being and the Sustainable Development Goals: How far are OECD countries from reaching the targets for children and young people?* OECD. <https://doi.org/10.1787/5e53b12f-en>
- ²⁸ Christensen, T., & Lægreid, P. (2007). The Whole-of-Government Approach to Public Sector Reform. *Public Administration Review*, 67(6), 1059–1066. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-6210.2007.00797.x>, p. 238
- ²⁹ Lodge, M., & Wegrich, K. (Eds.). (2014). *The Problem-solving Capacity of the Modern State: Governance Challenges and Administrative Capacities*. Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198716365.001.0001>, p. 50
- ³⁰ Candel and Biesbroek (2016, p218) uses the definition of subsystem involvement as the dimension that ‘capture the range of actors and institutions involved in the governance of a particular cross-cutting policy problem’.
- ³¹ See: <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-protection-system/wales>
- ³² See: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419150/Good_practice_by_Local_Safeguarding_Children_Boards.pdf
- ³³ Jacklin-Jarvis, C., & Potter, K. (2020). Exploring the Potential for Collaborative Leadership through a Policy Lens: A Comparative Analysis of Children’s Services and Flood Risk Management. *International Journal of Public Administration*, 43(16), 1386–1396. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01900692.2019.1669176>
- ³⁴ Ansell, C. (2012). *Collaborative Governance*. Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199560530.013.0035>
- ³⁵ Kim, S. (2010). Collaborative Governance in South Korea: Citizen Participation in Policy Making and Welfare Service Provision. *Asian Perspective*, 34(3), 165–190. <https://doi.org/10.1353/apr.2010.0017>
- ³⁶ See: <https://www.oecd.org/wise/Measuring-What-Matters-for-Child-Wellbeing-and-Policies-Policy-brief-July-2021.pdf>
- ³⁷ Rights Right Now young people’s group <https://www.togetherscotland.org.uk/about-us/our-partnerships/rights-right-now/>
- ³⁸ UNCRC Article 12 reads: 1. States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child. 2. For this purpose, the child shall in particular be provided the opportunity to be heard in any judicial and administrative proceedings

affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.

³⁹ Lundy et al <https://bera-journals.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1080/01411920701657033>

⁴⁰ See: <https://today.rtl.lu/news/luxembourg/a/1903042.html> and <https://zpb.lu/chico/>

⁴¹ World Bank (April 2019), How Countries Nurture Human Capital: Whole of government approaches.

<https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/708741555598903523/pdf/Human-Capital-Project-How-Countries-Nurture-Human-Capital-Sustained-Efforts-Across-Political-Cycles.pdf>

⁴² See OECD CWB Reports: <https://www.oecd.org/social/family/child-well-being/OECD-WISE-Webinar-Children-Post-Covid19-Decade-Oct2020.pdf>

⁴³ HCFEA, 2019 [41]

⁴⁴ <https://www.oecd.org/social/family/child-well-being/OECD-WISE-Webinar-Children-Post-Covid19-Decade-Oct2020.pdf> and DPMC, 2018[42]

⁴⁵ From: Dirwan, Thevenon, Davidson, Goudie, (2020) The economic and social returns from investing in children's well-being – a schematic illustration <https://www.oecd.org/social/family/child-well-being/OECD-WISE-Webinar-Children-Post-Covid19-Decade-Oct2020.pdf>

⁴⁶ Hanna, K., Hassp.all, I., & Davies, E. (2006). Child Impact Reporting. *Social Policy Journal of New Zealand*, 29, 11, 33

⁴⁷ This is a tool well recognised for its ability to bring an integrated focus to children across governments. There are several countries and nations that adopted such policy appraisal system, including Belgium, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Canada, Finland, Ireland, New Zealand, Sweden, and the UK.

⁴⁸ Child Impact Assessments (CIA) may also be called child impact statements or child impact reporting.

⁴⁹ Krieger, Y. P., & Ribar, E. (2009). Child Rights Impact Assessment of Proposed Electricity Price Increases in Bosnia and Herzegovina. *Children, Youth and Environments*, 19(2), 176–201.

⁵⁰ McCall-Smith, K. (2021). Entrenching children's participation through UNCRC Incorporation in Scotland. *The International Journal of Human Rights*, 1–24. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13642987.2021.1969920> Pg. 7.

⁵¹ Scottish Government Ministerial code s1(a)

⁵² See Figure 2, pages 14-16 of: Goudie, A. (2021). 'Achieving the Well-Being of Children in the COVID-19 Era: The Centrality of the Economic Perspectives' Inspiring Children's Futures Learning Report Series 2/2021. University of Strathclyde, UK <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5ef078c78c147231fcfd509f/t/60d499faaae2dc2a358d49d9/1624545797843/FIN+22+Jun.pdf>

And Figure 3.2 'The economic and social returns from investing in children's well-being – a schematic illustration' from page 14 of this OECD paper: Dirwan, Thevenon, Davidson, Goudie, (2020) Securing the Recovery, Ambition, and Resilience for the Well-being of Children in the post-COVID-19 Decade <https://www.oecd.org/social/family/child-well-being/OECD-WISE-Webinar-Children-Post-Covid19-Decade-Oct2020.pdf> and/

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- ⁵³ Bhutan and the United Arab Emirates have also pursued similar lines of thinking: <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2019/05/new-zealand-is-publishing-its-first-well-being-budget/>
- ⁵⁴United Nations (2015): Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld>
- ⁵⁵ See: UNCRC Article 4
- ⁵⁶ The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child has consistently recommended that states adopt a child rights-based approach to budgeting as a key aspect of implementation. This was expanded on in the Committee’s General Comment no. 19 on public budgeting for the realization of children’s rights, adopted in 2016. <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/838730?ln=en>
- ⁵⁷ General Comment 19 s 31. <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/838730?ln=en>
- ⁵⁸ The second part the Article which is “with regard to economic, social and cultural rights, States Parties shall undertake such measures to the maximum extent of their available resources and, where needed, within the framework of international co-operation”. Convention on the Rights of the Child, 20 November 1989, 1577, UNTS 3, Article 4
- ⁵⁹ See: https://www.childrightsconnect.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/GC_IIC_ChildFriendlyVersion_English.pdf
- ⁶⁰ L Lundy, K Orr & C Marshall ‘Children’s rights budgeting and social accountability: Children’s views on its purposes, processes and their participation’ (2020) 4 Global Campus Human Rights Journal 91-113 <http://doi.org/20.500.11825/1699>
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- ⁶⁶ See: https://ssir.org/articles/entry/the_dawn_of_system_leadership
- ⁶⁷ See: Delivering evidence based services for all vulnerable families A review of main policy issues <https://www.oecd.org/officialdocuments/publicdisplaydocumentpdf/?cote=DELSA/ELSA/WD/SEM%282020%298&docLanguage=En>

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⁷⁰ Paula Kivimaa, Wouter Boon, Sampsa Hyysalo, Laurens Klerkx, Towards a typology of intermediaries in sustainability transitions: A systematic review and a research agenda, *Research Policy*, Volume 48, Issue 4, 2019, Pages 1062-1075, ISSN 0048-7333, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.respol.2018.10.006>.
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Continuity across political cycles is fundamental to human capital transformation. Country experiences across diverse contexts have shown that consistent prioritization of human capital issues is both possible and effective.

Many countries that have pursued continuity, coordination, and evidence in tandem have managed to achieve complete transformations. In their efforts to build human capital, countries that have successfully managed to sustain efforts across political cycles, coordinate across government, and design policies and programs that use and expand the evidence base have been most effective in accumulating human capital, thereby reaping many lasting social and economic benefits. These include countries like Singapore, the Republic of Korea, Japan, Ireland and Finland, to name a few. Many have managed to achieve significant transformations in just a few decades.

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- ⁷⁵ See: OECD Child Wellbeing reports <https://www.oecd.org/els/family/child-well-being/#:~:text=Our%20work%20on%20children%20and,need%20for%20a%20bright%20future> See also COVID 4P Log for Children’s Wellbeing Learning Reports <https://inspiringchildrensfutures.org/covid-learning-reports>
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- ⁷⁷ MacKay, R., & McKiernan, P. (2018). *Scenario Thinking: A Historical Evolution of Strategic Foresight* (Elements in Business Strategy). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. doi:10.1017/9781108571494
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- ⁸⁰ See: <https://www.oecd.org/social/family/child-well-being/OECD-WISE-Webinar-Children-Post-Covid19-Decade-Oct2020.pdf>
- ⁸¹ This point is picked up in the context of conflict: OECD (2006) *Whole of Government Approaches to Fragile States*. <https://www.oecd.org/dac/conflict-fragility-resilience/docs/37826256.pdf>
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- ⁸⁵ Peters, B. G. (2018). The challenge of policy coordination. *Policy Design and Practice*, 1(1), 1–11. <https://doi.org/10.1080/25741292.2018.1437946>; Candel, J. J. L. (2021). The expediency of policy integration. *Policy Studies*, 42(4), 346–361. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01442872.2019.1634191>
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