

Beyond Every Child Matters: Local Area Agreements and your outcomes

This briefing gives an overview of:

- What are Local Area Agreements?
- Who develops Local Area Agreements?
- How do Local Area Agreements link with the national indicator set?
- How do Local Area Agreements fit with children's trusts and the Children and Young People's Plan?
- How are Local Area Agreements monitored and reviewed?
- How does the voluntary and community sector fit in?
- What are the outcomes for children and young people?
- What are the children and young people national indicators?
- What can you do? Next steps for your organisation.

What are Local Area Agreements?

The purpose of a Local Area Agreement is “to deliver genuinely sustainable communities through better outcomes for local people” (Communities and Local Government). It is a three-year funding agreement between central and local government.

The first Local Area Agreement (LAA) began in April 2005, followed by rounds 2 and 3 in 2006 and 2007. In April 2008 a new system for LAAs was introduced as an outcome of the Comprehensive Spending Review 2007. This will have an impact on the voluntary and community sector (VCS). The Comprehensive Spending Review set the priority outcomes the Government wants to achieve in the spending period (2008-2011). These outcomes are expressed as Public Service Agreements (PSAs). The most important local delivery mechanism for PSAs is the Local Area Agreement (LAA).

- The LAA is a three year ‘contract’ between a local area (represented by the local authority and other partners through the Local Strategic Partnership) and central government to deliver particular priorities as set out in its *Sustainable Community Strategy*.
- The LAA describes how local priorities will be met from 2008 - LAAs are the main place where central government can agree targets for local areas.
- The new agreements were finalised in June 2008.

Who develops Local Area Agreements?

The Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) is the forum where the *Sustainable Communities Strategy* and LAA targets are negotiated. The local authority is the lead partner in the LSP and the overall financially accountable body for LAAs. The regional government office (GO) is the lead for negotiation of the LAAs on behalf of the Government.

LSPs are expected to plan, review and manage performance against the targets identified in the LAA.

How do Local Area Agreements link with the national indicator set?

The LAA will use the national indicator set to plan and monitor the delivery of certain local services. The national indicator set contains 198 national indicators of performance against targets for local areas. The national indicators:

- will be the only measures on which central government will performance manage outcomes delivered by local government working alone or in partnership (to deliver their Local Area Agreement);
- replace all other sets of indicators such as Best Value Performance Indicators and Performance Assessment Framework indicators;
- will be reported by all areas from April 2008; and
- aim to achieve outcomes under the following themes:
 - Stronger Communities;
 - Safer Communities;
 - Children and Young People;

- Adult Health and Well-being;
- Tackling Exclusion and Promoting Equality; and
- Local Economy and Environmental Sustainability.

There are 67 specific children and young people indicators, although there are likely to be others that are relevant to work with children and young people in some of the other themes.

Local authorities are required to prioritise a maximum of 51 target outcomes from the national indicator set for their LAAs. These comprise 16 statutory education and childcare targets and up to 35 targets that will be locally agreed. (Although they will be assessed against all 198 indicators) These can be supplemented with local targets which areas wish to set. These local targets will not be subject to performance monitoring by central government. The full set of national indicators can be downloaded from:

www.communities.gov.uk/publications/localgovernment/finalnationalindicators

How do Local Area Agreements fit with children's trusts and the Children and Young People's Plan?

The core of the children and young people's priorities for the LAA is the *Every Child Matters: Change for Children* framework. This supports the aims for children and young people to:

- be healthy;
- stay safe;
- enjoy and achieve;
- make a positive contribution; and
- achieve economic wellbeing.

The local children's trust oversees the Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) – the local strategy for improving the five Every Child Matters outcomes for children, young people and their families. The children's trust, therefore, plays an important role in developing the children and young people's indicators of LAAs. So the LAA and CYPP should both be focused on the same priorities, targets and outcomes.

Children's trusts will have a key role in coordinating the work of local partnerships. They will drive the process of identifying improvement priorities for children and young people within the new LAAs, and feeding these into the wider LSP, which will negotiate improvement targets with central government through the local government offices (GO).

How are Local Area Agreements monitored and reviewed?

Performance against the targets in LAAs will be monitored by GOs as part of a new performance framework. GOs will report back to central government on performance against the priority indicators and work with LSPs to support improvement. The performance framework also includes, from April 2009, a new inspection and audit regime – Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA).

Comprehensive Area Assessment

- The CAA is a single inspection and assessment system for councils and their partners.
- The CAA replaces the Comprehensive Performance Assessment, children's services Joint Area Reviews and Annual Performance Assessments and social care star ratings.
- The CAA is being developed and delivered jointly by all the inspectorates responsible for assessing those organisations and services. They are:
 - Audit Commission;
 - Commission for Social Care Inspection;
 - Healthcare Commission;
 - HM Inspectorate of Constabulary;
 - HM Inspectorate of Prisons; and
 - HM Inspectorate of Probation and Ofsted.
- The assessment of individual schools and other children's services providers by Ofsted will continue and feed into the CAA.

Although the performance framework will be used by central government to monitor the 'up to' 51 LAA targets, the CAA will provide a wider narrative on how well your area's statutory partners are performing against all of the 198 national indicators.

How does the voluntary and community sector fit in?

Involvement

The voluntary and community sector (VCS) should be involved in both the design and delivery of the services delivered through the LAA. They will continue to negotiate with individual statutory organisations for delivery of services and funding but they now need to demonstrate where their work contributes to the LAA outcomes.

Funding

LAAs mean there are likely to be changes to the methods of funding for the Children and Young People VCS, although again local areas will vary in their approach.

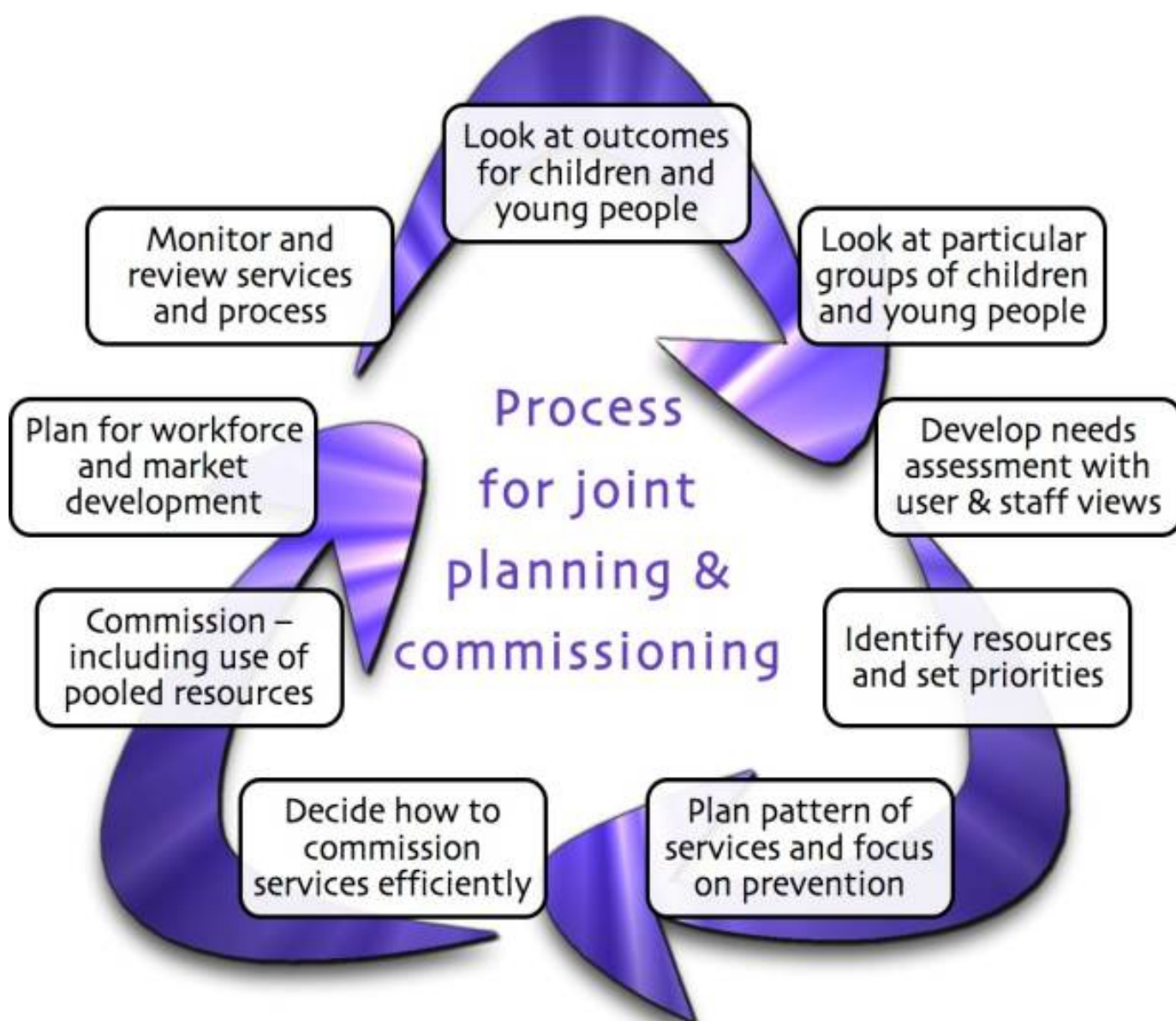
- The LAA does not represent any new guaranteed funding for the local authority – it is simply a different way of delivering existing funding.
- All money will be pooled into a single pot to deliver the indicators in the LAA. This is known as the 'area based grant'.
- Funding is no longer tied to specific themes.
- There will be no ring-fenced pots of money (e.g. Neighbourhood Renewal and Children's Fund).
- As LAAs distribute funds on a local authority administrative area, financial challenges for organisations relying on local statutory funds, but working across two or more local authority boundaries, will increase.
- There will be some new funding from central government if the local authority and its partners exceed

the expectations for the target. This is known as a 'reward grant' and is payable upon completion of your LAA (i.e. 2011 for this LAA round). How the reward grant is spent is at the discretion of local partners.

Commissioning

Although there will be various approaches to working with and funding the local VCS, the Government expects that the commissioning of services from the VCS will increase.

- LSPs will decide what outcomes it wants to achieve and 'buy' the service(s) required.
- Funding will be linked to delivering against one or more of the national indicators.
- Authorities are required to have a joint commissioning framework in place for children's services.
- Government guidance describes a nine-stage commissioning process as outlined in the diagram below.



What are the outcomes for children and young people?

A clear outcomes framework is at the centre of the LAA. By starting with outcomes, LAA partners can begin to answer key questions, such as:

- What is it we want to do?
- Where can we get improved results faster?
- What do we need to take account of in planning for this?

The Comprehensive Area Assessment will focus more on outcomes, on local people's experiences and perspectives, and on areas rather than individual institutions. Its scope will encompass all outcomes delivered by local authorities working alone or in partnership. It will cover all the services provided by the council or purchased from others.

Indicators

- An indicator is information which shows whether something is happening.
- You use indicators to see if you are reaching your targets or achieving your outcomes.
- An indicator is something you can observe or measure, and which is a sign that something has happened.
- To be useful, an indicator must be a test of what you want to find out about. It must also be something you can collect information about consistently.

There is information within the national indicator set guidance on how targets will be measured and reported.

www.communities.gov.uk/documents/localgovernment/pdf/735125.pdf

Below is an example of a new national indicator for children and young people that will be monitored and reported upon by LSPs.

National indicator 110 - young people's participation in positive activities

Rationale for the indicator - To measure and drive improved performance around the participation of young people in positive activities.

The activities young people participate in out-of-school have a significant bearing on their later life outcomes. Positive activities are a good use of young people's time because they provide opportunities to:

- acquire, specific social, physical, emotional and intellectual skills;
- contribute to the community;
- belong to a socially recognised group;
- establish supportive social networks of peers and adults;
- experience and deal with challenges; and
- enjoy themselves.

Definition of the indicators - Positive activities include a range of sporting, cultural and recreational activities and opportunities for volunteering. The key is that activities are structured, good quality, adult-led and support development towards the ECM outcomes. Activities can take place in a variety of settings including youth clubs, sports clubs, outdoor recreation centres, museums and libraries.

How this will be measured nationally - The proportion of young people in school year 10 responding 'yes' to the question "In the last 4 weeks, have you participated in any group activity led by an adult outside school lessons (such as sports, arts or a youth group)?" (TellUs survey data).

What are the children and young people national indicators?

There are 67 specific children and young people indicators (including the 16 statutory indicators). There will be cross-cutting targets for children, young people and their families and carers, so inevitably relevant priorities will be included in the other themes.

Appendix one lists all indicators for the children and young people. It is important to check which indicators (other than the 16 statutory ones) are in your LAA. Details of all local authority chosen indicators can be downloaded from: www.localpriorities.communities.gov.uk/LAAResults.aspx

What can you do? Next steps for your organisation

There are a number of opportunities to get involved in the planning and delivery of LAAs.

- You can use the LAA and other planning documents such as the CYPP to find out which agencies are working towards the same objectives as you, and therefore who your potential partners might be.
- Identify where your work will complement and add particular value to existing provision.
- Use the website of your LSP to find out more about the process and how you can make a contribution.
- Set up or adapt the evaluation of your project's work so that its impact can be described in terms of your LAA targets.
- Share expertise as a provider of innovative approaches to service delivery.
- Deliver services to children and young people and to parents in a community-based and, arguably, more accessible way.
- Contact your local authority and local voluntary/community/third sector infrastructure organisation (such as your local council for voluntary youth services, council for voluntary service or rural community council) to find out what is happening in your area and who the key contacts are.
- Widen your network of contacts. Community anchor organisations such as local community associations, settlements and social action centres, development trusts and multi-purpose centres may also be able to offer information, support and useful contacts.
- Try to increase your profile with the LSP in any way you can. Attend consultations, talk to your local councillors. Think of this engagement as part of the fundraising process. Get on their radar.

Also remember,

- As an independent organisation you have the right to campaign and challenge – consult and use your local Compact for more guidance
- You need to keep as informed as possible, as this is a time of great change at a rapid pace.
- Seek advice from infrastructure bodies and do not be afraid to ask questions.

In *Hearts and Minds: Commissioning from the Voluntary Sector* (2007) the Audit Commission recommends that to improve their credibility VCS organisations should focus on cost and value issues and suggests that they will benefit more from the new public services commissioning climate if they:

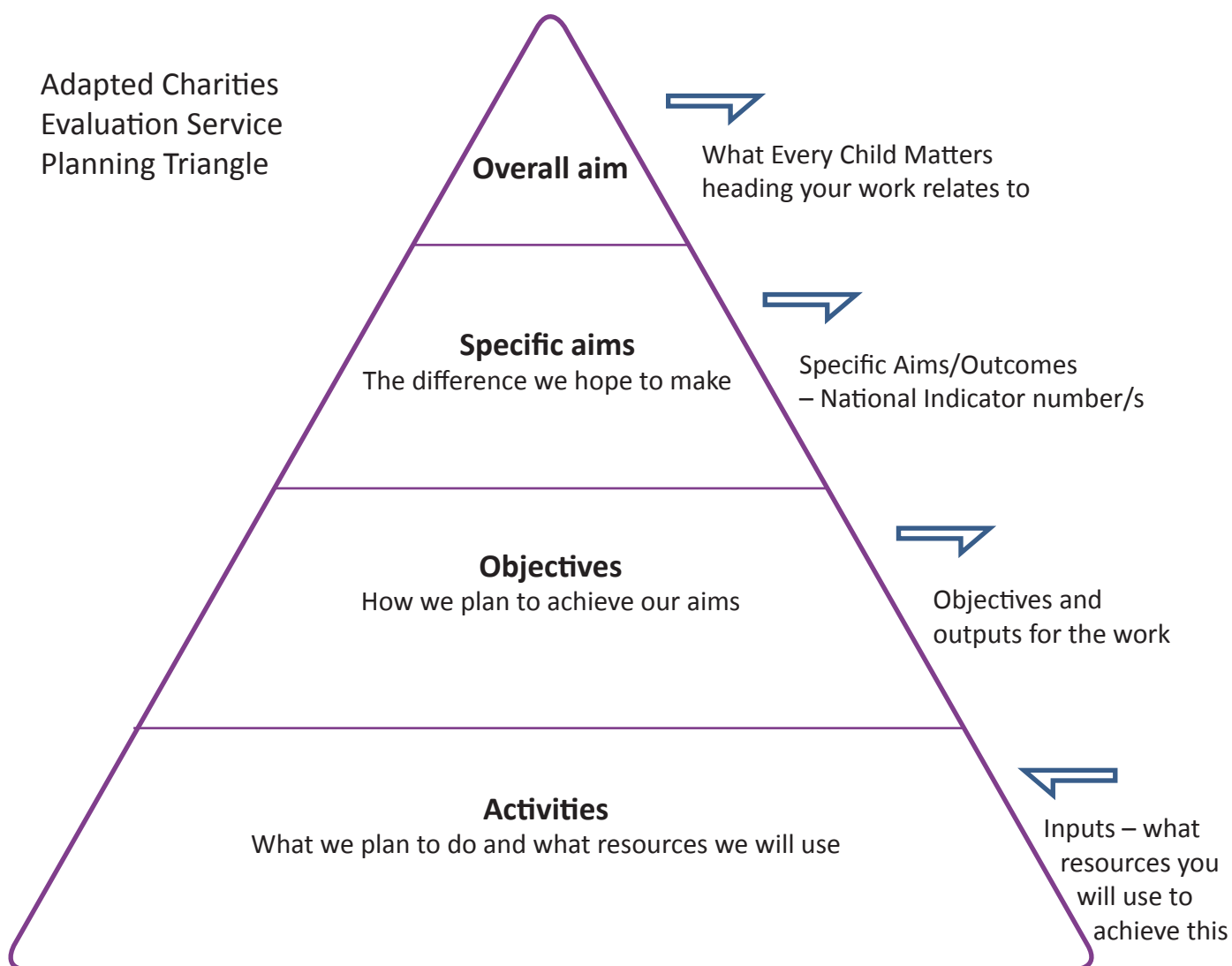
- improve their understanding of their costs and submit high-quality, fully costed bids for service delivery contracts that address commissioners' service objectives;
- evaluate their own value for money and use that evaluation to make the case for service delivery through the VCS to local public bodies; and
- work closely with local public bodies, regulatory organisations and improvement agencies to develop consensus on measuring value for money.

How to map your outcomes in line with the indicators

A first step is to ensure that your services are aligned with the new LAA framework.

- Establish what the priorities are in your local area agreement in relation to the service that you provide, and what targets your work could be contributing towards.

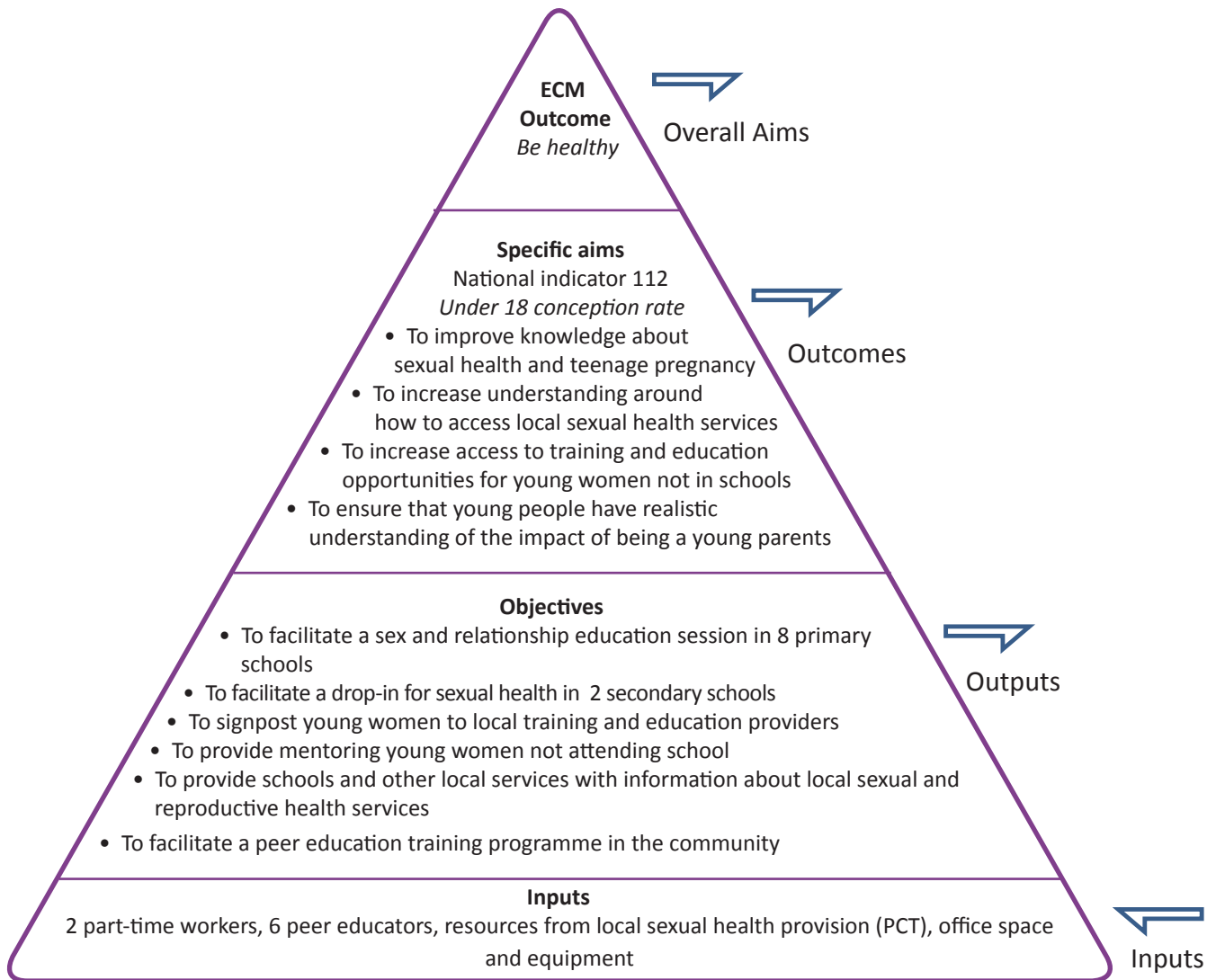
Charities Evaluation Service has developed a well-tested, simple, but effective way of presenting aims, objectives, activities and outcomes. The diagram below has been adapted from this tool as a suggested format for planning your services in relation to the new national indicator set. Appendix three has a template of this for you to use in your work.



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Case Study

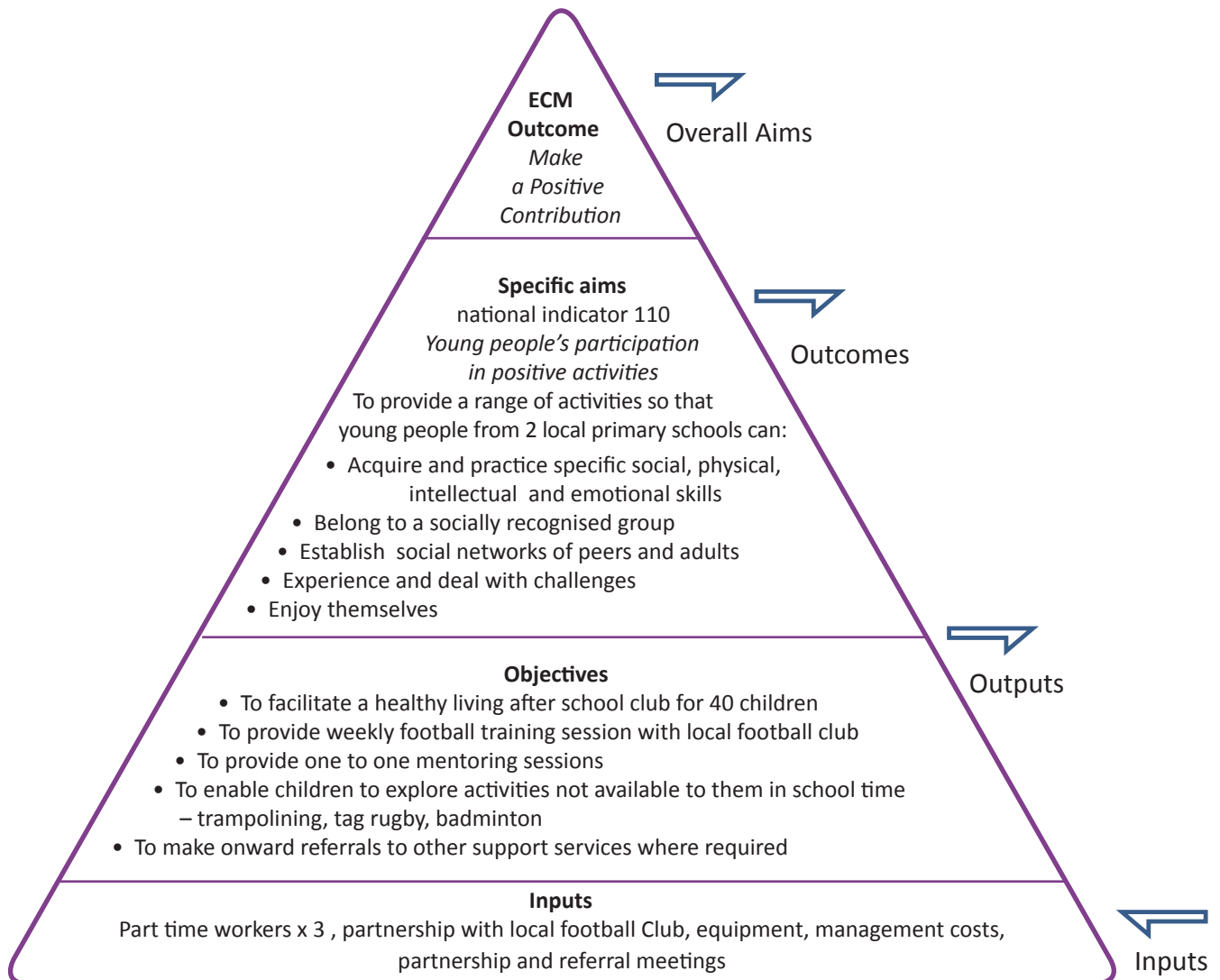
Teenage Pregnancy Outreach project in primary and secondary schools
(Adapted CES Planning Triangle)



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Case Study

Voluntary Sector youth project based in a community centre
(Adapted CES Planning Triangle)



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Finally, a key to success will be the willingness and skills to work in new partnerships. Successful working partnerships will lead to an improvement in the quality of provision and a diversity of opportunities for children, young people and parents.

Appendix one - National indicators for children and young people
(16 mandatory indicators in bold)

Outcome - Be Healthy	
NI 50	Emotional health of children
NI 51	Effectiveness of child and adolescent mental health (CAMHS) services
NI 52	Take up of school lunches
NI 53	Prevalence of breastfeeding at 6 – 8 weeks from birth
NI 54	Services for disabled children
NI 55	Obesity in primary school age children in Reception
NI 56	Obesity in primary school age children in Year 6
NI 58	Emotional and behavioural health of looked after children
Outcome - Stay Safe	
NI 59	Percentage of initial assessments for children’s social care carried out within 7 working days of referral
NI 60	Percentage of core assessments for children’s social care that were carried out within 35 working days of their commencement
NI 61	Timeliness of placements of looked after children for adoption following an agency decision that the child should be placed for adoption
NI 62	Stability of placements of looked after children: number of placements
NI 63	Stability of placements of looked after children: length of placement
NI 64	Child Protection Plans lasting 2 years or more
NI 65	Percentage of children becoming the subject of a Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time
NI 66	Looked after children cases which were reviewed within required timescales
NI 67	Percentage of child protection cases which were reviewed within required timescales
NI 68	Percentage of referrals to children’s social care going on to initial assessment
NI 69	Children who have experienced bullying
NI 70	Hospital admissions caused by unintentional and deliberate injuries to children and young people
Outcome - Enjoy and Achieve	
NI 72	Achievement of at least 78 points across the Early Years Foundation Stage with at least 6 in each of the scales in Personal Social and Emotional Development and Communication, Language and Literacy
NI 73	Achievement at level 4 or above in both English and Maths at Key Stage 2
NI 74	Achievement at level 5 or above in both English and Maths at Key Stage 3
NI 75	Achievement of 5 or more A*-C grades at GCSE or equivalent including English and Maths
NI 76	Reduction in number of schools where fewer than 65% of pupils achieve level 4 or above in both English and Maths at KS2
NI 77	Reduction in number of schools where fewer than 50% of pupils achieve level 5 or above in both English and Maths at KS3
NI 78	Reduction in number of schools where fewer than 30% of pupils achieve 5 or more A*-C grades at GCSE and equivalent including GCSEs in English and Maths
NI 79	Achievement of a Level 2 qualification by the age of 19
NI 80	Achievement of a Level 3 qualification by the age of 19

NI 81	Inequality gap in the achievement of a Level 3 qualification by the age of 19
NI 82	Inequality gap in the achievement of a Level 2 qualification by the age of 19
NI 83	Achievement at level 5 or above in Science at Key Stage 3
NI 84	Achievement of 2 or more A*-C grades in Science GCSEs or equivalent
NI 85	Post-16 participation in physical sciences (A Level Physics, Chemistry and Maths)
NI 86	Secondary schools judged as having good or outstanding standards of behaviour
NI 87	Secondary school persistent absence rate
NI 88	Percentage of schools providing access to extended services
NI 89	Reduction in number of schools judged as requiring special measures and improvement in time taken to come out of the category
NI 90	Take up of 14-19 learning diplomas
NI 91	Participation of 17 year-olds in education or training
NI 92	Narrowing the gap between the lowest achieving 20% in the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile and the rest
NI 93	Progression by 2 levels in English between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2
NI 94	Progression by 2 levels in Maths between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2
NI 95	Progression by 2 levels in English between Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3
NI 96	Progression by 2 levels in Maths between Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3
NI 97	Progression by 2 levels in English between Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4
NI 98	Progression by 2 levels in Maths between Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4
NI 99	Looked after children reaching level 4 in English at Key Stage 2
NI 100	Looked after children reaching level 4 in Maths at Key Stage 2
NI 101	Looked after children achieving 5 A*-C GCSEs (or equivalent) at Key Stage 4 (including English and Maths)
NI 102	Achievement gap between pupils eligible for free school meals and their peers achieving the expected level at Key Stages 2 and 4
NI 103	Special Educational Needs – statements issued within 26 weeks
NI 104	The Special Educational Needs (SEN)/non-SEN gap – achieving Key Stage 2 English and Maths threshold
NI 105	The Special Educational Needs (SEN)/non-SEN gap – achieving 5 A*-C GCSEs including English and Maths
NI 106	Young people from low income backgrounds progressing to higher education
NI 107	Key Stage 2 attainment for Black and minority ethnic groups
NI 108	Key Stage 4 attainment for Black and minority ethnic groups
NI 109	Delivery of Sure Start Children’s Centres
NI 199	Children and young people’s satisfaction with parks and play areas
Outcome - Make a positive contribution	
NI 110	Young people’s participation in positive activities
NI 111	First time entrants to the Youth Justice System aged 10–17
NI 112	Under 18 conception rate
NI 113	Prevalence of Chlamydia in under 25 year olds
NI 114	Rate of permanent exclusions from school
NI 115	Substance misuse by young people
Outcome - Economic Wellbeing	
NI 116	Proportion of children in poverty
NI 117	16 to 18 year olds who are not in education, employment or training (NEET)

Appendix two - Where can I get further information?

Local Government and Communities – LAA borough results

www.localpriorities.communities.gov.uk/LAAResults.aspx

Local Government and Communities – national indicators set

www.communities.gov.uk/publications/localgovernment/finalnationalindicators

Hearts and Minds, Audit Commission Report

www.audit-commission.gov.uk/reports/NATIONAL-REPORT.asp?CategoryID=&ProdID=418C38AF-0D97-49

Improving Service Delivery – Introducing Outcomes-Based Accountability

www.idea.gov.uk/idk/aio/5573454

Costs and Outcomes Every Child Matters and IDeA

www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/costsandoutcomes

Your Project and its Outcomes, Charities Evaluation Service

www.ces-vol.org.uk/downloads/yourprojectanditsoutcomes-139-146.pdf

Bulletins and Downloads

www.thirdsector.co.uk

www.cypnow.co.uk/?DCMP=EMC-DailyBulletin

Under the Radar, Small Change? – reports on the impact of commissioning on small organisations

<http://www.childrenengland.org.uk/upload/Under%20the%20radar.pdf>

<http://www.childrenengland.org.uk/upload/small%20change%20smallfilesize.pdf>

National programme for third sector commissioning

www.idea.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pageId=6583598

Regular LAA e-bulletins from London Voluntary Service Council

www.lvsc.org.uk/Templates/information.asp?NodeID=97907&i1PNID=90619&i2PNID=90623

DCSF – The Children’s Plan

www.dcsf.gov.uk/publications/childrensplan/downloads/The_Childrens_Plan.pdf

DCSF outcomes framework

www.dfes.gov.uk/publications/childrensplan/downloads/ECM%20outcomes%20framework.pdf

www.dfes.gov.uk/publications/childrensplan/downloads/Children's%20Plan%20timeline.pdf

www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/_files/3A95EBE85623F35FDF726998E7DB78A5.pdf

London Voluntary Service Council, An Introduction to Local Area Agreements and the National Indicator Set, June 2008

Appendix three - Adapted Charities Evaluation Service Planning Triangle

Adapted Charities
Evaluation Service
Planning Triangle

