

Local Government and Communities Committee

Consultation of the Scottish Parliament on the Scottish Government's Revised National Outcomes

Submission from the Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG) in Scotland

CPAG in Scotland works to raise awareness of the devastating impact poverty has on children in Scotland and campaigns for positive policy changes to end that poverty. Almost one in four (230,000) of Scotland's children are officially recognised as living in poverty. In the absence of significant policy change, this figure is likely to rise in the coming years with independent modelling by the Institute for Fiscal studies (IFS) forecasting that more than a third of children in the UK will be living in poverty by 2021/22.

1. CPAG in Scotland welcome the opportunity to respond to the committee's inquiry on the Scottish Government's revised national outcomes. We are very pleased to see the need to address poverty being highlighted in the outcomes, the fourth of which states that,

"We tackle poverty by sharing opportunities, wealth and power more equally"

CPAG in Scotland, however, believe the outcome should be clearer and more ambitious and should instead state that,

*"We **end** poverty by sharing opportunities, wealth and power more equally"*

2. The main reasons for such a change being required are as follows:
 - If national outcomes are intended to present a "vision" of Scotland's future they should be aspirational, going beyond what has already been prescribed in legislation and government policy. As the committee is no doubt aware the Scottish Government already has a legal duty (contained within Child Poverty (Scotland) Act) toward eradicating child poverty in Scotland by 2030. The national outcomes should in no way be seen as a 'step back' from this historic commitment and should instead seek to strengthen it by highlighting the wider aspiration to end poverty for all of Scotland's people.
 - The Scottish Ministers' report highlights the government's intention to align the outcomes with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Goal One of the SDGs is to '*End poverty in all its forms, everywhere*'. If the national outcomes are to be truly aligned they should adopt the strength and clarity of the language used in the SDGs.
 - "Tackling poverty" is not an outcome. Rather it is a process intended to achieve the goal of eradicating poverty for good. The Scottish Ministers' report on the outcomes states that "*Participants told us that they wanted the language of the national outcomes to be simple and more accessible*". In the interests of clarity the outcome should state the eventual aim rather than the method of achieving it.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you require any further information.

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ⁱResolution adopted by the General Assembly on 25 September 2015, Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/70/1&Lang=E