



ROCKET SCIENCE

STV Children's Appeal impact assessment

October 2022



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Executive summary

In 2022, Rocket Science was commissioned by STV Children's Appeal to conduct an independent impact assessment of its work since inception. The Appeal has run from 2011, with the aim of having a positive impact on child poverty in Scotland, while also shining a light on its prevalence and impact.

The research aims of the work were:

- Understand how organisations viewed their experience of working with STV Children's Appeal as a funder, including any organisational impact this had
- Evidence the impact that the funded projects had on child poverty, including any impacts on families, their communities, and any wider impacts
- Understand the impact that the TV programming has had on the public's awareness of child poverty in Scotland

For the report, 18 interviews were conducted with personnel from organisations whose projects received funding from STV Children's Appeal. This was also supplemented by qualitative and quantitative desk research which examined STV Children's Appeal Mid and Annual Reports, Governance Profiles, ScotPulse data, and other relevant documents.

Findings

From 2011-2021, STV Children's Appeal has awarded £23 million to over 2,000 projects that address several aspects of child poverty including employability, mental health, education, material need, and community capacity building. The projects operated across all 32 Local Authorities and impacted 127,070 children. The 49 hours of STV Children's Appeal programming over the past 10 years was estimated to reach 2.5 million Scots, reaching an average of 900,000 Scots per year.¹

The impact that the projects and TV programming have had on Scottish communities is wide-reaching. The holistic approach taken by STV Children's Appeal and the funded organisations to address child poverty is reflected in the impacts being felt by children, their families, and their communities.

¹ BARB 2011-2022, individuals reach = 3+ continuous min, includes repeats.




Impact on Scottish communities

- Projects influenced national and local policy across Scotland by conducting consultations with the Scottish Government, participating in Parliamentary sessions, and using project learning to inform local policy
- The TV programming has raised public awareness of child poverty and is appreciated by organisations who were featured, as it brings welcome publicity and attention to their projects
- Organisations reported they have a better, and deeper understanding of their communities and the longer-term impacts of their work. This was especially crucial to ensure efficient allocation of resources during the Covid-19 pandemic
- Organisations reported that they were better able to understand and respond holistically to child poverty by tackling it through a 'systems change' approach. This led to whole-family support, which enhanced familial relationships and encouraged families to become more active within their local communities
- STV Children's Appeal's willingness to let organisations test new ideas supported them to develop 'out of the box' solutions and initiate the development of unique and innovative projects for family wellbeing
- STV Children's Appeal willingness to fund existing activities, to help increase the scale of delivery, was valued by the organisations

Impact on funded organisations

- Organisations enjoyed STV Children's Appeal flexible approach to funding, as it allowed them to be creative and innovate approaches that address pertinent needs of the community
- STV Children's Appeal commitment to long term grants has assisted in alleviating the impact of poverty and supported to mitigate issues at the intersectionality of poverty and homelessness. The constant support to organisations enabled them to design multifaceted programmes and undertake work in some of the most deprived areas of Scotland
- The open communication channels right from the inception of the funding application till the fruition of the project, assisted organisations to learn, and adapt to changes during their projects
- The partnership approach taken created a change in the way organisations provided support to communities by enabling organisations to pool resources with each other to tackle child poverty and support families to be self-sustainable

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- Organisations were able to become more efficient due to automating processes and improving volunteer infrastructure

Case studies

Two case studies were used as an opportunity to understand the impact of the STV Children's Appeal in more detail. The findings of these are summarised below.

Case study: Aberlour, Edge of Care

Aberlour entered a partnership with the Highland Council to pioneer change in social care services and reduce the current expenditure on social care. They worked with children, who were at risk of entering care, and their families to prevent children from being taken into care through local authority intervention. In 2016 and 2017, they were granted around £150,000 for their project by the STV Children's Appeal. These funds were used for used to support 17 families. In the first year of the project, it reported a 79% (n=14) success rate of keeping young people with their families.

In terms of the economic impact, it was estimated that for every £1 spent on the Edge of Care project in 2017, the Council saved £8.50. In total, it was estimated to have saved the Highland Council almost £1.3 million by 2017. By 2019, this it was estimated to reach between £1.6 and £3 million.

Additionally, the success of this programme in the Highlands, has led to other local authorities adopting this model. In 2018, the service was started in Perth and Kinross after Aberlour won a £1.1 million contract and it has also been commissioned by the Scottish Borders Council. The funding from STV Children's Appeal helped leverage funding from these two local authorities, which in 2018, was predicted to amount to over £1.4 million.



Case study: Who Cares? Scotland, Communities that Care

The Communities that Care project was funded by STV Children's Appeal in 2016 for five years and is based in Renfrewshire. The project aims to transform how care experienced young people are treated and understood, and to create a 'care aware' community.

The project runs sessions in schools to educate teacher, professionals, and other pupils on what care is, so that care experienced young people feel more understood and supported. Communities that Care also runs activities, such as open mic and craft nights, for care experienced young people so that they can connect with their peers.

The project has had several far-reaching impacts on both care experienced people, communities' understanding of care, as well as national and local policy. Stakeholders had very positive views of the programme, 77% of stakeholders believed that the project was 'very successful' in increasing communities' understanding and attitudes towards care experienced people. Through their awareness raising programmes in schools, among pupils surveyed, there was a 70 percentage-point increase in the average knowledge and understanding of questions related to care experience.

The project has also had several impacts on local and national policy in Scotland. The programme worked with the Scottish Government to develop a plan for the 2017 Care Review. By 2018, they had engaged with 16 local Councillors and developed an e-learning module on Corporate Parenting through a partnership with the Renfrewshire Council. Young people involved in the project were also able to help train members of the Children's Hearing and questioned the First Minister during the Care Day Question Time.



Introduction

One in four children in Scotland live in poverty.² It is within this context that the STV Children's Appeal was initiated in 2011. Its aim is to bring attention to, and positively impact child poverty in Scotland, by supporting innovative work that helps inform policy and practice. STV Children's Appeal has awarded funds to organisations (categorised as either large or small investments), distributed funds on behalf of the Scottish Government, broadcast TV programming to fundraise and increase awareness about child poverty and fundraises through events. STV Children's Appeal takes a proactive approach to their grant making, actively seeking out opportunities and areas of need that reflect the current context. This venture philanthropy approach encourages innovation in addressing child poverty and uses the knowledge gained to inform future investment priorities.

In 2022, Rocket Science UK Ltd, an independent research and consultancy organisation, was commissioned by STV Children's Appeal to assess its impact over time. This report examines the both the impact of the funded projects and the TV programming on Scottish communities from 2011-2021. The research also evaluates the funding approach of STV Children's Appeal, by considering the views and experiences of the organisations that were granted awards.

The rest of the report is structured as follows:

- **Chapter 2- Methodology** – Outlines the aims and methodology that was used to gather data for the report
- **Chapter 3- Findings** – This chapter details the findings from both the desk research and interviews, exploring the impact of the Children's Appeal on Scottish children, their communities, and the organisations that support them

² Scottish Government. (2022). Child Poverty Summary. [Link](#)



Methodology

This chapter outlines the aims, framework and methodology followed by Rocket Science for this work.

Research aims

The work sought to understand the impact of the larger investments made by STV Children's Appeal on the policy landscape and identify what all investments made by STV Children's Appeal have enabled organisations to achieve for children and families living in poverty in Scotland. Further, the work focused on gathering the organisation's views on STV Children's Appeal as a funder to understand the relationship between the beneficiary organisation and STV Children's Appeal, the impact made and identify the potential cost benefit savings on two specific case study investments.

Research framework

We identified four main themes within this process and impact review:

- STV Children's Appeal funding approach
- The work of the funded organisations
- The impact of STV Children's Appeal funding approach
- The impact of the projects on the intended target audience

The framework outlined in the table below describes the research themes and the set of questions associated with each theme guiding our work. The final column outlines the methodology that we used for gathering the relevant data.



Theme	Review questions	Source of information
STV Children's Appeal funding reach	What is the duration & amount of funding received by organisations and to what extent did organisations supplement it with funding from other sources?	Desk research
	What was the geographical spread of the funding?	Stakeholder interviews & desk research
	What activities were funded?	Stakeholder interviews & desk research
	Which groups did the funding aim to support?	Stakeholder interviews & desk research
	What were the aims of the funded projects? (large projects) What were you wanting to achieve with the funding? (small projects)	Stakeholder interviews & desk research
Impact of STV Children's Appeal funding approach for partner organisations	What were the strengths and challenges associated with working with STV Children's Appeal as a funder? What did organisations find helpful/less helpful in the funding approach of STV Children's Appeal?	Stakeholder interviews
	How does the experience working with STV Children's Appeal differ from the experience of other funders?	Stakeholder interviews
	To what extent is the STV Children's Appeal funding sufficiently flexible to meet the needs of the funded organisations?	Stakeholder interviews
	What is the distinct added value of STV Children's Appeal funding approach?	Stakeholder interviews
	How likely would they be to recommend working with the STV Children's Appeal?	Stakeholder interviews
	Impact that working with STV Children's Appeal had on the funded organisation's operations more broadly? (large projects only)	Stakeholder interviews
Impact of STV Children's Appeal funding on Scottish communities	How many people within Scottish communities were the STV Children's Appeal funded projects able to reach and across which geographical areas? To what extent were they able to reach underrepresented groups?	Desk research
	What impact have the projects had on communities/families?	Stakeholder interviews & desk research
	What have been the outcomes related to child poverty? (as defined by the Scottish Government's Child Poverty Strategy)	Stakeholder interviews & desk research
	Where there any other wider impacts from the funded projects?	Stakeholder interviews & desk research



Theme	Review questions	Source of information
Impact of STV Children's Appeal programming	How many hours of programming did the STV Children's Appeal show?	Desk research
	What was the reach of the STV Children's Appeal programming?	Desk research
	What was the impact of the STV Children's Appeal programming – e.g. on public perceptions of poverty	Desk research

Research methodology

Our methodology comprised of desk research and stakeholder engagements.



Desk research

- Mid-year and annual reports STV Children's Appeal reports
- Reports from larger funded project
- Governance profiles
- Scot pulse data




Stakeholder engagement

- Interviews with large and small organisations

Through these two approaches, we gathered data from five major contact points which collectively informed the process.

1. Mid-year and annual reports STV Children's Appeal reports – through this we acquired data on number of organisations funded, the reach intervention and impact on communities, location of the funding and the quantum of funding leveraged
2. Reports from the larger funded projects
3. Governance profiles providing a background on the funded organisation, funding amount, geography, income, and expenditure

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4. Scot pulse data issues following STV Children's Appeal programming to track the public perceptions of child poverty
 5. Qualitative interviews with 18 organisations that received funding from the Children's Appeal

As a part of the qualitative interviews, we spoke to organisations with a mix of smaller and larger projects funded by the STV Children's Appeal. Through the engagement with the stakeholders, we aimed to find out the following:

- Impact that organisations were able to achieve through STV Children's Appeal funding for Scottish communities
- Impact on small and large projects due to STV Children's Appeal Children's Appeal co-production and flexible approach to funding and compare it with their experience of other funders
- Extent to which they would recommend working with the Children's Appeal to others
- Value addition to impact achieved because of the partnership with STV Children's Appeal



Findings

This chapter will outline the findings from the desk research and the stakeholder interviews.

What did the STV Children's Appeal fund?

STV Children's Appeal has invested £23 million from 2011-2021, with the aim of positively impacting on child poverty and drawing public attention to its prevalence in Scotland. They have made over 2,000 awards to organisations across Scotland, who's projects were directed at preventing and alleviating childhood poverty. These projects worked with over 50,000 families and over 127,000 young people.

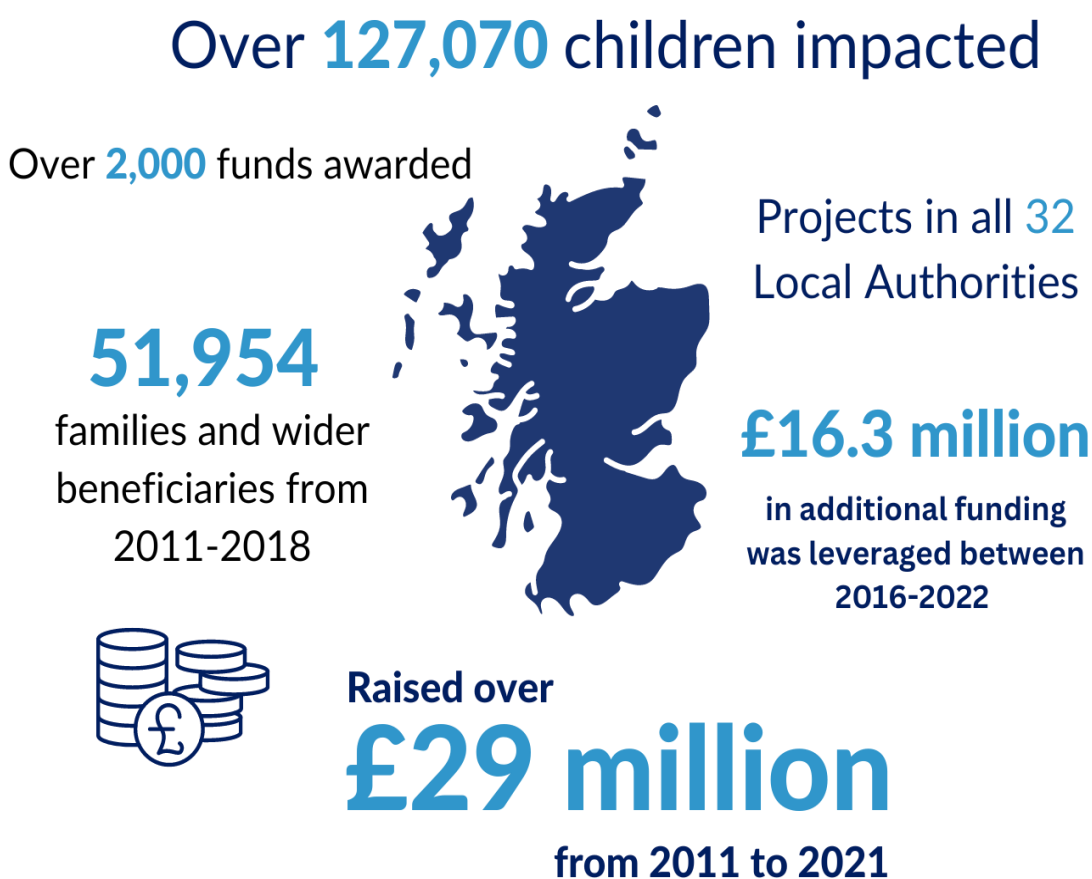


Figure 1- STV Children's Appeal in numbers

Over the 10 years of the Children's Appeal, the priority of the funding has been to tackle child poverty. However, the dynamic and flexible approach of the funding has meant that the aims and target populations of the projects has addressed a range of factors that contribute to childhood poverty and



The funded projects worked in both rural and urban communities across Scotland. With projects operating in all 32 Local Authorities every year. Figure 2 uses data on STV Children's Appeal small project funding in 2021 as an example to show distribution of funding across Local Authority area for that year. In 2021, Glasgow City received the most amount of funding (19%), followed by Edinburgh (10%). The distribution of these funds largely followed the Local Authorities proportional need, as determined by the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD).

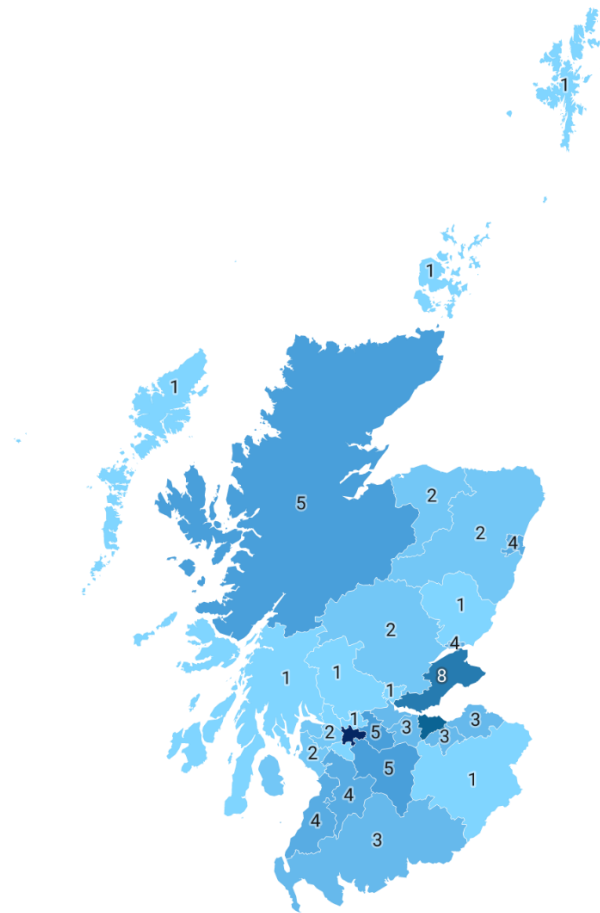


Figure 2- Percentage of STV Children's Appeal Funds Received by Local Authority - 2021 Small Projects

The funded projects worked not only with children, but also parents, teachers, professionals, youth workers, and wider communities. Projects also targeted especially vulnerable groups such as those with care experience, lone parents, rough sleepers, unemployed, those with additional needs or disabilities, and low-income households.



Reflecting the diversity of target groups and the holistic way in which the funded organisations address child poverty, the projects organised and facilitated wide array of activities including:

- **Provision of material goods and financial support:** food, clothing, fuel top ups, vouchers, baby items, books, sporting equipment, Christmas presents, and other essential goods
- **Mentoring and counselling activities:** peer mentoring programmes, 1:1 counselling and therapeutic sessions, job-testing sessions, tutoring programmes, addiction support
- **Support and advice activities:** family support work, expert advice sessions, parent support groups, emotional support, childcare provision, advocacy support, before and after school clubs
- **Leisure and creative activities:** Singing, dance, theatre, sporting activities, access to hobbies, street parties, cookery classes, outdoor residential holidays, extracurricular activities, community groups, community meals, youth groups
- **Training and awareness:** professional training, awareness training, capacity building and upskilling, public awareness campaigns, community partnership development

STV Children's Appeal programming

As a major media organisation, STV helps the Appeal raise awareness and vital funds each year through dedicated Appeal programming. Traditionally this involves a telefundraiser hosted by TV presenter and Trustee Lorraine Kelly which showcases a combination of fundraising “heroes”, corporate support, and a mix of real-life stories of families affected by poverty.

There is also an annual documentary and previous years these have addressed issues such as homelessness, ACES, in work poverty, and young carers.

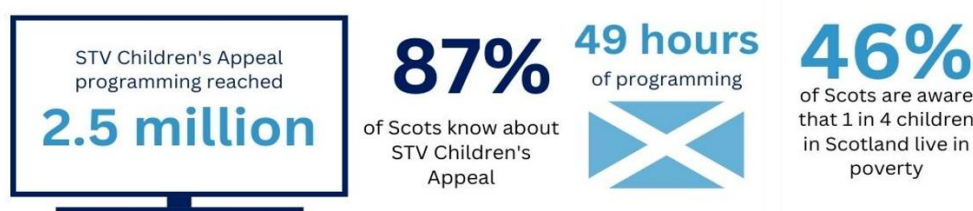


Figure 3- STV TV programming in numbers

In total, the 49 hours of STV Children's Appeal programming over the past 10 years was estimated to reach 2.5 million Scots, reaching an average audience of 900,000 Scots per year³. According to a

³ BARB 2011-2022, individuals, reach = 3+ continuous min, includes repeats.



ScotPulse survey that ran after the 2021 programme, 87% of Scots knew about the STV Children's Appeal. As a major media organisation, STV Children's Appeal aimed to increase the awareness of the Scottish public about the prevalence child poverty in Scotland. The same ScotPulse survey found that 46% of Scots were aware that 1 in 4 children in Scotland live in poverty. For context, in 2011 this figure was 15%. Since 2018 it has stayed consistently between 45-50%. This shows an increase in the awareness of Scots on how many children live in poverty.

"STV Children's Appeal as a media organisation, has helped us put our real story out there. It is a valued additional feature."

In addition to the impact on public perception of child poverty, several funded organisations mentioned that the programming had an impact on their organisation and project. For example, some organisations believed that being featured on the programming helped give credibility and attention to their project, as well as increased awareness of the problems they address. Additionally, it impacted the organisations, as it was recognised how these programming events were also a good networking event for funded organisations and how this facilitated building connections and knowledge sharing. This unique position of STV Children's Appeal as a media organisation can help give the work of the funded organisation the needed publicity and awareness from the wider public.



Detailed case studies

Two projects, Aberlour's Edge of Care and Who Cares? Scotland's Communities that Care project, will be used as case studies to further explore their services. These case studies will describe the project aims, activities, and their impact on Scottish communities.

Case study one: Aberlour, Edge of Care

Project

Aberlour has been operating for more than 145 years in Scotland and works with vulnerable children and their families. Aberlour entered a partnership with the Highland Council to pioneer change in social care services and reduce the current expenditure on social care through developing an 'edge of care' service that aims to keep children with their families. The Edge of Care project works with children, who are at risk of entering care, and their families to prevent children from being taken into care through local authority intervention. They offer personalised and more intensive support than statutory services, such as by offering support on evenings, weekends, and offering multiple sessions per week in an effort to strengthen the relationships within families and develop links with the local community. They also help tackle problems such as substance abuse, domestic abuse, and wellbeing.

In 2016 and 2017, they were granted around £150,000 for their project by the STV Children's Appeal. These funds were used for used to support 17 families. The project was able to effectively build links in the local communities through working closely with local partners like schools and social workers.

Impact

The innovative approach taken by the programme proved successful. In the first year of the project, it reported a 79% (n=14) success rate of keeping young people with their families. In later years, an independent evaluation found that it had an 85% success rate. Edge of Care also had a wider impact beyond the children they supported, by working with siblings and parents. Several families reported how the project resulted in improved finances, familial relationships, and improved relationships with other organisations that the family worked with.

In terms of the economic impact, the project aims to reduce social care expenditures of local authorities on social care. In 2017, it was estimated that for every £1 spent on the Edge of Care



project, the Council saved £8.50. In total, it was estimated to have saved the Highland Council almost £1.3 million by 2017. By 2019, this it was estimated to reach between £1.6 and £3 million.

Additionally, the learning that came from this programme was an important result. The project highlights how, that with a person-centred approach, children can be supported within their families and prevented from entering local authority care. The success of this programme in the Highlands, has led to other local authorities adopting this model. In 2018, the service was started in Perth and Kinross after Aberlour won a £1.1 million contract and it has also been commissioned by the Scottish Borders Council. The funding from STV Children's Appeal helped leverage funding from these two local authorities, which in 2018, was predicted to amount to over £1.4 million.

Case study two: Who Cares? Scotland – Communities that Care

Project

Who Cares? Scotland is a primarily advocacy organisation that works with and for care experienced individuals. The Communities that Care project was funded by STV Children's Appeal in 2016 for five years and is based in Renfrewshire. The project aims to transform how care experienced young people are treated and understood, and to create a 'care aware' community.

The project runs sessions in schools to educate teacher, professionals, and other pupils on what care is, so that care experienced young people feel more understood and supported. Communities that Care also runs activities, such as open mic and craft nights, for care experienced young people so that they can connect with their peers.

In its first year, the project trained 500 Children's Panel members and 90 police officers. By 2020, the project worked in 8 schools, reached over 6,100 pupils, trained 87 teachers, organised 59 drop-in sessions, and engaged almost 10,000 young people with their 'care aware' sessions.

Impact

The project has had several far-reaching impacts on both care experienced people, communities' understanding of care, as well as national and local policy. Stakeholders had very positive views of the programme, with 85% of stakeholders wanting the project to continue after the funding period and 77% of stakeholders believed that the project was 'very successful' in increasing communities' understanding and attitudes towards care experienced people.



Through their work in schools, over 80 care experienced pupils have joined Who Cares? Scotland. Through their awareness raising programmes in schools, among pupils surveyed, there was a 70 percentage-point increase in the average knowledge and understanding of questions related to care experience. This shows a growing knowledge of care and the experiences of care experienced individuals, aligning with the objectives of the project.

*"I feel that Renfrewshire is somewhere that Care Experienced people can flourish and I think that is due to the amazing work the Renfrewshire Who Cares? Scotland team do."*⁴

The evaluation also found that, through STV Children's Appeal funding, they have been able to build a strong volunteering infrastructure. They have also been able to leverage additional funding from the Lottery Fund, to help scale the project to the national level.

Care experienced young people face several disadvantages in terms of education, housing, and employment. Improving the life outcomes of care experienced young people can have widespread economic impacts. The figures below outline some of the potential benefits:

- Nearly 40% of care leavers are not in education, employment, or training, compared to only 13% of similar aged young people.⁵ The cost of being NEET between 16-18 is estimated to be £56,000 in public finance costs and over £100,000 in resource costs over the person's lifetime.⁶
- In 2015, it was estimated that having an unstable and unsupported care experience will incur £22,415 in additional costs per year compared to a young person who is supported in care.⁷
- 77% of looked-after young people claim out of work benefits as their main activity in the eight years after secondary school.⁸

⁴ Who Cares? Scotland. (2021). Stakeholder Evaluation Survey Report. [Link](#)

⁵ Department for Education. (2019). Vital Support for Young People Leaving Care. [Link](#)

⁶ Worcestershire County Council. (2017). NEET Reduction and Prevention Strategy 2017-2021. [Link](#)

⁷ Social Market Foundation. (2018). Looked-after Children: The Silent Crisis. [Link](#)

⁸ Children's Social Care. (2022). The Care Experience. [Link](#)



- 26% of the homeless population is care experienced and homelessness services for a group of 30 is estimated to be £1.2 million over two years.⁹⁵
- The rate of school exclusions among looked-after children is seven times higher than children not in care during the year.¹⁰ It is estimated that over the course of a lifetime, the cost of exclusion is £370,000.¹¹

The project has also had several impacts on local and national policy in Scotland. The programme worked with the Scottish Government to develop a plan for the 2017 Care Review. By 2018, they had engaged with 16 local Councillors and developed an e-learning module on Corporate Parenting through a partnership with the Renfrewshire Council. Young people involved in the project were also able to help train members of the Children's Hearing and questioned the First Minister during the Care Day Question Time.

⁹ Children's Social Care. (2022). The Care Experience. [Link](#)

¹⁰ Who Cares? Scotland. Statistics. [Link](#)

¹¹ Institute for Public Policy Research. (2017). Making the Difference. [Link](#)



Impact on Scottish communities

The impact the projects have had on Scottish communities is wide-reaching. The holistic approach taken by STV Children's Appeal and the funded organisations to address child poverty is reflected in the impacts being felt by children, their families, and their communities.

Projects influence local and national policy across Scotland

The learning from funded projects has been used to try to influence and inform national and local policy in Scotland. For example:

- As part of Shelter's project Foundations First, findings from two research projects have been brought to local government. Participants from the Foundations First attended a Scottish Parliament session in relation to the Child Poverty Bill.
- The Aim Hi project from Achieve More Scotland has contributed to Government consultations surrounding the No One Left Behind policy.
- One-Parent Families in Scotland received attention from both local and Scottish Government on their Families House project and have been working with them to develop an exemplar service.
- The MCR Pathway's Mentoring Programme, has been rolled out across six local authorities, including Glasgow City Council, who has included the Mentoring Programme in its long-term core budget.

"Everyone is talking about tutoring now. It's now being used as an example of what can be done in education in Scotland."

Deeper understanding of care and hardships endured by communities in a state of deprivation

Organisations unanimously agree that they have better, and deeper understanding of communities and the longer-term impacts of their work undertaken, especially for young people. For instance, in one project, they found that focusing on the skill development of young people enables the creation of a virtuous cycle. They're more likely to stay in school, get better employment prospects, and from the community side of it they develop a greater understanding or care within community which leads to a more empathetic police force that aims to have a dialogue with young people rather than arresting them.

In a similar vein, a better understanding of the communities, especially during the adverse time of the pandemic, helped organisations to devote their resources in a much more efficient way. Organisations



could identify communities which struggled to connect due to lack of resources and through STV Children's Appeal funding they were able to provide Wi-Fi devices, and the required digital training for families to be connected during the COVID period. Through this, organisations could bring people together and develop a sense of community, as well as provide their clients with family support. This family support included advice, advocacy and parenting support, housing money and debt advice, alongside some focus on volunteering opportunities and around involving people in community focused solutions.

"Our multifaceted programme that very much had our housing and homelessness expertise at its centre, sought to actually impact much more for the individuals that were involved."

Enabling systems change for a sustainable impact

Organisations reported that they were able to create new opportunities and connections between services for the families and communities in need. STV Children's Appeal funding enabled a culture of 'systems thinking' across a multitude of organisations. The systems thinking approach also helped them understand the different interconnected forces within communities, helping them to design tools and structures to strengthen their service delivery. Systems approach also facilitated understanding of the different kinds of issues that individuals and families experiencing poverty and homelessness were facing. This approach allowed organisations to weave interventions that supported the development of deeper connections within families, leading to enhanced relationships and encouraging families to become more active within their local community.

"We could design programmes with the component of diversity, inclusion, motivation, and time keeping enabling us to strengthen relationships between parents and children. If we didn't have the STV Children's Appeal or the STV Children's Appeal funding, the children we support would have nothing."

Developing out of the box solutions to help deprived families & communities

Organisations were supported to develop 'out of the box' solutions and were able to initiate the development of unique and innovative projects for family wellbeing. Core to this was STV Children's Appeal's emphasis on thinking through new ideas and willingness to let organisations test and learn through experience. For example, one of the partner organisations working around family health and well-being came up with a quite novel idea of providing outdoor spaces for families during weekends as these families were missing over the weekends as both parents were required to work due to the



financial duress on them. The principal focus of such projects was providing opportunities to connect with other families over weekends which in turn improved the mental health, emotional wellbeing, strengthening relationships between families, and connections within their community as well.

"There wasn't actually a lot of understanding or well-established evidence around the importance of the outdoors, the importance of fresh air and physical activities. So, it was actually quite a unique project for families that, that hadn't really been considered. So, thanks to having the opportunity in building the links with a partner like STV Children's Appeal that's allowed us to explore something that I think would've been, would've been quite a challenge and quite abstract concept from, from many other vendors."

Funding existing services that work

Organisations noted that they found it useful that STV Children's Appeal was willing to fund an existing activity that was working, to enable organisations to increase the scale of delivery. In particular, organisations felt that this helped scale their impact by rolling out existing services to new beneficiary groups. For example, for one programme, this additional funding helped them to sustain the existing programme and encouraged them to roll out more holistic programmes to strengthen financial inclusion for families including a new offer for ethnic minorities. Another example is an organisation which focussed on providing free soccer drop-in sessions for adults who came from different backgrounds such as homelessness, long-term unemployment, mental health issues, was able to develop a similar programme for young people especially for migrants through the funding received. The organisation found that the programme built a variety of skills such as communication, team working, team building, problem solving, time keeping and attendance in young people to impact their future positively. The funding support provided by STV Children's Appeal allowed organisations to integrate more services and raise their capacity to reach a wider range of people helping them to deliver the services efficiently and effectively.

"We could highlight many benefits of having the funding provided by STV Children's Appeal. The work that is carried out by our coaches and sessional workers, at times can be life-changing for our families in Aberdeen. Working on various life skills, such as communication, team working, team player, problem solving, time keeping and attendance. We also offer life awareness in teaching our 10-13-year-olds, about diversity, inclusion, healthy lifestyle, exercise, and motivation. We believe that these life skills and life awareness, will make a positive impact on a child's life from now and into the future."

"Children's Appeal challenges you to spend the money differently to get a different result."



Impact on organisations

This section outlines the thematic analysis of the impact the funding had on organisations, drawing on the desk research and field research. These findings relate only to organisations who were categorised by the Children's Appeal as a large project, as it was felt that the small project funding was too small to reasonably expect organisations to achieve widespread organisational change as a result.

STV Children's Appeal flexible and proactive approach makes it an attractive partner for organisations who are funded

Organisations liked STV Children's Appeal flexible approach to funding and thought that has allowed them to re-divert the funding to respond to urgent need, especially during the pandemic. Organisations associated with STV Children's Appeal have found that their ideas were shaped up better when they were put forward to the board. STV Children's Appeal's proactive approach made the process of funding feel quite organic, and organisations felt they were able to adapt and change the needs, to meet the definite needs of the groups that they were engaged. Several organisations also reported that because the approach of STV Children's Appeal was so flexible, they felt that STV Children's Appeal trusted them to identify the needs and priorities within their communities, which helped build their relationship with STV Children's Appeal.

As the funding requirements were flexible organisations were also able to adapt their programme through COVID-19. For instance, during the pandemic they delivered the programmes through distinct digital mediums like Zoom, Teams, and other avenues. Organisations appreciated STV Children's Appeal flexible approach with the Key Performing Indicators (KPI) as they were able to adapt to the KPIs with regards to their community-based projects.

"We together changed the terms of the agreement to make sure that actually the project could run to capacity for the full two year period and even though we were slightly out with the timeframes, they seemed to have a very approachable and flexible attitude to the grant."

"I think if you were to look at the original KPIs we dealt with and outcomes we were anticipating, versus what it looked like it in the year five, they were very, very different. And I would anticipate that with community-based projects, that would always happen, because the landscape because is changing right under your feet."



Easy reporting structures and quick turnaround on fund disbursements

Most partner organisations found the reporting structures to be straightforward and easy. The quick turnaround times and the degree of responsiveness from STV Children's Appeal helped to strengthen the partnership between organisations and STV Children's Appeal. Even from a financial perspective, partner organisations found that the reporting structures were not too onerous, and they appreciated the support provided by STV Children's Appeal at the start of the application process to get it right, leading to faster fund disbursements. The minimal turnaround time on payments helped organisation's cashflow and enabled them to procure resources and support families and children need during the adverse times of COVID-19. Partners found the reporting structures to be lucid, and transparent with the right questions on impact.

"We feel that the reporting structures were meaningful, and we are capturing the right areas of impact. STV Children's Appeal was interested, about on the ground impact rather than numbers."

Organisations seek STV Children's Appeal continued commitment and long-term support

Organisations found STV Children's Appeal continued commitment to large scale projects quite helpful. Large organisations have multiple projects which form a part of the organisation's fabric. During the pandemic such projects required augmented funding and the money offered by STV Children's Appeal helped many organisations to support marginalised families in Scotland. STV Children's Appeal commitment to long term grants has assisted in alleviating the impact of poverty and supported to mitigate issues at the intersectionality of poverty and homelessness. The constant support to organisations enabled them to design multifaceted programmes and undertake work in some of the most deprived areas of Scotland including the SIMD - 1 and 2.

"STV Children's Appeal gave £45,000 in 2021 as an urgent assistance fund, particularly for supporting rural communities. The urgent assistance fund is a direct cash grant to families that are usually living in poverty to basically meet their immediate needs. So, this is an ongoing funding programme through STV Children's Appeal, and it's completely oversubscribed by families."

Impetus to learning with a focus on input, impact and to influence change



STV Children's Appeal emphasis on learning with and from their funded organisations appears to be different than the experience organisations have had with other funders. Inviting organisations to meet with each other provided them with a platform to learn from, and support, each other. Partners find the drive to improve the funding culture to be a unique value-added proposition that set them apart from other funders. STV Children's Appeal inclination to brainstorm with their grantees and have open conversations around the most complex problems and challenges allowed organisations to think about their approaches and improve solutions to mitigate child poverty. Although organisations admit it could be a bit of a time-consuming process, they also reported that such approaches in the longer run strengthens trust and builds long-lasting relationships with the funder. The open communication channels right from the inception of the funding application till the fruition of the project, assisted organisations to learn, and adapt to changes during their projects. Regular interactions with STV Children's Appeal funding team and timely feedback have been meaningful and helped to strengthen the funder grantee relationship. STV Children's Appeal focused approach to encourage learning and acting as an enabler to big charities assisted in developing a partnership model to the funding. The partnership approach taken created a change in the way organisations provided support to communities by enabling organisations to pool resources with each other to tackle child poverty and support families to be self-sustainable.

"STV Children's Appeal wanted to bring the big charities together, to see how we could work together to have a bigger input, impact, and influence change. And so, a partnership developed out of that looking at a model of community systems change."

Cultural transformation in organisations helped to improve process efficiency

Funded organisations reported that they were able to change the culture of their organisation including automating processes and improving volunteer infrastructure – including some who are scaling their volunteer network nationally. Process automation including upgrading digital infrastructure helped organisations reach a wider audience and target areas of significant deprivation. Upon identifying areas of deprivation, they were able to target their volunteer force across those areas. Even in terms of areas, where organisations had minimal volunteer support or no volunteer presence, deprived families were able to reach out to organisations and charities due to improve digital infrastructure like automated telephone helplines.



"Our delivery models have evolved significantly since the point of application and the point of inception of foundations. At the core our understanding, is the best way to work with families, and what families are looking for, what approaches work, how we design and deliver interventions within four families that has been informed by this funded project."

Relationship based funding approach is a distinct feature of the STV Children's Appeal funding model

Organisations reported the relationship-based funding ideology has been a key factor in strengthening the quality of the services provided. Organisations felt that STV Children's Appeal listened to their ideas and helped provide unique solutions to challenging problems. **They felt that STV Children's Appeal added value to the conversations which is uncommon amongst funders.** Regular interactions with key people at STV Children's Appeal, and the feedback mechanism resulted in a meaningful funder and grantee relationship that informed their next steps. Grantees also felt that they were able to openly discuss the changes in their pilot or inception programmes due to STV Children's Appeal 'open door policy' and take corrective measures as and whenever required. Funded organisations also noted that STV Children's Appeal was generous in using their connections to introduce them to other delivery partners and other potential funding sources.

"It was heartening to know, that STV Children's Appeal as a funding organisation was interested in listening to us and weren't coming along with a package or telling us do things. It was a collaborative way to solve the problems through the funding and helping the affected people. And so that was very important that they had that level of kind of flexibility and willingness to engage in that kind of way."

Reduced funding over subsequent time

Although organisations were made aware at the outset of projects, organisations felt that the diminishing nature of the funding model over the funded project life span was a consistent issue for Third Sector. Because of the reduced funding over the years, partners were required to approach other funding sources either directly from the council or from other trusts.



Appendix 1

List of organisations interviewed

1. Shelter Scotland
2. Aberlour
3. Moray Schoolbank
4. Glasgow Children's Hospital Charity
5. Youth Scotland
6. CentreStage
7. Queen Margaret University
8. Abernecessities
9. Wick Youth Club
10. Heavy Sound
11. LIFT
12. Who Cares? Scotland
13. Place2Be
14. Save the Children
15. Children 1st
16. Street Soccer Scotland
17. Perth Kinross Association of Voluntary Service (PKVAS)
18. One Parent Families Scotland (OPFS)

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