THE NATURE AND EFFECTIVENESS OF MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF SOCIAL INCLUSION PROJECTS IN SCOTLAND: AN EXPLORATORY ANALYSIS

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of Napier University, Edinburgh for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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ABSTRACT

The research examined the experiences of professional workers engaged in the monitoring and evaluation of Scottish social inclusion projects, in order to address the research question *"To what extent do the existing systems of monitoring and evaluation in Scottish social inclusion initiatives recognise the particular nature of social inclusion?"* In-depth interviews were undertaken with 34 key players involved in the policy and practice of evaluation social inclusion projects. Interviewees included individuals involved in social inclusion projects at both project and programme level, funders and evaluators of social inclusion projects, and policy makers. The interviews were analysed using qualitative content analysis.

The research concluded that the respondents were very positive about social inclusion, with the key disadvantage of the term identified as its lack of meaning for the client groups with whom projects were working. Encouraging participation and empowering individuals and communities were seen as the key outcomes of social inclusion projects, with outcomes relating to poverty and tackling exclusion mentioned only by a small number of respondents.

Respondents found indicators such as resident satisfaction, fear of crime and confidence useful. Relationships were noted to be an important area that projects had an impact on, but none of the projects involved were actively measuring their impact in this area. Qualitative methods were noted by respondents to be useful in recognising individual experience, and have a key role to play in establishing the additionality of projects, but respondents perceived a lack of credibility of qualitative research amongst funding agencies and policy makers.

Respondents raised concerns regarding the views of individuals who did not, for whatever reason, participate in research, but noted the expense of methods that specifically targeted non-participants, and, on the other hand the dangers of survey fatigue.

The conclusions of the thesis were that although social inclusion is a well received term and both the policy makers and practitioners are working toward the same agenda, there are a number of areas where there is a need for further development in order to make the monitoring and evaluation of initiatives meaningful. The conclusions note that the current systems meet the needs of neither funding agencies nor projects well.

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1.1   Introduction

The focus of the research is on the monitoring and evaluation of social inclusion projects in Scotland. This chapter sets out the background to the research, and outlines the research question and objectives. It examines the rationale for the research, and summarises the research method used. The chapter details limitations to the scope and method of the research before moving on to outline the definitions used. The chapter concludes by explaining the structure of the thesis.

1.2   Background to the Research

Central and local government have been concerned with addressing poverty since at least the Middle Ages, and for centuries have debated the best method of providing relief to the poor (Midwinter, 1994). Attempts have been made to quantify the value of measures to relieve poverty to individuals and communities through the application of utilitarianist philosophy (Bentham, 1982) to public policy (Chadwick, 1965). The post-war years saw an expansion of state intervention to relieve poverty, with the development of the 'welfare state' in the United Kingdom (Beveridge, 1942) and an increased range of targeted anti-poverty initiatives undertaken by local government (Alcock and Craig, 1998), with the European Union also moving to address poverty.

The past twenty years has seen the public sector take an increasing interest in accounting for the public funding they receive. The impetus for this has come partly from central government initiatives such as Compulsory Competitive Tendering (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, 1999) and Best Value (Scottish Executive, 2001), and partly from an increased interest within the public sector in improving management practices (Smith,1995).

Over the same period local authorities have been faced with the issue of increasing disadvantage in the communities that they serve (Scottish Poverty Information Unit, 1995). This has presented a challenge for local authorities in dealing with areas of multiple deprivation, and has created a need for new approaches, both in tackling poverty and in ensuring that local authority services are targeted on those most in need.

In Scotland, government policy and practice and its evaluation has developed differently from the rest of the UK. Since devolution in 1999, responsibility for addressing poverty and exclusion has lain partly with the Westminster government, through the Social Security system, and partly through the Scottish Parliament through the development of initiatives such as lifelong learning and regeneration projects (Scottish Parliament, 2000). Scottish initiatives to address poverty and exclusion have been developed by the Scottish Executive, with the development of a Scottish Social Inclusion Network to advise on policy, with the main source of funding on social inclusion going to 47 Social Inclusion Partnerships across Scotland (Scottish Executive, 2001). Scotland also has its own distinctive geography; in addition to deprivation in its major cities, there is also a need to tackle rural poverty, with a large rural and island population.

This thesis analyses the application of public sector monitoring and evaluation techniques to social inclusion initiatives in Scotland. The thesis examines previous attempts to monitor and evaluate anti-poverty and social inclusion initiatives such as the New Life for Urban Scotland Initiatives (Cambridge Policy Consultants, 1999) and wider initiatives (Howarth *et al*, 1998). The thesis then examines current attempts to monitor and evaluate Social Inclusion Partnerships (Scottish Executive, 2001) and their constituent projects.

Within the existing literature a number of issues were identified which would benefit from further examination. The literature review identified a body of research on establishing and measuring quality of life, much of it from a health

perspective, and attempts are made here to identify its applicability to social inclusion. The geographically based social inclusion partnerships are required to collect a range of opinion based information such as fear of crime and resident satisfaction. Both confidence and job readiness are noted in the literature as relevant indicators for social inclusion, and the thesis also examines how these indicators are used. Finally personal relationships with family and friends are noted in the literature as being an area which suffers as a result of poverty and social exclusion, and the impact of projects on relationships is also examined.

Another theme in the literature is who participates in evaluation processes, who does not, and the potential limitations to the accuracy of the information gained. Issues of quality of provision were also key. The issue of quality also concerns funding agencies, who have the added concern of how to target scarce resources (see the retrospective/prospective role of monitoring noted by Smith (1995) in Chapter 2). Quantitative and qualitative research both have a role to play in this analysis, and examining their respective roles in monitoring and evaluation was another strand of the research.

Within any monitoring and evaluation system there will be limitations, and the research aimed to address the limitations of current systems, and potential improvements that could be made.

This issues are addressed in more detail in Chapters Two and Three.

1.3   Research Question and Research Objectives

The issues identified above generate a key research question and related objectives.

"To what extent do the existing systems of monitoring and evaluation in Scottish social inclusion initiatives recognise the particular nature of social inclusion?"

The conclusions of the thesis identify that although social inclusion is a well received term and both the policy makers and practitioners are working toward the same agenda, there are a number of areas where there is a need for further development in order to make the monitoring and evaluation of initiatives meaningful. The conclusions suggest that the current systems meet the needs of neither funding agencies nor projects well.

1.4 Rationale for the Research

The rationale for the research operates on two levels: the importance of the research for stakeholders in social inclusion, and the lack of previous similar research.

The justification for undertaking the research can be seen by the impact that it has on the stakeholders in social inclusion initiatives. A substantial amount of funding is spent on the alleviation of poverty and exclusion, with £120 million being spent on Social Inclusion Projects alone between 2002 and 2004 (Scottish Executive, 2002). This funding comes largely from taxpayers, who, therefore, have an interest in the efficient use of resources, and central and local government have a responsibility to oversee this use of the public purse.

A substantial amount of funding for projects that tackle deprivation comes from non-governmental sources. The Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisation estimates that the voluntary sector raises between £1.6 and £2 billion per annum from a variety of sources (SCVO, 2000). One such source, the Community Fund, which is the arm of the National Lottery that funds voluntary sector projects tackling poverty and disadvantage, awarded £375 million over the year 2001/2 (Community Fund, 2002). In their funding role, all these organisations would benefit from additional research on the most effective method of targeting resources, and ensuring that good use has been made of resources they have allocated. The research aims to examine the role of existing monitoring and evaluation frameworks in targeting resources.

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Figure 1.1: Stakeholders in Social Inclusion Projects

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                         ┌──────────────────┐
                         │   Government     │
                         └──────────────────┘
                                  ▲
┌──────────────┐                  │                  ┌──────────────────┐
│  Taxpayers   │ ◄─────          │          ─────►   │  Non-            │
│              │                  │                   │  governmental    │
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                         ┌──────────────────┐
                         │    SOCIAL        │
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│  Project     │ ◄─────          │          ─────►    │  Project         │
│  staff       │                  │                   │  evaluators      │
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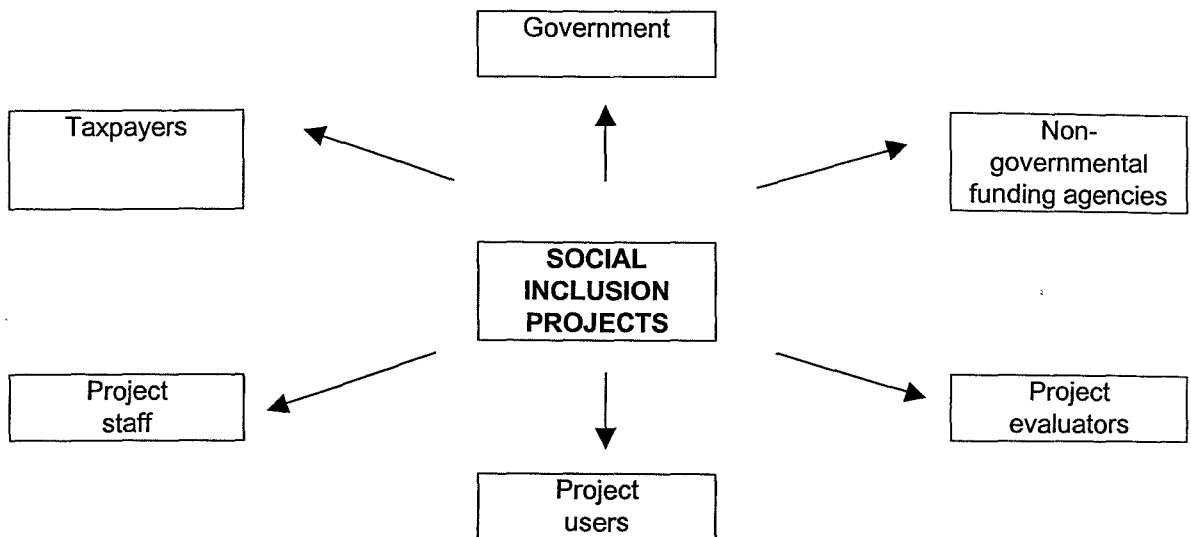
Project staff have an interest in monitoring and evaluation on two levels. First, as the individuals responsible for undertaking much of the monitoring of projects, they have an interest in the demands that are put upon them for data collection and analysis. Second, project staff have an interest in ensuring that projects are well evaluated, both in order to ensure the continued funding of the project, but also to ensure that the quality of their work is accurately reflected. Project external evaluators have similar interests in evaluation of social inclusion projects, and wish to ensure that they have the best possible techniques to use in evaluation. The research aims to help address the needs of staff and evaluators from the evaluation process.

The final, and most important, stakeholder in social inclusion projects are the end users of the project, and the residents affected by regeneration programmes. As the purpose of social inclusion projects is to address their needs, their views and opinions are key.

The research, therefore, has a justification in the information that it will provide to stakeholders in social inclusion.

Chapters Two and Three identify a range of techniques that have been used to monitoring and evaluate public policy and practice. However, it is also identified that there are a number of areas which are specific to social inclusion:

- The choice of the terms used in initiatives to tackle disadvantage and deprivation are in themselves meaningful. The use of the term 'social inclusion' brings with it an underlying theory of what the problem is, and how it should be addressed.
- The individuals assisted by social inclusion projects have specific needs which has implications for monitoring and evaluation. Project users are often vulnerable individuals, and may need assistance to participate fully in research.
- There are outputs and outcomes which are specific to social inclusion.
- The users of social inclusion monitoring and evaluation data, such as funders and policy makers, have specific uses for the data, such as the targeting of resources.

The literature review in Chapters Two identifies a number of areas where there is a shortage of information, such as techniques for evaluating the impact of social inclusion projects on relationships, and identifies a range of areas where related research has been undertaken, but would benefit from further exploration in a social inclusion context. The Social Inclusion Partnerships, who form part of the focus of the research, are themselves only a few years old, and the monitoring and evaluation systems are still evolving. The research aims to identify the issues in monitoring and evaluation that are specific to social inclusion.

1.5 Methodology

The research is of an applied nature, and relates to public policy. After consideration of a number of approaches within the two broad paradigms of positivism and social constructivism, it was decided that a qualitative approach

would best allow exploratory investigation of the underlying issues relating to the monitoring and evaluation of social inclusion projects.

The research method used was in depth interviews undertaken with key players in the field of social inclusion. These transcripts were then analysed using qualitative content analysis. More detail on the research method can be found in Chapter Four.

1.6   Limitations of Scope and Method

The social inclusion sector in Scotland is very large, and in order to derive a meaningful focus to the research it was necessary to impose several limitations. First, the research is limited in scope to the public sector in Scotland. Second, the research focussed on initiatives to address poverty and exclusion through a project based approach. It is acknowledged that much of government policy on tackling exclusion is undertaken through benefits and employment initiatives, but evaluation of national policy initiatives are beyond the scope of the thesis. Finally, the focus of the research is with professional staff; it may be that the experience of project users and community activists such as Management Committee members and Board members would be quite different.

1.7   Definitions

Social inclusion is a very broad term, and is, in fact, only one of a range of terms that is or has been used to describe disadvantage in Scotland. The literature review identified an on-going debate regarding the use of terminology, and questions regarding terminology were discussed in the interviews. The issues relating to definition are discussed at length in Chapter Two.

At the outset of the research, social inclusion was the most widely used term, and, therefore, this was the term that was chosen in developing the research instrument; the debate regarding terminology in discussed in more detail in Chapters Two and Three. A number of definitions were provided for participants in the research, as noted below:

"Quantitative"   Quantitative information is based on quantities and numbers, such as the number of users of a project, and demographic information. Quantitative methods of collecting information include "tick box" questionnaires and surveys.

"Qualitative"   Qualitative information is based on the opinions and views of users and/or evaluators. Qualitative methods of collecting information include interviews (groups or individuals), focus groups, observation, recording by diary, or any other method that is based on the opinions of users or evaluators.

"Outputs"   Outputs are the results of the operation of your project.

"Users"   Individuals who make use of the services provided by social inclusion projects.

"Poverty"   Poverty can be defined as *"individuals, families and groups in the population can be said to be in poverty when they lack the resource to obtain the types of diet, participate in the activities and have the living conditions and amenities which are customary, or are at least widely encouraged or approved, in the societies to which they belong. Their resources are so seriously below those commanded by the*

average individual or family that they are, in effect, excluded from ordinary living patterns, customs and activities." (Townsend, 1979, p31)

"Social exclusion"	Social exclusion can be defined as *"A (British) individual is socially excluded if (a) he/she is geographically resident in the United Kingdom but (b) for reasons beyond his or her control, he/she cannot participate in the normal activities of United Kingdom citizens and (c) he/she would like to so participate."* (Spicker, 1998, p11)
"Social inclusion projects"	Social inclusion projects aim to give their users the skills, knowledge, advice and support they need to participate in their community and in wider society.

1.8 Structure of the Thesis

Chapter Two outlines a number of issues for the measurement of social inclusion initiatives. This literature review seeks to address issues of definition and analysis regarding poverty and social inclusion, and review initiatives undertaken to address these issues. It looks at a variety of definitions of poverty and social exclusion, trying to establish exactly what the relevant issues are. It then examines the key assumptions underpinning these definitions and the implications of these for policy. Chapter Two notes the development in thinking about disadvantage from a discussion of poverty and exclusion, to the current discussion of social justice, with its connotation of citizenship and individual rights.

The literature review then moves on to examine why poverty and social exclusion exist by addressing some of the key theories of poverty causation. The literature review looks at who experiences poverty, and establishes the different experiences of poverty as it affects different groups in society, before concluding

by examining some of the implications of these issues for the measurement of social inclusion initiatives.

Chapter Two concludes by summarising the key issues in a theoretical framework for monitoring and evaluating social inclusion, examining the underpinning theory, the needs of different clients groups, the need for measurable outputs, and the usefulness of the information provided.

Chapter Three builds upon the review of the literature by examining the practicalities of tackling poverty and assessing the impact of these interventions. It briefly examines the current government involvement in tackling poverty, and addresses attempts to tackle poverty at the European, UK, Scottish and local government levels, and examines the motivation for these interventions. It also examines the roles in the social inclusion process of the Scottish voluntary sector and traces the history and focus of regeneration partnerships. Chapter Three then moves on to look at the methods used to evaluate the impact of policy and practice on social inclusion before summarising the gaps in the literature that generate the research question and informed the choice of research method.

Chapter Three concludes by building on the theoretical issues highlighted at the end of Chapter Two, and examining the practicalities of implementing a monitoring and evaluation system, with reference to the underpinning theory, the needs of different clients groups, the need for measurable outputs, and the usefulness of the information provided.

Chapter Four outlines the research method for examining the limitations of existing systems of monitoring and evaluation of social inclusion projects. It identifies a research paradigm, and methods of sample selection, data collection, and data analysis.

Chapter Five reports the findings of the research undertaken with the sample and analyses the implications of the findings with regard to the paradigm of social inclusion.

Chapter Six noted the findings of the research with regard to the practicalities of monitoring and evaluation.

Chapter Seven critically analyses the findings with regard to the issues it raises for resource allocation.

Chapter Eight establishes the conclusions that can be drawn. The chapter identifies areas that require further research and addresses the implications for theory and practice of the monitoring and evaluation of social inclusion projects.

CHAPTER TWO LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The focus of the thesis, and consequently the literature review, is on the monitoring and evaluation of social inclusion projects. However, in order to adequately understand the context in which these projects operate, it in necessary to examine also related concepts. This literature review seeks to address issues of definition, theory and analysis regarding social inclusion, and the related concepts poverty, social exclusion and social justice, and review initiatives undertaken to address these issues. It looks at a variety of definitions of relevant terms, trying to establish exactly what the underlying issues are. It then examines the key assumptions underpinning these definitions and the implications of these for policy. The literature review moves on to examine why poverty and social exclusion exist by addressing some of the key theories of poverty causation. The literature review examines who experiences poverty and exclusion, and establishes the different experiences of poverty and exclusion as it affects different groups in society. The literature review then examines the underpinning principles of monitoring and evaluation, before examining some of the implications of these issues for the measurement of social inclusion initiatives.

2.2 Definitions and Descriptions

2.2.1 Poverty

Philosophers, researchers and policy makers have many different views of the nature of poverty and how it can be described. Defining poverty is a political act: as Alcock (1993) notes:

> *"The way we define poverty to a large extent depends on what we intend to do about it." (Alcock, 1993, p2)*

This section looks at definitions of poverty and its related conditions, looking at absolute poverty, relative poverty, social exclusion, social inclusion and social

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justice. It looks at previous attempts to quantify poverty through the development of poverty lines and deprivation indices, before moving on to look at more qualitative analyses of poverty, exclusion and inclusion.

The two main schools of thought on poverty are divided between those who see it as an absolute concept and those who see it as relative to the living conditions in a particular community prevailing at the time. Absolute poverty takes as a baseline the biological needs of an individual such as the need for food, water, clothing and shelter, and judges an individual to be living in poverty only if (s)he cannot meet these needs. Definitions of relative poverty insist that poverty can only be measured in relation to the existing standards of living and living customs of the society in which the individual lives. Peter Townsend, writing in 1979, emphasised the relative nature of poverty:

> *"Poverty can be defined objectively and applied consistently only in terms of the concept of relative deprivation.... individuals, families and groups in the population can be said to be in poverty when they lack the resource to obtain the types of diet, participate in the activities and have the living conditions and amenities which are customary, or are at least widely encouraged or approved, in the societies to which they belong. Their resources are so seriously below those commanded by the average individual or family that they are, in effect, excluded from ordinary living patterns, customs and activities." (Townsend, 1979, p31)*

In UK policy terms there are few examples of a truly absolutist view of poverty. Although the benefit system provides for a minimum level of subsistence, the recognition of what constitutes necessities has changed over time. Beveridge, writing in 1942, noted:

> *"determination of what is required for reasonable human subsistence is to some extent a matter of judgement; estimates on the point change with time, and generally in a progressive community, change upwards." (Beveridge, 1942, p14)*

2.2.2 Social Exclusion

A more recent attempt at describing poverty and its related conditions is the use of the term social exclusion. This has been described by the Prime Minister, Tony Blair, as

> *"a shorthand label for what can happen when individuals or areas suffer from a combination of linked problems such as unemployment, poor skills, low incomes, poor housing, high crime environments, bad health and family breakdown."* (Scottish Office, 1998, p4)

However, this description seems slightly at odds with other definitions of social exclusion, and seems to reflect more ideas of multiple deprivation. Julian Le Grand, for the Centre for the Analysis of Social Exclusion, closely ties exclusion with the notion of participation:

> *"A (British) individual is socially excluded if (a) he/she is geographically resident in the United Kingdom but (b) for reasons beyond his or her control, he/she cannot participate in the normal activities of United Kingdom citizens and (c) he/she would like to so participate." (Spicker, 1998, p11)*

This is obviously a definition that is much wider than poverty: for example, a disabled person may well find themselves unable to participate on equal terms without necessarily being poor. The Child Poverty Action Group publication *"Excluding the Poor"* (Golding, 1986) makes the case that poverty can result in exclusion from everyday activities such as participating in politics and undertaking leisure activities. The poor are also excluded from making full use of banking, credit and insurance services, and from benefiting from developments in the "information society".

The notion of poverty being related to participation is popular in the European Union: for example the definition of poverty used by the European Council of Ministers states:

"...'the poor' shall be taken to mean persons, families and groups of persons whose resources (material, cultural and social) are so limited as to exclude them from the minimum acceptable way of life in the Member States in which they live. (Council of the European Communities, 1984, Article 1.2)" (Golding, 1986)

Room (1995) notes the two different traditions in Europe that are borne out in the approach to tackling poverty. He notes the contrast between the liberal tradition which treats individuals as commodities in the labour market, and the social democratic view which places a much greater emphasis on social citizenship. In attempting to address issues of poverty across the Union, Room notes that the French researchers were particularly uncomfortable with the Anglo-Saxon tradition of poverty lines, and those schooled in the Anglo-Saxon tradition found it difficult to operationalise the notion of "social exclusion" favoured by the French. Room comments:

"The mutual incomprehension highlighted the very different theoretical paradigms which these two traditions for analysing poverty and social exclusion appear to involve. The notion of poverty is primarily focused upon distributional issues: the lack of resources at the disposal of an individual or a household. In contrast, notions such as social exclusion focus primarily on relational issues; in other words, inadequate social participation, lack of social integration and lack of power." (Room, 1995, p105)

2.2.3 Social Inclusion

When moving to tackle social exclusion, the Scottish Executive changed its terminology to talk about social inclusion, with the publication of a Social Inclusion Strategy. Rather than give a definition of social inclusion, the Executive used a vision statement, noting:

"In developing this strategy, the Government and the Scottish Social Inclusion Network have agreed a 'vision' of social inclusion in Scotland. Our vision is of a Scotland in which:
- *every child, whatever his or her social or economic background, has the best possible start in life*
- *there are opportunities to work for all those who are able to do so*
- *those who are unable to work or are beyond the normal working age have a decent quality of life*

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- *everyone is enabled and encouraged to participate to the maximum of their potential" (Scottish Executive, 1999).*

2.2.4 Social Justice

A further change occurred in 1999, with the publication of a series of targets for tackling disadvantage, which were published under the title *"Social Justice... a Scotland Where Everyone Matters",* and social justice has continued to be the favoured term. Again, in discussing social justice the Executive have used a vision statement, with many similarities to the vision for social inclusion:

> *"Our vision for delivering social justice in Scotland:*
>
> *A Scotland in which every child matters, where every child, regardless of their family background, has the best possible start in life.*
>
> *A Scotland in which every young person has the opportunities, skills and support to make a successful transition to working life and active citizenship.*
>
> *A Scotland, in which every family is able to support itself - with work for those who can and security for those who can't.*
>
> *A Scotland in which every person beyond working age has a decent quality of life.*
>
> *A Scotland in which every person both contributes to and benefits from the community in which they live." (Scottish Executive, 2002)*

2.2.5 Key Issues

The Social Inclusion and Social Justice visions address very similar issues, but there is an increased emphasis on 'family' in the Social Justice statement, reflecting an increased emphasis on the family unit as the basis for policy.

While the vision statements may lack a certain amount of clarity, the description of how these concepts will be achieved, and how they will be monitored, is very detailed, and is discussed further in the next chapter.

The key issues in the development of the discussion has been a movement from a passive state of being for individuals experiencing disadvantage (poverty, exclusion), through a more active involvement of individuals by examining the

process that disadvantages them (inclusion), to a discussion of justice, with the connotation that it has of individual rights. This movement is summarised in the table below.

Table 2.1: The changing terminology of disadvantage

Terminology	Assumptions
Poverty	Individuals are poor and unable to participate.
Social Inclusion	Individuals are excluded from society due to barriers such as poverty, ill health etc.
Social Justice	Individuals have rights due to them as citizens, and have a right to participate in society.

The range of terminology in use can cause problems for organisations and individuals. Research undertaken with voluntary organisations in Oxford (Willis, 2002, p5) noted that of 38 organisations interviewed, only 31 felt that had a good/fair understanding of the term 'social exclusion' and only 27 felt they had a good/fair understanding of the term 'social inclusion'.

The Scottish Executive Central Research Unit (1999) interviewed a number of representatives of organisations active in tackling social exclusion, who noted a number of reservations about the term "social exclusion, and about its utility as a basis for policy":

> "There is concern that the concept might pathologise and stigmatise individuals in a way that would be dis-empowering and unhelpful. There is concern, too, that it is a term which lacks precision or poignancy, one which might be used as a euphemism and which might mask the reality of the disadvantage and inequality faced by individuals in Scotland." (SECRU,1999, p87)

2.3   Measuring Poverty and Exclusion

2.3.1 Establishing Poverty Levels

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The definition of poverty one chooses to adopt has an effect on how we attempt to measure it. Examinations of poverty and exclusion have been undertaken from different perspectives and using a range of techniques. This section examines attempts to establish the level and nature of poverty and exclusion using household surveys, both those focused specifically on poverty issues, and the use of information gained from more general surveys such as the census and the Scottish Household Survey. It then moves on to look at attempts to establish poverty lines, and minimum budgets, before examining the relationship between the UK benefits system and poverty levels. It explores the use of deprivation indices and longitudinal data sets, and identifies studies that reflect individuals' experiences of poverty. This section concludes by examining the key issues and criticisms that can be made of these measures.

2.3.2 Household Surveys

Seebohm Rowntree made an early attempt to establish the levels of poverty in the city of York using a methodology based on an absolute view of poverty. He interviewed households in an attempt to establish a subsistence level; in his words:

> "to arrive at a minimum sum necessary to maintain families of various sizes in a state of physical efficiency." (Rowntree, 1902 ,ix-x)

He based his estimates on three areas: food, house rent and household sundries. He then went on to distinguish between primary and secondary poverty; primary poverty being experienced by the families who did not have enough money to reach this subsistence level, and secondary poverty being experienced by those families who earned sufficient income for subsistence, but where money was spent on other items such as drinking or gambling. A similar approach was taken by Booth (1902) at the beginning of the twentieth century. He undertook research with households in London, again with the aim of establishing levels of subsistence. Rowntree's attempts to define an absolute poverty line below which a household can be deemed to be living in poverty has been revisited on a

number of occasions in an attempt to update it. Stitt and Grant (1993) attempted to apply Rowntree's methodology to 1990's Britain and found:

> "At least 30% ... of families with two children are living on or below a 1992 primary poverty line, constructed upon the approaches and ethos of B.S. Rowntree." (Stitt and Grant, 1993, p110)

Townsend, researching in the 1970's, used a similarly qualitative method of establishing poverty through the use of household surveys, but started from an explicitly relativist view of poverty. He used 60 indicators of "style of living", ranging from diet and clothing through to family support and recreation, to assess levels of poverty. Mack and Lansey (1984) report and analyse the findings of a MORI poll undertaken as part of a London Weekend Television programme entitled *"Breadline Britain"*. They were critical of what they saw as the "arbitrary" nature of the criteria used by Rowntree and Townsend surveys to assess poverty as these criteria were chosen by the researchers themselves. Therefore they asked their respondents themselves to define poverty using a list of criteria, pre-set by the researchers, and assess which of these criteria indicated poverty. This was then applied to Britain in 1983 which showed that one household in seven were living in poverty.

A number of contemporary investigations have been made through the use of existing household information. Two of the most useful data sets for Scotland are the Census, and the Scottish Household Panel Survey.

The decennial Census provides the most comprehensive coverage of communities, with every household being required by law to complete a questionnaire every ten years, with the last survey being carried out in 2001. The 1991 Census was broken down into Small Area and Local Base Statistics consisting of approximately 30 000 cross-tabulated counts, covering a wider range of topics including age, gender, occupation, qualifications, ethnicity, social class, employment, family structure, amenities and tenure. In Scotland these data are available at postcode sector, local authority district and regional level, as well as in Output Areas of 200 households.

The "Scottish Household Survey" is designed to provide accurate, up-to-date information about the characteristics, attitudes and behaviour of Scottish households and individuals on a range of issues. Over the 4 years for which the survey was initially being funded, interviews were conducted in over 62,000 households across the whole of Scotland. The principal purpose of the survey is to collect information in the areas of local government, social inclusion and transport.

The Scottish Household Survey Bulletin 2 focused on the characteristics of households in different social circumstances and looked at key aspects which can be related to social exclusion such as income, housing and family composition. Amongst its findings it noted:

♦ State benefits and pensions are the main source of income for most single parent and pensioner households.

♦ Over two-thirds of low income households do not have access to a motor vehicle.

♦ Forty per cent of adults in low-income households hold no educational qualifications.

♦ Over half of low income households are renting their homes, mainly from the local authority or a housing association.

♦ Although the large majority of low-income households have fridges/ freezers, washing machines and telephones, around one in ten are still without some of these items.

♦ Among householders who are unemployed and seeking work, 70% have been out of work for a year or more.

♦ 26% of adults report having a limiting illness, health problem or disability.

The "Family Expenditure Survey" (FES) is a continuous household survey carried out by the Office for National Statistics (ONS). Information is collected from a sample of around 7000 households in the UK. Individuals within the household are interviewed face-to-face and are asked to complete a detailed diary of their expenditure over a two week period. The Family Resources Survey (FRS) has

been in operation since October 1992 and is carried out jointly by the ONS and Social and Community Planning Research. At 26 000 households interviewed per year the FRS is considerably larger than the FES. The FRS allows benefit unit to be identified and has far more detailed questions related to social security benefits.

2.3.3 Poverty Lines

MacDermott (1998) notes four different measures that can be used to establish a poverty line, namely:

> *"Average or below average income ('income measures such as HBAI [Households Below Average Income])*
> *spending less than average ('expenditure measures' such as the Family Spending statistics)*
> *the number of dependents on state benefits (a 'benefits' measure)*
> *standards of living lower than an agreed minimum (a 'budget standards' measure)"* (McDermott, 1998, p16-17)

"Households Below Average Income" is the most commonly used indicator of poverty levels in the UK. Poverty is usually defined as households living on 50% of average income. At 1998 prices this represented a weekly income of £73.50 for a single adult and £223 for a couple with three children after housing costs have been discounted (Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 1998). There are issues regarding the use of HBAI data. The average figure used is likely to be an underestimation as it does not include individuals living in institutions, or homeless people, who are likely to lack access to regular sources of income. Their extreme poverty would bring the average figure down. Separate HBAI data figures are not available for Scotland which hinders comparison. The HBAI is of questionable use as a poverty line as living on half of average earnings indicates that a household is relatively disadvantaged, but does not actually indicate that they are poor. It does not look at the actual expenditure incurred by poor households, therefore has limited use in actually assessing the adequacy of income levels.

The Family Budget Unit and York University (1997) undertook a study using a *"Modest but Adequate"* (MbA) and *"Low Cost"* (LC) budgets to measure the

weekly costs of a child. The MbA budget excluded items that less that half the population possessed but included items which are generally considered by experts as necessities. The LC budget includes items described as necessities by two thirds of the respondents to *Breadline Britain* plus any items three quarters of the population have. The MbA budget uses the most popular brands from major chain stores, while the LC budget uses the cheaper brands. The Child Poverty Resource Unit noted that in 1993 the LC budget for 2 adults and 2 children was 25% higher than the income support level, and 21% higher for a lone mother and 2 children.

2.3.4   Poverty and the Benefits System

If levels of state benefit are taken to indicate a level of need there is a wealth of information regarding means tested entitlements held by the Benefits Agency and the Inland Revenue that could be used to assess poverty. However, there are several issues regarding the use of benefits in assessing poverty. In the absence of an officially recognised poverty line there is no agreed income level to which benefits can be linked. Therefore, there is a question about whether benefit levels in themselves are an accurate measure of poverty, or whether households with an income marginally above benefits levels should also be included. A similar argument could be made that there may be people receiving benefit who are not actually poor. Central government is sensitive to the assessment of the levels of means tested benefits:

> *"the ... government consistently refused to divulge the basis on which the levels were set."* (Scottish Poverty Information Unit, 1995, p2)

In terms of policy it is problematic as any increase in the benefits level would also mean an increase in those deemed to be living on or below the poverty line.

The benefits system is highly complex and does not lend itself easily to analysis. In addition, certain groups are excluded from the benefits system, most notably 16 and 17 year olds who are not in employment or on a training scheme. Therefore benefits analysis would not adequately reflect the poverty of this group. Finally,

there are substantial problems of under-claiming of benefits. This is likely to result in an under-estimation of poverty levels, and problems of bias as it is likely that some groups are less likely to claim benefits than others, for example pensioners, ethnic minority households.

2.3.5 Deprivation Indices

Census information has formed the basis of a number of deprivation indices. Deprivation indices *"measure the proportion of households living in a defined small geographical unit with a combination of circumstances indicating low living standards or a high need for services, or both"* (Bartley and Blane, 1994, p8) The following table illustrates some of the more commonly used indices:

Table 2.2: Deprivation Indices

Name	Purpose	Variables
Jarman Underprivileged Area Score	The Jarman Score was designed to take account of geographic variations in the demand for primary care based on a survey of GP's subjective expressions of the social factors among their patients that most affected their workload.	◆ Unemployment ◆ Overcrowding ◆ Lone parents ◆ Under 5s ◆ Elderly living alone ◆ Ethnicity ◆ Low social class ◆ Residential mobility
Townsend Material Deprivation Score	The Townsend Score is based on four variables originally taken from the 1981 Census that were selected to represent material deprivation, and it is a summation of the standardised scores for each variable. The four variables are combined together in an overall deprivation index, with each variable being given an equal weight.	◆ Unemployment ◆ Car ownership ◆ Home ownership ◆ Overcrowding
Carstairs and Morris Scottish Deprivation Score	This index was constructed by Carstairs and Morris for the analysis of Scottish health data. It is also based on four variables taken from the 1981 census which were judged to represent, or to be determinants of, material disadvantage.	◆ Overcrowding ◆ Male unemployment ◆ Social Class IV or V ◆ No car
MATDEP and SOCDEP	MATDEP (a material deprivation index) and SOCDEP (a social deprivation index) are both indices of deprivation that were developed by Forrest and Gordon (1993) following the 1991 Census. MATDEP and SOCDEP scores are the summation of the unweighted standardised scores for each variable. Higher scores indicate greater levels of deprivation.	MATDEP ◆ Overcrowding ◆ Lack amenity ◆ No central heating ◆ No car SOCDEP ◆ Unemployment ◆ Youth unemployed ◆ Lone parents ◆ Elderly ◆ Long-term illness ◆ Dependent only
Department of the Environment's Index of Local Conditions (1991)	The Index of Local Conditions (ILC) comprises 13 variables, seven of which are Census variables and six of which are non-Census variables. The index of local conditions is an unweighted summation of the selected indicators using their log-transformed signed chi-squared values. The index differs from those previously described in using actual numbers rather than percentage rates as to the input into the calculations. This has the effect of giving lower weights to those areas where the actual counts are small, and hence less statistically reliable.	Census variables ◆ Unemployment ◆ Children in low-earner households ◆ Overcrowding ◆ Households lacking basic amenities ◆ No car ◆ Children in unsuitable accommodation ◆ Educational participation Non-Census variables ◆ Long-term unemployment(DfEE, 1991) ◆ Income support (DSS, 1991) ◆ Low educational attainment (DfEE, 1991) ◆ Standardised mortality ratios (1991) ◆ Derelict land (DoE, 1988) ◆ Home insurance weightings (1991)
Department of the Environment, Transport and Region's Index of Local Deprivation (1998)	In June 1998, following consultation, the DETR published an updated version of the 1991 ILC. The 1998 Index of Local Deprivation (ILD), based mainly on data for 1996, was calculated for all 354 Local Authority Districts as they stood at April 1998. The ward and ED level indexes are based on the 1991 Census Area definitions.	Unemployment (ONS claimant count 1997) Dependent children of income support recipients (DSS 1996) Overcrowding (1991 Census) Housing lacking basic amenities (1991 Census) Non-income support recipients

Name	Purpose	Variables
		in receipt of council tax benefit (DSS 1996) Educational participation (1991 Census) Long-term unemployment (ONS Claimant Count 1997) Income support (DSS 1996) Low educational attainment (DfEE 1996) Standardised mortality ratios (ONS 1996) Derelict land (DoE 1993) Home insurance weightings (1996)

Adapted from the Social Exclusion Unit Policy Action Team 18 Working Paper

Mackenzie *et al* (1998) note the preference of different organisations for using different measures. They state that

> "...the Townsend Material Deprivation Score is favoured by Health Authorities, whereas Local Authorities tend to use the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions' Index of Local Deprivation. The Jarman Underpriviledged Area Score is used by the Department of Health for making additional payments to general practioners." (Mackenzie *et al*, 1998, p188)

2.3.6 Longitudinal Data Sets

There has been less use made of existing longitudinal data sets in assessing poverty and exclusion. The Office of National Statistics provide a longitudinal survey base on the census and vital event data routinely collected for England and Wales, although not for Scotland. The survey is based on 1% of the population – approximately 500 000 individuals at any one census point.

The National Child Development Study is a continuous longitudinal study which is seeking to follow the lives of all those living in Great Britain who were born between 3 and 9 March 1958. The aim of the study is to improve understanding of the factors affecting human development over the whole lifespan. To date there have been five attempts to trace all the members of the birth cohort in order to monitor their physical, educational and social development. These were carried out in 1965, 1969, 1974, 1981 and in 1991.

2.3.7 Individuals' Experiences of Poverty

Poverty can perhaps best be described through speaking to individuals who have experienced poverty and exclusion. Beresford *et al* (1999) undertook research with a group of community activists who had experienced poverty and noted the following themes emerging:

> "The discussions we undertook made it clear that people's views of the effects of poverty were overwhelmingly negative. The effects they identified fall into four broad categories:
> Psychological: Highlighting the psychological and emotional issues, such as the loss of self-esteem, feelings of powerlessness, anger, anxiety, depression and boredom associated with poverty;
> Physical: exploring health issues relating to being poor;
> Relational: focusing on how relationships and social interactions are affected;
> Practical: including the practical implications of living in poverty for day-to-day choices, budgeting and child-rearing." (Beresford *et al*, 1999, p89)

However, Stone (1996) undertook research with residents and activist on a Scottish housing estate and found that individuals were very reluctant to describe themselves as poor, even when they might appear so by more quantitative definitions of poverty. He noted

> "Subjects deny that they are poor, homeless or disabled as they are reluctant to identify themselves as members of a category which sets them apart from 'normal' people." (Stone, 1996, p229)

A Scottish Executive Central Research Unit (1999) study with individuals suffering economic and social disadvantage noted that social exclusion was experienced as discrimination based on some characteristic of the individual, such as ethnicity and race, and/or social exclusion arising from a personal crisis such as bereavement, relationship breakdown or drug/alcohol dependency.

2.3.8 Key Issues

Criticisms can be made of all these methods of assessing poverty. Household surveys are of necessity often quite limited in sample size; the Mack and Lansey survey, for example, interviewed only 1174 people. This can lead to a misrepresentation of the actual situation. The quantitative methods also have their difficulties as outlined above. A major weakness of all these methods, with the exception of the Family Expenditure Survey, is that they all provide a "snapshot" of poverty. The other aggregated figures give a picture of the number of individuals living in poverty at any given point, but do not allow a method of identifying whether these are the same individuals continuing to live in poverty, or whether there are households moving out of poverty, and being replaced by other households.

2.4 Causes of Poverty and Exclusion

Before moving away from the theory of poverty to look at the practical policy implications it is useful to spend some time looking at the underlying theoretical causes of poverty. Stitt (1994) notes:

> "It is apparent that (a) social policies to deal with various social phenomena are influenced by the theorisation and conceptualisation of relevant ideas and (b) consequently the construction of concepts pervades the policy response to the problem.
>
> In other words, how the state responds to the problem of poverty, mainly in terms of income maintenance/poor relief will be determined by its perception of the causes of poverty." (Stitt, 1994, p13)

Alcock (1993) draws a distinction between theorists who see the roots of poverty in individual pathology, and those who cite structural issues as the cause. Alcock notes that pathological explanations include both genetic explanations, which links poverty to inherited characteristics such as intelligence, and psychological explanations which attributes poverty to individuals' personality traits. One proponent of the pathological view was the late Keith Joseph, a former Conservative minister, who attacked the "dependency culture" of long-term

welfare benefits. In 1972 he said this had helped to create a "cycle of deprivation" in poor families, with poverty being transmitted from one generation to the next. The research he commissioned to examine this phenomenon, however, failed to support the argument. (SPIU, 1997, p2)

One of the key proponents of pathological explanations of poverty is Charles Murray (1990) who has written extensively about the 'underclass' in America and the UK. His view is that the underclass represents not a degree of poverty but a type of poverty, characterised by deviant attitudes towards social parenting, work and crime, and it is this deviancy that prevents individuals from moving out of poverty.

In looking at the other side of the debate, that is structural reasons for poverty, Alcock notes:

> *"Poverty is a product of dynamic social forces... and in modern welfare capitalist countries state policies have been developed over time to combat or reduce poverty. If, therefore, despite these policies poverty persists, then perhaps explanations should look not to the failings of the poor but to the failings of anti-poverty policies and to the agencies and institutions responsible for making them work. If the victims of poverty are not to blame, then the blame must lie elsewhere. A focus on agency failure directs attention towards those who are supposedly charged with eliminating poverty."* (Alcock, 1993, p39)

Stitt (1994) summarises the different theories of poverty as follows:

Table 2.3: Causes of poverty

Theory	Description	Role of poverty relief
Orthodox economic theory	Employers act to maximise profits in a rational way. The poor are poor because they demand too high a price for their productivity i.e. wages.	Benefits must be of such a low level it becomes "rational" to accept poorly paid work.
Minority Group Theory	Causal factors in the characteristics of groups of poor people (as opposed to individuals in OET). Constructs its hypothesis around very simplified observations of the features of the poor e.g. death of a breadwinner, old age, low wages etc.	Welfare policies concentrate upon and attempt to reform the inadequacies of their "targets" by providing income levels so low as to deter settlement with the lifestyles of the unemployed.
Culture/sub-culture	The poor develop a distinctive cultural framework which affects their ability to address their own poverty.	The function of social security is to offer a subsistence income which would deter complacency about the lifestyles of the poor and force them to look beyond their immediate

Theory	Description	Role of poverty relief
	Includes theory of "culture of deprivation". People in poverty are integral entities within the macro framework, but find themselves poor because of, during their formative years, inappropriate participation in societal action.	group institutionalised society for the means by which they can escape from poverty.
Labour market theories	Dual market theory assumes that the labour market can be divided into two. In the primary market there are rules, training, firm specific skills and unions. In the secondary labour market there are poor wages, poor working conditions, variability in employment and little chance to advance to the primary market. Segmentation theory assumes a much more complex labour market than just dual markets.	Function of poor relief is to create an appropriate and readily available supply of labour to meet the demands of the free market.
Structuralist theories	The existence of poverty is seen as functional to the maintenance of the societal hierarchy. Various social mechanisms operate to perpetuate poverty which is itself in turn encourages the 'victim' to respond in such a way as to serve to consolidate its existence.	The level of the services and benefits provided by welfare are so low that the problem of poverty is contained but not improved. By doing this they reinforce the lowly status of the poor, a position designated to them by society. They present and provide services in such a way as to attribute blame to the poor for poverty by offering them, for example, income levels which make it impossible to make ends meet and to budget.
Marxist theories	For Marxists the "cause" of poverty is the very existence of capitalism and thus the "solution" to poverty can only be found in the complete overthrow of the capitalist system. Because capitalism places the ownership and control of the means of production and distribution in the hands of private individuals and groups Marx argued that poverty is the natural outcome of such a system. Surplus population allows for economic expansion and drives wages down - the industrial reserve army.	A standard of living among the reserve army that unemployed labour will be coercively attracted into low paid sectors of the labour market.

Adapted from Stitt, 1994

Several of these theories place a great emphasis on individuals and organisations behaving in a "rational" manner. In what Stitt terms "Orthodox Economic Theory" it is assumed that employers will always operate to maximise profits, and are easily able to shed labour to cut costs. It does not take account of factors such as employment law, unionisation or employer's loyalty to staff.

Conversely, the sub-culture theories pre-suppose that the actions of the dominant majority are rational and that the acts of those living in poverty can be deemed as deviant and irrational. However, this is not necessarily so. The effect of living in poverty over an extended period of time may force people to behave in a way that would not be "rational" on a higher income, for example, buying expensive convenience foods may seem an irrational act on a low income, but may be perfectly rational in terms of avoiding the additional fuel costs required to heat less

"convenient" food, and through minimising waste with children not eating other less attractive foods.

The theories primarily deal with poverty amongst workers, whom are assumed to be homogenous units, clearly an untenable assumption. The theories do not adequately explain the existence of poverty amongst non-working people such as the disabled, elderly and non-working women.

The focus of Stitt's examination of poor relief in light of these causal theories of poverty has been to concentrate on social welfare responses to poverty. He does not examine the impact of these theories on other methods of addressing poverty, such as addressing barriers to accessing the labour market, local social inclusion initiatives, or client group based approaches to tackling poverty.

2.5   Experiences of Poverty and Exclusion

2.5.1   Groups at Risk of Poverty and Exclusion

The Scottish Poverty Information Unit (SPIU) note that several groups are more at risk of poverty, and these groups are often those who face discrimination and other barriers to accessing the labour market. The groups they identify as being particularly vulnerable to poverty are as follows:

"Women, who are much more likely to be poor than men. This has to do with the fact that women still retain primary responsibility for home and family.
Unemployed and low paid people.
Lone parents, the majority of whom (93% in Scotland) according to the 1991 Census are women.
Rural households with low income and poor access to public services. 16 and 17 year olds who have no job, Youth Training place and no benefits.
Disabled people or families with a disabled child. The additional costs of caring and limited access to the labour markets make this group of people particularly susceptible to poverty.
Ethnic minorities who have much higher rates of unemployment and are disproportionately represented in low paid jobs.
Families with children: children increase the costs of essentials and this at a time when one parent (usually the mother) stops work to care for them.
Pensioners, who are dependent on state benefits or small occupational benefits." (Scottish Poverty Information Unit, 1997)

A range of research has been undertaken with all these groups. This section looks at their experiences in more detail.

2.5.2 Women

With regard to female poverty Millar and Glendinning note:

"The causes of poverty amongst women are ... a result of complex but mutually reinforcing threads, which have their origins in the limitations placed upon women by the current gendered division of labour and by assumptions of female financial dependency upon men." (Millar and Glendinning, 1992, p7)

Lewis and Piachaud note the persistence of female poverty:

"The simple fact is that throughout the last century women have always been much pooere than men. At the start of this century 61% of all adults on all forms of poor relief were women. Today 60% of adults for whom supplementary benefit is paid are women." (Lewis and Piachaud, 1992, p27)

Women are more likely than men to be outwith the labour market or to be in low paid employment. The Child Poverty Resource Centre note that in 1993, 48% of

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Scottish full time women workers were on low pay compared to 20% of male full time workers, and three quarters of women part-time workers are on low pay (Tennant, 1995, pvi). There are disproportionately high numbers of women in low paid professions such as the service industries, clerical work, retail work and the caring industries. These differences in employment can begin on segregated training programmes when young women choose, or are encouraged to choose training programmes that will result in ultimately low paid employment (Buswell, 1992).

A major reason for female poverty is the disproportionate number of women involved in caring for other people, either children or other relatives. Joshi (1992) estimates that a woman who has an eight year break from employment and then twelve years of part time work loses £205,000 in earnings foregone. This includes an estimate not only of the money lost not working, or working part-time, but also takes into account that when the woman returns to work she is likely to return to a lower level of employment: Joshi also notes that amongst mothers in the 1980 Women and Employment Survey who made a return to work after their first birth, 37% returned to a lower level of occupation than their previous job. Women who take time out of the labour market in order to care for an adult until that person's death may find it difficult to return to the workforce after a number of years but will lose their entitlement to Carer's Allowance.

Absence from the labour market has an impact on later life and can result in poverty. Walker notes:

> *"Poverty in old age is a function, first, of low economic and social status prior to retirement, which restricts access to a wide range of resources, and secondly, of the imposition of depressed social status through the process of retirement itself."* (Walker, 1992, p176)

The lower occupational status of women who have taken time out of the labour market is compounded by the fact that they are less likely to belong to occupational pension schemes; in 1992 more than twice as many men as women belonged to occupational pension scheme (Walker, 1992, p178). In addition, women have a longer life expectancy - 78 years as opposed to 72 years for men

(Walker, 1992, p178) - which results in more elderly women than men living in one person households, with the added financial difficulties this can bring.

Black women are particularly disadvantaged. Black men are paid less than white men, there are a high proportion of Black women in low paid domestic labour, and Black women are more likely to be benefit recipients, and in particular are more likely to be unemployed. Immigrant women are disadvantaged as they are treated as the dependants of men. Disproportionate numbers of Asian women are involved in homeworking, which is low paid and can leave them open to exploitation. Various studies have also shown that Black claimants are less likely to claim benefits to which they are entitled (Cook and Watt, 1992).

One of the major difficulties is assessing women's poverty is the inability of statistics to reflect the division of household income within the family. Graham notes:

> *"While money may be under female management, it is not necessarily under the woman's control. Where their partners control what they manage, women can find their attempts to meet health needs and financial commitments thwarted."* (Graham, 1992, p188)

The overall statistics do not reflect households where individual members may be living in poverty due to an inequitable distribution of intra-household income, although there is substantial anecdotal evidence to support the existence of poverty of women who have no access to independent income. (Graham, 1992)

2.5.3 Unemployed and Low Paid Individuals

In terms of unemployment, the Scottish Office noted that:

> *"Lack of employment crucially involves loss of income and bargaining power in other situations but also relates to exclusion from social and occupational milieu."* (Scottish Office Central Research Unit, 1999, p14)

The Social Exclusion Unit also note that unemployment affects not just the individual, but the whole community in which they live. They note:

> *"The cycle of decline for a neighbourhood almost always starts with a lack of work. This generates other social problems – crime, drugs, low education attainment and poor health – all of which reinforce one another and speed local decline." (Social Exclusion Unit, 2000, p1)*

Gosling *et al* (1997) used the 1991-1994 waves of the British Household Panel Survey (BHPS) to examine the dynamics of low pay. Amongst their key findings they note that:

- Only about two-thirds of men aged between 18 and 60 and not in full time education remained in continuous employment over the whole period 1991-1994 and note that lower relative wages of individuals are associated with a higher probability that they will move out of work in the future.
- They note the persistence of low pay, with very few people at the bottom of the earnings distribution making it into the top half.
- Low qualified women face particular probability of remaining in low pay over the whole of their working life.

2.5.4 Families with Children

The Scottish Poverty Information Unit (1995) note that families with children have been hardest hit by the rise in poverty since 1979. They note that large families suffer higher rates of poverty, and that unemployment and the costs of caring for children are significant factors in family poverty.

The Child Poverty Resources Unit (1995) note that over 70% of lone parents in Scotland are dependant on income support because of the difficulties of taking up employment caused by lack of childcare facilities and high levels of unemployment.

Should, Whitehead, Burstrom and Diderichsen (1999) note, risk of poverty particular to lone mothers. They examined the socio-economic and health studies of lone mothers compared with couple mothers from 1979 to 1995 using secondary analysis of data from the General Household Survey, covering 9159 lone mothers and 51922 couple mothers. They found that the unemployment rate of lone mothers was double that of couple mothers and that 90% of lone mothers who were not working in 1992-95 were poor, compared to 39% of couple mothers. In addition, lone mothers had significantly worse health than couple mothers.

2.5.5 Disabled People

The Leonard Cheshire Foundation undertook research into disability and social exclusion using the experiences of disabled people as articulated in a series of focus groups. They found:

> *"Social exclusion is the general collusion (whether conscious or unconscious) on the part of society to deny disabled people the respect it automatically gives to able-bodied people."* (Knight and Brent, 1998, p5)

The Shaw Trust (2002) note that approximately 14% of the UK working age population have a long term disability (Shaw Trust website) which affects their working lives, and that the unemployment rate for disabled people is twice as high as the rate for non-disabled people.

The likelihood of working varies dependent on the type of disability. The Shaw Trust note the following points:

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- *"Nearly half (48%) of disabled people are economically inactive, as opposed to 21% of non-disabled people.*
- *Only 18% of people with mental illness are employed.*
- *Only 47% of people with difficulty seeing are employed.*
- *Disabled people are twice as likely as non-disabled people to have no qualifications.*
- *Disabled people are more likely than non-disabled people to work in low-skilled occupations."* (Shaw Trust, 2002)

In addition, there are additional costs associated with severe disability; Alcock (1993) notes that while official estimates place these additional costs at £7, independent surveys put this cost at £50 per week.

Meyers *et al* (1998) note that children in poor families are at heightened risk of disability and chronic health problems; they note that children in low income families are more likely to suffer from chronic illnesses and have as much as a 40 per cent higher risk of being disabled. The causes of this are complex, thus:

> *"Children in low-income families are more likely to live in poor neighbourhoods where they are exposed to heightened environmental risks. They are more likely to suffer from low birth weight and other complications associated with poor maternal nutrition, health behaviour and health care. Children in poor families are also less likely to receive the adequate early nutrition, housing and health care that might help prevent the development of serious disabilities and health conditions."* (Meyers *et al*, 1998, p211)

American research notes that direct care costs for disabled children can range from $334 per year for children with cystic fibrosis to $4012 for children with cancer. Annual foregone earning averaged from $1514 to $4697. The research noted that care for children with cancer can consume as much as 37% of potential family income. (Meyers *et al*, 1998, p211)

2.5.6 Individuals Living in Rural Areas

The Scottish National Rural Partnership (SRNP) (1999) note that the literature on social exclusion and disadvantage deals overwhelmingly with urban areas. However, in contrast to urban deprivation, where people experiencing

circumstances of deprivation are often in the same geographical area, the dispersed nature of rural poverty means that it is often hard to identify. The SNRP note:

> "The lack of geographical concentration manifests itself in particular ways - notably, a lack of solidarity and peer support which can lead to an unwillingness by individuals to speak out and be identified as 'in need'." (SNRP, 1999, p2)

SNRP note that poverty is widespread in rural areas of Scotland, with 20% of households on incomes below £108 per week in 1996, and of those of working age on low income in rural Britain only 22% are in employment, with 23% being self-employed. 13% are unemployed and 41% are detached from the labour market (e.g. long-term sick or family carers) (SNRP, 1999, p3). They note the more limited choice of job opportunities in rural areas, and the limited access to childcare and training, and the problems of inadequate rural public transport.

Chapman, Clark and Shucksmith (1996) undertook research for the Rural Forum (Scotland) and the Scottish Consumer Council in rural Scotland. The areas they studied were Harris, Wester Ross, Angus and North Ayrshire, and highlighted the following issues:

- Income levels were considerably lower in these areas than the British average, with 65% of household heads having incomes below the Low Pay Unit low pay threshold.
- The cost of living was higher and the necessity to maintain a car in many areas meant rural dwellers had less disposable income than their urban counterparts.
- There is a lack of affordable rented housing in the rural areas noted which led to concealed homelessness.
- Service provision varied considerably between the areas.

2.5.7 Young People

Regarding the position of young people, the Scottish Office (Scottish Office Central Research Unit, 1999, p14) note that in the most deprived areas almost

one-quarter of 16/17 year olds are not in education, employment or training. Wilkinson (1995), in a study of youth drop out rates in Sunderland notes youth dissatisfaction with Youth Training Schemes, with only 18% of those leaving before the completion dates citing positive reasons such as 'finding a job' or 'returning to education'. He also notes that almost two-fifths (37%) of 'non-completers' had either insecure accommodation or were sleeping rough, compared to 12% of those who completed the course.

2.5.8 Ethnic Minority Communities

There has been substantial research into the issue of poverty amongst ethnic minority communities. John Hills notes that by 1994/95 two-thirds of the Pakistani and Bangladeshi population were in the poorest fifth of British society, along with 25% of the Indian population. Amin and Oppenheim (1992) for the Child Poverty Action Group undertook a comprehensive review of deprivation and ethnic minorities in the UK. They noted:

- The unemployment rate for ethnic minorities as a whole is approximately twice that for white people. The 1989-91 Labour Force Survey showed that the unemployment rate for men from ethnic minorities was 13 per cent on average for the three years, compared to 7 per cent amongst white men. For women the comparable figure was 12 per cent against 7 per cent for white women. These gaps in employment rates were equally marked in young people, and persisted across all qualification ranges.

- People from ethnic minorities were more likely than white people to work in the industrial sectors of distribution, hotels, catering and repairs; footwear, clothing and leather goods manufacture; and medical health and veterinary services. The industries have high proportions of the workforce on low wages. A study carried out in Leicester found that Asian men were twice as likely as white men to work shifts and 15 per cent of Asian women worked shifts compared to 10 per cent of white women. (Amin, and Oppenheim, 1992, p12)

- Amin and Oppenheim (1992) quote local poverty studies carried out in Islington, Birmingham and Manchester. Despite differing methodologies all the studies found that ethnic minorities were overrepresented in the numbers of those living in poverty.

Amin and Oppenheim (1992) examine the reasons why people from ethnic minorities are more likely to be living in poverty. Not surprisingly, they found the reasons to be complex and varied. They see immigration policy as one of the key reasons for poverty amongst ethnic minority groups. The initial post-war waves of immigration were to provide labour for industry in the UK. This affected the areas lived in by immigrants (predominantly inner cities) and the work they undertook. Therefore ethnic minority groups were particularly hit by the decline of the UK manufacturing industry and the difficulties of inner city life. Increasing restrictions on immigration to the UK meant that more recent immigrants have restricted access to public funds; dependants of immigrants can only enter the UK if they can prove they will have no need to access public funds.

They note also the different family patterns that impact on poverty. For example, 49% of West Indian families and 30% of African families are headed by a lone parent, compared to 15 per cent of white families. The growth in child poverty has affected some ethnic minority groups disproportionately as over two-thirds of Pakistani and Bangladeshi households are couples with children, as are over half of Indian families compared to just over a quarter of white households. In addition, there is a variation in average family size, with 12 per cent of West Indian and 31 per cent of Asian households having more than two children, compared to 5 per cent of white households. (Amin and Oppenheim, 1992, p46)

Amin and Oppenheim note that people from ethnic minority groups are disadvantaged by the contributory nature of many benefits, as they are less likely to be in a position to have an unbroken record of contributions than white people, due to unemployment, caring responsibilities and visits abroad. Discriminatory practices have also made it harder for ethnic minority households to gain access to public housing.

The Policy Studies Institute has undertaken four national surveys of ethnic minorities since the 1960's. The 1994 survey was analysed by Momood *et al* (1997) which found that there had been some improvement in the situation for many people between ethnic minorities. However, Momood et al note that the situation varies greatly between different ethnic minority groups:

> *"Pakistanis and Bangladeshis are consistently at a disadvantage with respect to white people, and often with respect to other minorities...*
>
> *People of Caribbean and Indian origin (excluding African Asians) are often found to experience disadvantage, though it is usually less serious for these groups than for Pakistanis and Bangladeshis...*
>
> *Chinese people and African Asians have reached a position of broad parity with the white population - behind on some indicators perhaps, but ahead on others. It would not be appropriate to describe them as disadvantaged groups."* (Momood *et al*, 1997, p342)

2.5.9 Older People

Older people can also suffer disadvantage. Howarth *et al* (1998) note three reasons why those of pensionable age are disadvantaged:

> *"First, they make up a disproportionate share of those with the lowest incomes. Although pensioners on average enjoy better incomes that they have in the past, the rising average conceals a large minority, dominated by older single women, who have no additional resources other than the state retirement pension and means tested benefit - where this is claimed.*
>
> *Second, old age can bring many additional problems which act to exclude people. Two-thirds of disabled people are aged over 60. As with all other age groups, health problems amongst older people are not evenly distributed but are concentrated amongst the poorest. While life expectancy has been increasing overall, in many cases the number of years free of sickness and pain have not.*
>
> *Third, health systems, transport systems, and leisure facilities, to name but a few, often provide older people with worse, or less appropriate, services within society."* (Howarth *et al*, 1998, p117)

2.5.10 Implications for Policy and Practice

The above experiences of poverty serve to outline the very different nature of poverty for different groups. This has implications for policy makers in terms of tackling poverty, targeting resources and involving different communities of interest. Several writers have raised concerns about the extent to which social inclusion initiatives address the needs of different disadvantaged groups.

Bronstein notes that despite the numbers of women deemed to be living in households in poverty, few attempts were made within English regeneration funding to target them:

> *"A couple of years ago, a team from Birmingham University carried out an assessment of SRB bids for Round 3 nationally. It showed that less than 10% of bids made any reference to gender, while close to 25% included a specific focus on race, but not unsurprisingly over 65% focussed on social exclusion. In addition, it carried out a more specific analysis of bids within the West Midlands. While just under 20% did respond positively when asked if they actively promoted women's involvement, only 5% actually did any monitoring to see if they were successful."* (Bronstein, 1999)

She notes that *"gender blind interventions almost always reinforce the structural inequalities for women, and they are also unlikely to be effective or sustainable."* (Bronstein, 1999)

Amin and Oppenheim raise similar concerns regarding ethnic minority involvement. They conclude:

> *"Anti-poverty measures will have a disproportionately beneficial effect on people from ethnic minorities because they are... disproportionately affected by poverty. However, anti-poverty measures need to be examined very seriously for their relevance to ethnic minority communities in terms of their principles, contents and means of implementation. For example, most obviously, those in particular geographical areas, and those which are targeted at particular groups such as the 16-25 age group, lone parents, and families with young children."* (Amin and Oppenheim, 1992, p66)

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Valios (1999) notes the under-representation of older people in community regeneration schemes. She quotes Tessa Harding, Help the Aged's head of policy as follows:

> "Older people are seen solely in terms of health and care needs and not as contributors to society. They don't figure in discussions about anything - economic development, regeneration, employment issues. You name it, there's a whole raft of local authority initiatives where they don't come to mind." (Valios, 1999, p24)

Chapman and Shucksmith (1996) highlight an urban bias in poverty research, thus:

> "Most studies of disadvantage are urban based and provide little information on the specific incidence and experience of disadvantage in a rural context ... Little information is available on the extent of rural poverty in Scotland. The available information relates more to average incomes rather than to the distribution of income..."
> (Chapman and Shucksmith, 1996, p71)

Having looked at definitions and descriptions of poverty and social exclusion, this section now moves on to look at the theoretical basis for monitoring and evaluating initiatives to tackle poverty and social exclusion.

2.6 Monitoring and Evaluation

2.6.1 Introduction

Evaluation can take place on a number of levels, with government policy, the practices of local government and voluntary sector agencies and individual projects all being suitable targets for evaluation. The rationale for evaluating social inclusion projects relates to the need to demonstrate to the stakeholders involved that their interests are being met. Central and local government are accountable for their use of public funds, and may wish to have evidence of the effectiveness of their policies and practices on tackling poverty and exclusion. Central government may place requirements on local government regarding the quality of the service they provide, which involves evaluation of their service delivery. Local

authority and charitable funders of social inclusion projects may place evaluation requirements on projects as a condition of funding; their motivation in seeking evaluations is to identify projects which provide a good use of public funds and those which do not, and to identify initiatives that are worth replication. Smith (1995) notes:

> *"In its prospective role, outcome measurement is used to guide public sector resource allocation decisions. The retrospective analysis yields evidence on good practice..." (Smith,1995, p5)*

Finally, project staff may take the lead in evaluating projects in order for them to identify strengths and weaknesses of their project, and to allow them to improve service delivery. The aims are not necessarily mutually exclusive, and evaluations may be a response to several of these influences.

There are a number of key definitions when examining monitoring and evaluation issues, which are examined in Sections 2.6.2 and 2.6.3. Section 2.6.4 recognises that attempts to quantify the impact of social provision is not new, and examines two historical attempts to attach value to social goods.

The monitoring and evaluation of social inclusion projects provides many challenges for evaluators, as many of the variables they would wish to assess are intangible. Sections 2.6.5 and 2.6.6 examines how this issue has been addressed in the fields of quality of life and evaluating the environment, and looks at what can be learned from these evaluations. Section 2.6.7 builds on this information to identify the key theoretical criteria that a monitoring and evaluation framework for social inclusion projects needs to address.

2.6.2 Monitoring

Monitoring public sector initiatives involves looking at the *inputs* and *outputs* of the initiative and quantifying them. Inputs are the discrete, quantifiable resources that are put into a project, outputs the discrete, quantifiable results. Project outputs may be tangible, that is discrete, quantifiable results such as the number of users

entering employment or training as a direct result of using the project. However, there are also a range of likely outcomes from participation in a project that are less easy to measure such as the improved self confidence and mental health of users. These are intangible outputs; they are not obvious to a person who has not met the users of the project.

A key element of monitoring is that the information gathered must be comparable to other information. These comparisons can be internal, comparing monitoring information gathered to information gathered in previous years, or external, making comparisons between organisations.

2.6.3 Evaluation

Evaluation is concerned with the success or failure of a project or programme, and may take more interest in the *outcomes* of an initiative, that is the impact on wider society of a particular project. Rossi and Freeman (1993) note that there are several reasons for undertaking evaluation:

> *"Evaluations are undertaken for a variety of reasons: to judge the worth of on-going programmes and to estimate the usefulness of attempts to improve them; to assess the utility of new programs and intiatives; to increase the effectiveness of program management and administration; and to satisfy the accountability of program sponsors."*
> (Rossi and Freeman, 1993, p3)

Evaluation may take the form of *performance measurement*, that is looking at the outputs against a pre-set series of targets, or against the outputs of previous years, or similar organisations.

Evaluations may also take account of the *process* of service delivery, that is looking not only at the outcomes of a particular project, but also looking at how well the delivery of the service meets the needs of users. This can be all users, or specific client groups such as disabled people.

Evaluations may also be explicitly concerned with *value for money*. This involves concern for how economically, efficiently and effectively a particular project is delivering its service.

The following table provides illustrations of the above concepts, using the example of a food co-operative. Food co-operatives represent one method of addressing inclusion issues relating to health and nutrition.

Table 2.4: Definitions with reference to a food co-op

Term	Example
Monitoring inputs and outputs	An example of this might be a food co-operative monitoring inputs such as staff time, cost of food, cost of delivery. Outputs monitored could include the number of customers that they have, sales volume/turnover, and the increase in number of customers.
Evaluation of outcomes	In this example it would involve looking at the wider impact that could reasonably be attributed to the work of the food co-operative, for instance a decrease in the incidence of particular types of illness in the area.
Performance measurement	This might involve comparing the outputs to targets derived from previous years or from the outputs of other food co-operatives, or other projects with similar goals.
Evaluation of the process of service delivery	For the food co-op this might involve looking at whether their service was open and available to all residents in terms of opening hours, delivery service etc. An examination of the process might focus on particular client groups; for example an examination of how well the food co-op serves the needs of disabled people.
Value for money	In the food co-op example, this would involve an examination of whether the outputs and outcomes provided by the food co-op could be provided as cheaply and effectively through another method, for example a comparison of a mobile food co-op compared to one based in premises.

Evaluation can also take place at a programme level. UNFPA (2002) define programme evaluation thus:

> *"Programme evaluation is a management tool. It is a time-bound exercise that attempts to assess systematically and objectively the relevance, performance and success of ongoing and completed programmes and projects. Evaluation is undertaken selectively to answer specific questions to guide decision-makers and/or programme managers , and to provide information on whether underlying theories and assumptions used in*

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programme development were valid, what worked and what did not work and why. Evaluation commonly aims to determine the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability of a programme or project." (UNFPA, 2000, p1)

2.6.4 Historical Attempts at Valuation

Attempts to quantify the benefits of social interventions are not new. Writing in the eighteenth century, Jeremy Bentham's utilitarian theories were influential in the development of social policy. He began with the premise that man is motivated by his pursuit of pleasure and avoidance of pain, and that if men were left free to pursue happiness this would result in the greatest happiness of the greatest number. This was an overtly individualistic theory, which saw a limited role for government and stressed the benefits of self-help. Left to their own devices individuals would form a "natural harmony of interests", as exemplified by commercial free trade. However, Bentham noted that sometimes individuals were unable to pursue pleasure due to obstacles in their way such as malfunctioning government practice. The role of the state was to minimise these barriers and guide people toward self-help.

In his 1781 work, *The Principles of Morals and Legislation*, Bentham proposed that individuals could calculate for themselves whether a particular act gave them more pleasure than pain. This balance could then be summed as follows:

"Take an account of the number of persons whose interests appear to be concerned; and repeat the above process with respect to each. Sum up the numbers expressive of the degrees of good tendency, which the act has, with respect to each individual, in regard to whom the tendency of it is good upon the whole: do this again with respect to each individual, in regard to whom the tendency of it is bad upon the whole. Take the balance; which, if it is on the side of pleasure, will give the general good tendency of the act, with respect to the total number or community of individuals concerned; if on the side of pain, the general evil tendency, with respect to the same community. "
(Bentham, 1982, p31)

Edwin Chadwick was an advocate of utilitarianism and applied it to the provision of social services. He noted that individuals were unable to pursue happiness due to poverty, sickness, crime and ignorance. This impeded commerce as individuals, for example became sick, or died prematurely. However, the subsidies provided by the poor law led to a distortion of the market, and Chadwick sought new ways of tackling poverty. Bentham used a "felicific calculus" to calculate the credit of pleasure against the debit of pain. Chadwick used this to promulgate the benefits of preventative action in tackling social ills. To implement his preventative plans he proposed locally elected committees, professional officials with qualifications and a central body to overlook each national service.

In his 1842 *Report on the Sanitary Conditions of the Labouring Population of Great Britain,* Chadwick made the case for public intervention to improve sanitary conditions in working class areas, with some of the costs of this being reclaimed from tenants. What is interesting about Chadwick's work is that he notes both the savings to be made from work that will prevent illness, and includes in his calculations several intangible items. For example, he notes the benefits to the landlord of improved sanitation:

> *"Supposing this charge of 11/2 d weekly imposed upon the landlord, he will have to set against it the preservation of the tenement from dilapidation by drainage, which of itself would frequent repay from the whole outlay. He has also the circumstances to consider that he may get better tenants by the improvement of his houses, and that with such tenants he will have more regular payments of rent. Protracted sickness and protracted losses of employment, and the frequent mortality caused by neglect of cleansing, occasion heavy losses to the owners, and occasion a greater diminution of the returns for such tenements than is commonly apparent." (Chadwick, 1965, p289)*

Chadwick made a similar point of the benefits to the tenant noting that tenants will save:

"in the wear and tear of shoes and clothes from having a well drained and well cleansed instead of a wet and miry district to traverse; they will also save the sickness itself, and each individual will gain a proportionate extension of a more healthy life. In a district where the wages are not one-half the amount above stated, the expenditure for efficient means of prevention would still leave a surplus of gain to the labourer." (Chadwick, 1965, p291)

2.6.5 Quality of Life

Health professionals continually face the problem of valuing treatments whose outcome, improved health, is intangible. Due to the scare resources in the health service, and the potentially huge costs of treatments, value for money is a key issue when allocating resources. One difficulty that has been addressed is how to account for a patient's quality of life after treatment; a patient may survive a particular treatment but be left with a very poor quality of life. The method that has been used to evaluate this is the quality adjusted life years (QALYs).

Tolley and Routledge (1995) describe this as follows:

> "The ... QALY is an outcome measure which reflects the fact that most people are prepared to sacrifice some quality of life in order to gain some additional life expectancy and vice-versa. If some healthcare activity would give someone an extra year of healthy life expectancy, then that would be counted as 1 QALY. But if the best we can do is provide someone with an additional year in a rather poor state of health, that would count as less than 1 QALY, and would be lower the worse the health state is." (Tolley and Rowland, 1995, p19)

They continue

> "The essence of the QALY concept is that effects on life expectancy and effects on quality of life are brought together in a single measure, and the bulk of empirical work involved in making the concept operational is concerned with eliciting the values that people attach to different health states, and the extent to which they regard them as better or worse than being dead. For the purposes of priority setting in health care, being dead is regarded as zero life value... although developed primarily by economists, the QALY is not a measure of people's economic worth, but a measure of whatever aspects of life they themselves value." (Tolley and Rowland, 1995, p19)

Criticisms can be made of this approach. Tolley and Routledge note the criticisms of Harris (1987) that it is a large assumption that people would prefer a healthier, shorter life to a longer one of severe discomfort. In addition, there are difficulties of assessing accurately individuals views on distress and disability.

Quality of life has also begun to be a consideration in the evaluation of social inclusion policy and practice. The Scottish Community Development Centre define quality of life thus:

> *"Quality of life is determined by the environment in which we live – its economic, social, political, recreational, artistic, cultural, religious and physical characteristics. There is no universally agreed definition of a satisfactory quality of life. Definitions reflect values. Within the value framework of community learning…a good quality of life would require positive answers to questions like these:*
> - *Are we able to meet our basic needs for food, shelter, clothing and sustain our personal health?*
> - *Do we have opportunity for fulfilling work?*
> - *Do we have opportunity for self expression and celebration of our identity?*
> - *Do we have opportunity for democratic participation and influence?*
> - *Can we lead our lives in safety?*
> - *Can we enjoy positive relations with others in the community?*
> - *Do we have access to justice?*
> - *Do we have equal access to essential services?*
> - *Do we have equality of opportunity and equality of treatment by public and private services?"* (Scottish Community Development Centre, 2000, Section 3)

An interesting point here is that all these criteria must be met in order for it to be assumed that an individual has a good quality of life.

The UK government has also shown an interest in quality of life as a measure of sustainable development, and has developed 15 headline indicators of quality of life. Poverty and social exclusion are a subset of indicators:

- Percentage of working age people in workless households;
- Percentage of working age people with no qualifications;
- Percentage of children living in households with relatively low income, after housing costs;
- Percentage of single elderly households experiencing fuel poverty.

2.6.6 Social Capital

In attempting to measure the strengths of particular communities, social capital has been widely used. Social capital refers to the norms and networks that enable collective action, such as community activity, community groups, formal and informal networks in society. Nel and McQuaid (2002) note many elements to social capital including:

> "the stock of social or mutual trust; cooperative norms; a sense of a shared future; shared values; reciprocal relationships; and networks that can be used by a community to deal with common problems or issues, as well as those formed with other communities and groups." (Nel and McQuaid, 2002, p6)

There are several views on the best method of assessing social capital. Fukuyama (1999) notes:

> "One of the greatest weaknesses of the social capital concept is the absence of consensus on how to measure it. At least two broad approaches have been taken: the first, to conduct a census of groups and group memberships in a given society, and the second, to use survey data on levels of trust and civic engagement. " (Fukuyama, 2003, p2)

2.6.7 Valuing the Environment

Valuation with regard to the environment has its own particular problems. Jacobs notes

> "... because environmental commodities are usually available free (that is, at zero price) this value generally goes unrecognised. The result is that they get overused, leading to environmental degradation. To bring the environment into the economic calculus, prices of monetary values therefore need to be assigned to the various goods and services it provides." (Jacobs, 1991, pxv)

He further notes the limits of orthodox economic theory in dealing with the environment, but comments:

"Advocates of the valuation approach to environmental protection have one apparently strong argument on their side. They can claim that theirs is what economists would call a 'positive' approach, one which rests on (in theory) objectively measurable desires and interests - the desires and interests of living, accessible people who can be asked what they are, or who reveal this information in their behaviour."(Jacobs, 1991, p77)

Jacobs notes several technical problems in assessing valuations of the environment, thus:

- As the environment is of value to everyone, he states that the view of people distant in time (future generations) and distant in space (in other countries) need to be built into the equation.

- Using money as a valuation tool assumes that one pound or dollar means the same to a rich person as to a poor one.

- Individuals can place values on the environment that they do not actually mean due to bias in the survey process; in some cases people may be reluctant to put a monetary value on the environment.

2.6.8 Issues in Monitoring and Evaluation

Isolating the Impact of Social Inclusion Projects

Social inclusion projects do not operate in isolation, and the outcomes of the projects will be influenced by other programmes and initiatives. Rossi and Freeman (1993) make a distinction between what they term the 'gross' and 'net' outcomes of a programme:

> *"Gross outcomes consist of all observed changes in an outcome measure that are observed when assessing a program... Net outcomes are those results that can be reasonably attributed to the intervention: free and clear of any other causes that may be at work." (Rossi and Freeman, 1993, p221)*

They note several extraneous confounding factors that may impact on the outcomes of an intervention, which are summarised below:

Table 2.5: Extraneous Confounding Factors on Intervention Outcomes

Issue	Definition
Uncontrolled selection	*"processes and events not under the researcher's control that lead some members of the target population to be more likely than others to participate in the program under evaluation."* (p221) Uncontrolled deselection also occurs as participants drop out of the evaluative process.
Endogenous change	*"ordinary or 'natural' sequence of events that influence the outcomes of interest."* (p224)
Secular drift	*"Relatively long-term trends in the community, region or country termed secular drift may produce changes in gross outcomes that enhance or mask the net effects of a program."* (p224)
Interfering events	*"short term events can produce enhancing or masking changes."* (p225)
Maturation trends	Changes in any age-determined target population.

Adapted from Rossi and Freeman, 1993

In attempting to isolate the impact of a social inclusion intervention, researchers are seeking to identify the additionality that results from the impact. The Treasury (2003) define additionality thus:

> *"The success of government intervention in terms of increasing output or employment in a given target area is usually assessed in terms of its 'additionality'. This is the net, rather than its gross, impact after making allowances for what would have happened in the absence of the intervention."* (HM Treasury, 2003)

The Treasury guidance notes that these figures must be adjusted for 'leakage', 'deadweight', 'displacement' and 'substitution' effects, which they define thus:

- *"'Leakage' effects benefit those outside of the spatial area or group which the intervention is intended to benefit.*
- *'Deadweight' refers to outcomes which would have occurred without intervention. Its scale can be estimated by assessing what would have happened in the 'do minimum' case, ensuring that due allowance is made for the other impacts which impact on net additionality.*
- *'Displacement' and 'substitution' impacts are closely related. They measure the extent to which the benefits of a project are offset by reductions of output or employment elsewhere."* (HM Treasury, 2003)

In a similar vein, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister publication *Local Evaluation for Regeneration Partnerships Good Practice Guide* (1999) notes:

- *"an evaluation must only measure the changes or activities that are attributable to the programme itself, that is they must not measure change or activity that may have occurred anyway. The term that covers these situations is* deadweight;
- *it should consider that the activity of the scheme may have resulted in activity being* displaced *from elsewhere and in some instances this may mean that the scheme has had no overall additional benefit;*
- *it should not allow events or activities to be* double counted, *for example if they could also be considered the outputs of other programmes."* (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, 1999)

Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches

Much of the information sought by social inclusion organisations includes individual's opinions, for example, regarding their satisfaction with the area they live in, or their opinion about their own progress. This opinion based information can be collected using either quantitative methods, such as surveys, or soft indicator frameworks, or through qualitative methods such as interviews and focus groups. This information can also be analysed using either quantitative or qualitative methods. There is more discussion of the two approaches in Chapter Four.

2.7 Monitoring and Evaluation of Social Inclusion Projects

2.7.1 Introduction

Social inclusion provides certain challenges in its evaluation. This section draws out the key issues that any effective monitoring and evaluation system must address.

2.7.2 Implications of the Underpinning Theory

The discussion of the terminology in Section 2.2 identified that the terms used to describe deprivation and disadvantage go beyond their face value. The choice of terminology brings with it an underpinning theory of the causes of individual and community disadvantage. Obviously, this theory will impact on the methods chosen to address deprivation and disadvantage.

The term that the Scottish Executive have used in tackling deprivation is 'social inclusion'. There are a number of theoretical implications to the use of this term, rather than one of the other terms outlined in this chapter, in a monitoring and evaluation system, thus:

- Social inclusion, as compared to the absolute definitions of poverty, is relational. Therefore any system of monitoring and evaluation must also recognise societal norms against which to measure social inclusion;

- Social inclusion, implies an active process as compared to poverty and exclusion which are states of being. This implies that there is action undertaken by public policy makers to encourage inclusion;

- Social inclusion, as compared to social exclusion, is a participative process, therefore any monitoring and evaluation system must be capable of recognising process outcomes;

- The state of being socially included is a subjective one, that is, only the individual concerned can identified whether they feel socially included. This has implications for any methods used to evaluated social inclusion initiatives.

2.7.3 Client Group Issues

Section 2.4 identified a wide range of causes of poverty, and Section 2.5 noted a variety in the different groups of people who were at risk of poverty and exclusion. Any monitoring and evaluation system must be capable of reflecting this diversity of experience.

The monitoring and evaluation of public services often falls into two categories, those providing services to customers, and those providing services to clients. Customers often have purchasing power, and a degree of choice in their purchase of services. Clients may have less control over their use of services, and may not participate out of choice. Many of the individuals involved in social inclusion projects could be deemed to be vulnerable, and have very differing abilities in participating in monitoring and evaluation. The system must be able to respond to the diversity of need.

2.7.4 Identifying Measurable Outputs and Outcomes

Many of the outcomes of social inclusion projects could be deemed to be intangible. There have been some attempts to address the issues of intangibles in evaluating anti-poverty and social inclusion work. Whitting (1989) undertook a review of the evaluation of the *European Programme to Combat Poverty* looking at how the cost-effectiveness of anti-poverty projects could be measured. She noted that there were two elements in assessing the costs and effects of projects. Firstly, there were the social and economic costs of the situation borne by the individual or community. She notes that these costs include both those directly affected by poverty, as well as those indirectly affected, such as their families, carers and the state. The second element she identifies are the costs and effects of the services and activities provided. She gives an example of possible costs for a project addressing homelessness. A social inclusion project monitoring and evaluation system must be capable of turning intangible outcomes into measurable concepts.

2.7.5 Providing Useable Information

An effective monitoring and evaluation system must provide also sufficient information to allow the assessment of the success or otherwise of the project, and must feed into a mechanism for the targeting of resources. Finally, the system must be capable of communication to the stakeholders involved.

2.8   Chapter Summary

This chapter raises a number of issues for the measurement of social inclusion initiatives. The discussion of definitions highlighted that there is a wide range of interpretations of what the "problem" actually is, that is whether we need to address issues of poverty, multiple deprivation or social inclusion. In short, the definition we use will result in a methodology to either measure individuals' ability to earn income or in a methodology to measure their ability to participate.

The chapter noted the development of the terminology, and identified in the use of the term 'social justice' a move toward the language of rights. An increased emphasis on the family in was also highlighted.

The chapter identified a range of tools that have been used by evaluators attempting to establish the nature and level of poverty and exclusion. Quantitative research has been used to establish deprivation indices. Qualitative techniques such as surveys, diaries and focus groups have been used by researchers interested in establishing the nature of poverty and exclusion. This research identified certain difficulties such as the reluctance of individuals to describe themselves as poor.

The literature review identified that living in poverty affected individuals' lives by affecting them psychologically, physically (in terms of their health), had implications for their relationships and had practical implications for day-to-day

choices, budgeting and child-rearing. It would be reasonable to assume that any project committed to tackling poverty and social exclusion would be dealing with some, or all, of these issues for their users.

This chapter concluded by establishing the key criteria for a useful theoretical framework for monitoring and evaluation of social inclusion projects. Chapter Three moves on to look at how poverty, social exclusion and social inclusion are addressed by policy makers. Chapter Three builds on the theoretical framework outlined in Section 2.7, by addressing the practicalities of meeting these criteria.

CHAPTER THREE: POLICY CONTEXT

3.1   Introduction

The resources to tackle poverty come by and large from central government. This may be directly to individuals, through the benefits and tax credit system, indirectly through grant aid to statutory and voluntary agencies, and through contributions to the European Union that are then used to fund social inclusion initiatives. In defining how these resources are to be spent the Government has scope to influence the shape of social inclusion work in the UK. This makes social inclusion work a political issue, bringing with it a range of opinion on the causes and nature of poverty in the UK and how it is best tackled.

The previous Chapter highlighted the numerous definitions relating to poverty and social exclusion. Similarly, there is no single definition of what constitutes a social inclusion initiative. A broad definition would be any initiative aimed at improving the ability of an individual to participate in society, or tackling the effects of exclusion, such as poverty or discrimination.   This can be broken down into initiatives operating at a policy development level, those operating at an implementation level, such as alterations to service delivery aimed at addressing the needs of those living in poverty, and initiatives operating on a targeted community level.

There are a number of motivations for government undertaking social inclusion work. The government may seek to address labour market issues by improving the employability of the labour force. It may want to address social justice through improving the quality of life for those on low incomes, or it may have explicitly 'moral' reasons for intervention, that is addressing issues of perceived deviant behaviour through manipulating the behaviour of those in poverty.

Social inclusion is addressed in the UK by all four levels of government: European, UK, the Scottish Parliament and local government, in addition to work undertaken

by the voluntary sector and regeneration partnerships. These are each discussed in turn below.

3.2 The European Union

3.2.1 Introduction

The European Union impacts on poverty in the UK in several ways. First, through the introduction of regulations and directives on poverty and related issues, the European Union instructs and encourages the UK government to respond to poverty in particular ways. Second, the European Union addresses poverty through the funding of initiatives to tackle poverty, and through related funding, such as grants for vocational training. Finally the European Union makes certain social and economic requirements on member states that affect poverty policy.

3.2.2 Historical Perspective

The European Union was established by the Treaty of Rome in 1957. The main objectives were:

- *"Freedom of movement between member states of goods - unimpeded by customs duties and quantitative restrictions.*
- *Free movement of labour.*
- *Free movement of services.*
- *Free movement of capital.*
- *Trade protection against non-member countries by a way of a common external tariff, i.e. a customs barrier, so that the same duty is levied on goods coming into the Community regardless of which member state imported them."* (Roney, 1991, p17)

The 1985 Single European Act further developed integration by removing non-tariff barriers to trade. Social inclusion work and equal opportunities work was undertaken using Article 235 of successive treaties which states that the Council of Ministers can act in a policy area if there is a unanimous decision to do so.

The Maastricht Treaty contained several measures that impact on poverty policy. First, it contained agreement on an irreversible movement toward economic and monetary union. Second, it contained agreement on a number of political and social issues including the introduction of a union citizenship, including freedom of movement, the right of residence and the right to vote and to be eligible for elections in the municipal and European level. Third, it contained a Social Chapter providing for the basic rights of workers in the Community. The UK, alone of all the EC states, opted not to sign this part of the agreement, and it is contained as an annexed protocol in the Treaty.

The Treaty of Amsterdam amended the Treaty of European Union to give competence to social inclusion and equal opportunities work. The Treaty of Amsterdam introduced a new provision on Social Exclusion, which means that there will be an explicit legal basis for European Union action on social inclusion. In addition, this provision also guarantees the right of the Union to provide small scale funding on 'incentive measures' in the field of social exclusion, such as the exchange of information and best practice.

Room (1993) notes that while being concerned primarily with preserving economic security, the European Community was also concerned that adaptations would need to be made to their systems of social security in order to meet the requirements of economic advance. To this end they have undertaken three anti-poverty programmes. The first European Poverty Programme (1975-1980) was strongly based on action research with nine national reports on poverty and social inclusion policy being undertaken. The second programme (1986-1989) was action led, with no research element as such. By the third programme (1990-1994) large scale interventions were being undertaken with a series of cross-national studies.

3.2.3 Current Initiatives and Policy

Social inclusion measures are funded under several of the current European funding objectives. The European Structural Funds were established in 1975 to help to reduce economic disparities between different regions in Europe. They

provide support to economic development and social measures across Scotland, although the funding varies depending on the area of Scotland. The Structural Funds most relevant for social inclusion work are as follows. The European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) provides support for the promotion of economic and social cohesion, particularly relating to jobs, infrastructure and the development of small and medium sized enterprise. The European Social Fund (ESF) aims to support measures to tackle unemployment, to develop human resources and social integration into the labour market in order to promote a high level of employment, as well as equality between men and women, sustainable development and economic and social cohesion.

The funding available in Scotland is broken down into Objective 3 funding, which is available across the whole of Scotland, Objective 2 which is targeted on areas of deprivation, and the Highlands and Islands Special Programme available only in that area.

Objective 2 funding is distributed on a regional basis by an Eastern, Western and Southern partnership body. All three partnerships have different strategic aims, but each includes objectives aimed at regenerating disadvantaged communities and developing community economic development.

The Scottish Objective 3 Programme assists disadvantaged groups in the community who, for a variety of reasons, are excluded both economically and socially. Priority 2 of Objective Three funding specifically targets exclusion, as noted in the table below:

Table 3.1: European Social Fund Objective Three: Priority Two – Addressing Social Exclusion

Measure	Scope of Activity	Target Groups
Addressing Exclusion of Thematic Groups	• Guidance and counselling Pre-vocational training Vocational Training (including core skills and IT) Activities and support for Individual Learning Accounts for excluded groups • Work Related Activities	Individuals who are jobless and a member of one of the following groups: Ethnic Minorities; People with Disabilities; Homeless; Drug Users, Former Drug Users and Alcohol Abusers; People with Literacy/Numeracy Difficulties; Young People Leaving Care;

Measure	Scope of Activity	Target Groups
	• Job Search Activities • Aftercare • Wage subsidy	Ex-Offenders; Older Unemployed People (50+); Pre School Leavers (12-16 years olds); Lone Parents; Travellers; and Long Term Unemployed.
Addressing Urban Exclusion	• As above	Individuals resident within designated areas under the Objective 2 Programmes (2000-2006) and Geographically Targeted Social Inclusion Partnerships (SIPs)
Addressing Rural Exclusion	• As above	Individual residents within areas designated as eligible rural exclusion areas by the Objective 2 Programmes (2000-2006)
Capacity Building for Organisations Involved in Delivering Support to Target Groups	• Organisation and management audits. • The design, development and implementation of new systems, including quality standards and assurance systems	Organisations and intermediaries who are, or intend to, provide ESF support to target groups within Priority Two.

Source: Objective 3 Partnership (Scotland) Ltd (2003)

On 25th March 1999, the European Council of Ministers agreed a package of support for the Highlands and Islands of Scotland for 2000-2006. Amongst the specific strategic objectives agreed was "to reduce social and economic disparities" in the region. Inclusion is addressed under Priority 3 - Human Resource Development Measure 2 - Promoting Social Inclusion (ESF). £192.5m is available to the Highlands and Islands Special Programme area until 2006.

3.2.4 Monitoring and Evaluating European Union Funded Projects

Projects receiving funding from the European Structural Funds are required to provide a range of information regarding the project, its staffing and finance and, for European Social Fund projects, details of its beneficiaries. Although most of the monitoring information requested is quantitative, the Scottish Executive guidance also stresses the importance of monitoring quality, and suggests that projects use methods such as 'mystery shoppers', focus groups, and surveys.

The Guidance lists a series of core indicators for all training projects, to allow comparability. For the European Social Fund these include:

- ❖ Number of beneficiaries of ESF assistance
- ❖ % of those who complete their course
- ❖ % of those leaving ESF funded training for positive reasons
- ❖ % of leavers who gain a qualification or part qualification
- ❖ % of beneficiaries who receive assistance specifically geared toward self-employment
- ❖ Number of existing companies given direct assistance from the ESF
- ❖ % of parents with children under 5, who are in employment 6 months after ESF assistance

The European Regional Development Fund has project level core indicators against four headings: jobs and employment, assistance to business, social inclusion and equal opportunities, and environment.

Armstrong *et al* (2000) notes the limitations of the existing measurement methods for community economic development projects (aimed at addressing issues of poverty) funded under Objective Two, noting that there are difficulties presented by the multiple objectives, multiple beneficiary groups, capacity building and interlocking initiatives of the work. They note the limitations of baseline analysis used in many evaluations, in that it cannot estimate the counterfactual situation. They raise the need to be able to compare community economic development with more traditional regional policy, and in order to do so call for projects to be evaluated for deadweight, displacement and opportunity cost.

3.3 Central and Devolved Government

3.3.1 Historical Perspective

At the level of central and local government attempts at poor relief have existed since at least Medieval times. Several issues have been constant themes

throughout the history of tackling poverty in the UK. The first recurring theme has been whose responsibility it is to provide welfare. Initially, the lead on this was taken by the Church through alms-giving and almshouses, with both central and local government becoming involved at a later date. Midwinter (1994) notes that centralised poverty policy dates from the Statute of 1601 which formalised existing poor relief by obliging each parish to administer relief through the office of an overseer who was appointed by magistrates, and who had the authority to levy rates on property to provide for the destitute. The urbanisation that followed the Industrial Revolution led to a number of new problems for the emergent local governments, who had to deal with issues of sanitation, water supply and ill health created by urban living conditions.

A second theme has been how the provision of relief should be given - through cash payments or through the provision of in-kind support. The early seventeenth century saw the first workhouses established and the development of "outdoor relief", where paupers received poor relief in their own homes. The most notable system of outdoor relief was that undertaken by the Berkshire magistrates in 1795 known as the Speenhamland system. This system used the poor rates to subsidise paupers, with reference made to the size of a man's family and the price of bread. Midwinter notes that this is the first instance of an attempt to link poverty to family size, as pursued in latter day family allowances, and the link to the price of bread was a pre-cursor of index linking of benefits.

The late nineteenth century saw a move away from individualist approaches to poverty to a more collectivist local approach. The workhouse continued to be a prime focus for the treatment of poverty, but with some slackening of the rules. Under the 1929 Local Government Act local authorities took over the specialist work of the poor law, and the Local Government Board took over the work of the Poor Law Board. Old age pensions were introduced in 1908, although this was in effect a "nationalisation" of poor relief that was already being provided to aged paupers. The 1911 National Insurance Act instituted a pattern of mixed contributions by employers, employee and the government that provided benefits for them in the event of sickness or unemployment. This did not, however, prevent people returning to the poor law provision when their benefit had ended, and in

1934 the Unemployed Assistance Board was founded to deal with those who had run out of benefit. In 1947 the Public Assistance Board took over the work of the Public Assistance Committees, which meant that poor relief was now a central rather than local matter.

The immediate post-world war two period saw the most major changes in the provision of welfare. The war had seen unprecedented levels of collectivism in the provision of services. Against a background of Keynesian demand management and nationalisation of industries, the Beveridge Report was published in 1943 which identified how welfare could be used to deal with issues of poverty. In 1944 the Churchill government passed the National Insurance Act which established the Ministry of National Insurance, which amalgamated with the War Pensions department to become the Ministry of Pensions and passed the Family Allowance Act in 1945. Under the Attlee government the 1946 Act allowed for a number of benefits including payments for sickness, unemployment, retirement, maternity, funeral, widowhood and dependency grants. The Act was universal in nature with everyone entitled to insurance.

There continued to be a consensus approach to welfare between the major political parties throughout the fifties, sixties and most of the 1970's. Over this period there was a tremendous increase in the amount paid in welfare benefits. Using 1980 prices the real sums increased from £8 billion in 1960 to over £22 billion in 1980, with the pension bill alone accounting for half the increase (Midwinter, 1994). There were other developments over this period such as the development of social services departments, formed under the 1970 Local Authorities Social Services Act and the launch of accredited social work training. The 1966 National Insurance Act made benefits other than state pensions earnings-related and in 1973 contributions began to be collected through the tax system.

The consensus on benefit spending broke down in the 1970's. The post-war boom ended with the oil price crisis of 1973-4, and most importantly there was the election of a government in 1979 who were determined to attack the existing consensus and replace it with a more individualistic economic and social

philosophy. Attempts to control welfare spending were made through the 1986 Social Security Act which included reductions in the State Earning Related Pension Scheme, and the replacement of supplementary benefit by income support.

Although an analysis of the benefit system is beyond the scope of this research it is worth noting that the Beveridge Report still forms the basis for the UK benefits system, but does not necessarily address the needs of the groups that were identified earlier as being a particular risk of poverty. It was written in a time of near full employment, and it was anticipated that this would continue, and the taxation revenue would fund the limited welfare requirements of society. It was also written before wide spread immigration into the UK and at a time when the role of women in society was considerably different from today. Finally, the Beveridge Report did not anticipate the increase in longevity of the post war years, with an ageing population's welfare needs being supported by a relatively smaller working population.

The Scottish Parliament, elected on May 6, 1999, took up its full legislative powers on July 1. The Scottish Parliament now has responsibility for most domestic policy matters, with international matters remaining at the UK level. The key areas of devolved responsibility are as follows:

Table 3.2: Areas of Devolved Responsibility

Key areas of devolved responsibility	Examples of issues
Health	Nurses' pay and conditions
Education	School standards
Transport	Road safety
Housing	Public sector housing strategy
Training	Lifelong learning, youth training
Economic Development	Regeneration of industrial areas
Agriculture	Animal welfare, crofting
Environment	Protecting Scotland's environment
Main areas still covered by Westminster (reserved):	**Examples of issues**
Constitutional matters	Electoral systems, devolution and the Union
Foreign and Defence policy	European Integration, Armed Forces
Most economic policy	Inflation, unemployment
Social Security	Levels of benefit
Medical ethics	Embryology research, abortion, genetics

Source: Scottish Parliament website (2000)

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Responsibility for matters impacting on social inclusion is, therefore, shared between Westminster and the Scottish Parliament, with Westminster retaining responsibility for issues such as the benefits system, policies to tackle unemployment and the Minimum Wage, and the Scottish Parliament having responsibility for issues of regeneration and the implementation of training.

3.3.2 Current Initiatives and Policies

Since 1997 there has been a renewed interest in government action on poverty. National government policy to tackle social inclusion includes a variety of benefit reforms, national strategies such as the New Deal and the National Childcare Strategy, covering both Scotland and England and Wales. These are summarised as follows:

Table 3.3: Government Initiatives on Social Inclusion

Issue	Initiatives
Unemployment	New Deals Employment Zones National Childcare Strategy
Incomes and the benefits system	Welfare reform Minimum wage Working Families Tax Credit Rise in Income Support levels for pensioners
Crime and drugs	National drugs strategy Local crime reduction partnerships Measures on youth crime and racially motivated crime Measures against anti-social behaviour including anti-social neighbours and witness protection
Young people	Government drive for school standards (OFSTED) Local Education Action Zones Project to cut youth drop-out from education, training Project to cut teenage pregnancy
Housing	Single source of capital support Best Value Tenant Participation Compact Wider reform of local government
Regions	Creation of Regional Development Agencies to promote sustainable development and regeneration Single Regeneration Budget for area-based economic and social regeneration (England)

Issue	Initiatives
	Social Inclusion Partnerships (Scotland)
Health	Inquiry into Health Inequalities Local Health Action Zones Healthy Living Centres funded by National Lottery money White papers on health 'Our Healthier Nation' and 'Working Together for a Healthier Scotland' Greater support for mental health services

Adapted from Duffy (1999)

A Social Exclusion Unit has been established within the Cabinet Office to co-ordinate government policy on social inclusion. The work of the Social Exclusion Unit to date has included the development of a National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal, and the establishment of 18 Policy Action Teams which have produced reports on various policy issues such as neighbourhood renewal, and young people.

The Prime Minister has appointed a network of Ministers in the Departments working closely with the Unit and chaired by the Minister for the Cabinet Office, to chase progress across Government on the implementation of past SEU reports, as well as acting as an informal sounding board for the Unit's future work programme.

In Scotland, co-ordination of social inclusion initiatives is undertaken through the Scottish Social Inclusion Network. The role of SSIN is two-fold:

> "To help the Executive develop its strategy for the promotion of social inclusion in Scotland, and
> To help the different sectors involved to co-ordinate their respective inclusion strategies." (Scottish Executive website)

The Network fulfils this role by discussing and considering aspects of the Executive's policies and programmes to promote social inclusion. In addition to this the Network acts as a forum within which the members can discuss and co-ordinate their respective strategies, although the size of the group means that not all sectors are represented.

3.3.3 Monitoring and Evaluating Government Policy

At both Westminster and Scottish Executive levels, steps have been taken to attempt to establish the effectiveness of a wide range of government policies that impact on social inclusion. The Westminster government have produced an Annual Report entitled *"Opportunity for All: Tackling Poverty and Social Exclusion"* which outlines the government's strategy on social inclusion and outlines the work they are undertaking to address poverty and social exclusion. As part of this they outline a number of policy milestones and targets which will indicate if they are succeeding.

The Scottish Executive outlined their strategy for tacking poverty and social exclusion in a publication called *"Social Justice ... A Scotland Where Everyone Matters".* This outlines a number of milestones and targets to be met. Progress on these targets was reported in the *"Social Justice Annual Report".* The Annual Report makes use of information from the following sources:

- 5-14 Attainment levels
- Community Care statistics
- Death data
- General Registrar Scotland population projections
- Higher Education Funding Council for England performance indicators
- Households Below Average Income dataset
- Labour Force Survey
- Rough sleepers estimate
- Schools attendance and absence data
- Scottish Crime Survey
- Scottish Drugs Misuse Database
- Scottish Health Survey
- Scottish Household Survey
- Scottish Qualifications Authority qualifications dataset
- Self reported health data

- Social Inclusion Partnership monitoring data
- Statistical return from local authorities based on the homeless persons legislation

3.4 Local Government

3.4.1 Local Government Initiatives

Local authorities have a long history of involvement in tackling poverty. Higgins and Ball (1999) describe the local authority position thus:

> "Local authorities are in direct contact with the community and many of the basic statutory services such as Education, Social Work and Housing involve alleviation of poverty (e.g. free school meals to children of deprived families, social care strategies and the homeless). In addition, local authorities have discretionary powers to carry out certain non-statutory services, some of which may be turned to social inclusion work (e.g. economic development and setting up credit unions)."
> (Higgins and Ball, 1999, p62)

Alcock and Craig (1998) identify a wide range of initiatives undertaken by local authorities including:

- "decentralisation and restructuring of local authority services
- introduction of rebates and remittances from local authority charges
- Welfare rights and take up work with social security claimants
- debt and money advice support
- support for credit union schemes and local exchange and trading schemes (LETS)
- partnership initiatives with other statutory bodies (such as Health Authorities) and voluntary sector bodies
- equal opportunities initiatives
- economic development work to protect and create employment opportunities
- community development work to encourage and empower local poor people." (Alcock and Craig, 1998, pp555-556)

A variety of work has been undertaken to assess the level of social inclusion work currently undertaken by local authorities. Craig (1994) reviewed social inclusion

work undertaken in Scotland. More recent research in England and Wales by Harvey noted that 117 local authorities had formal social inclusion strategies with a further 99 developing them (Harvey, 1998).

Higgins and Ball (1999) undertook a review of the social inclusion strategies of Scottish local authorities, prior to local authority re-organisation. They found that approximately 25% of the 57 responding local authorities had social inclusion strategies. From their research they noted the following points:

The majority of the strategies were corporate with all Council departments having an involvement.

- Most of the strategies dealt with social exclusion rather than being narrowly focused on financial poverty.
- Most of the strategies were linked to some form of decentralisation of Council services.
- Most of the strategies were partnership based, with partners including the voluntary sector, community groups and private and public sector bodies.
- Most of the social exclusion strategies tackled urban poverty, with only a minority tackling rural deprivation.
- The strategies included a wide range of non-statutory services.

3.4.2 Monitoring and Evaluating Local Authority Procedures

There has been an increasing interest in establishing the effectiveness of the public sector in recent years, and has resulted in an increasing use of evaluation. The changing political environment of the 1980's and 1990's and the impact this has had on stimulating interest in local authorities in performance assessment has been well documented (Stewart and Walsh, 1992; Sanderson, 1998). They identify a number of influences which are noted below.

Successive government initiatives meant an increased need for local authorities to consider value for money. Both compulsory competitive tendering (CCT) and the

best value regime (BVR) have forced local authorities to examine how they provide their services and how they ensure value for money. The CCT contracting regime had a particular emphasis on ensuring economy in local authority services with local authorities bound to take the lowest tender. With the development of BVR, effectiveness has become more of an issue with the added emphasis on quality as well as cost.

Linked to this the move to an "enabling" role in areas of local government services such as housing forced local authorities to work in partnership with other agencies which has again led to the need to consider how services are actually provided. In addition, the move towards competitive bidding processes such as City Challenge and Single Regeneration Budget in England, and the Urban Programme and Social Inclusion Partnership funding in Scotland required local authorities to plan and set objectives and targets.

Local authorities were also needed to respond to the performance indicators required by the Audit Commission for many of the services that they provide.

There are internal issues for local authorities too. The last two decades has seen as increasing interest by local authorities in improving their managerial performance, which has often involved looking to the private sector or other sources of 'best practice'. Allied to this has been an increasing recognition of the users of local authority services as consumers, with all the rights and expectations that this implies.

Local authorities have used a range of techniques to assess their performance, as outlined in the table below:

Table 3.4: Performance Measurement Techniques

Technique	Description
Performance Indicators	Performance indicators are a measure of a local authority's performance in exercising a function.
Best Value	Best value is a duty to deliver services to clear standards - covering both cost and quality - by the most effective, economic and efficient means available. In carrying out this duty local authorities will be accountable to local people and have a responsibility to central

Technique	Description
	government in its role as representative of the broader national interest.
Benchmarking	"the continuous process of measuring products, services and practices against the toughest competitors or those companies recognised as industry leaders, (that is)... the search for industry best practices that will lead to superior performance."
DIN ISO 9000-9004	The DIN ISO 9000-9004 is an internationally recognised benchmark for quality management.
Citizen's Charter	The Citizen's Charter, launched in 1991, was a ten-year programme which aimed to raise the standard of public services and to make them more responsive to the needs and wishes of users. The Charter was based on six key principles: • standards • information and openness • choice and consultation • courtesy and helpfulness • putting things right: and • value for money

These techniques have a number of implications for assessing the effectiveness of social inclusion initiatives. Social inclusion initiatives are not a statutory services and therefore there are no statutorily required indicators that directly cover this area of service provision. However, a number of comments can be made about related indicators, such as those used by the Education or Social Services sections of local authorities. Performance indicators can lead to a concentration on short term outputs, rather than longer term analysis of outcomes. Smith (1995) notes that performance indicators are short term proxies for outcomes that may be too difficult to establish. He noted a lack of movement toward the use of outcomes in measurement, which is due in part to the developing contract culture in the public sector. There can also be an over-emphasis on tangible indicators; for example, Palmer (1993), in a sample survey of local authority education, personal social services, highways, housing and refuse collection departments, found that 90% used cost as a performance indicator, while only 38% used customer satisfaction, reflecting a concentration on inputs rather than outputs.

Brown and Elrick (1997) note the role of customers and citizens in best value, and raise concerns about certain groups of 'customers' who may find it difficult to have their voices heard. They state:

"Those who have the least power in the market place are those disadvantaged who are a major focus for community development support. Customers exercise choice, they have all the rights and no responsibilities, as long as they have the economic means, to partake in the market place... To fully realise and implement all principles underpinning Best Value Councils should go beyond the rights of the customer advocate and support the rights and responsibilities of the citizen, and recognise the key role of community development in policies aimed at developing and supporting these." (Brown and Elrick,1997, p84)

The issue of for whom performance measurement is undertaken is also key. The information that is collected and the way that it is presented can vary depending on who the stakeholders are. There are different reasons put forward for involving users of services in evaluation, both ethical reasons (Palfrey and Thomas[]) and practical reasons (Knos and McAlister, 1995; Pollitt, 1988). However, other stakeholders can include potential users, taxpayers, employers, staff, the general public and government (Smith, 1995).

Kourzin *et al* (1999) note that in the public sector arena "competition" can only occur between agencies providing largely the same goods and services. They note:

> *"If benchmarking is supposed to introduce competition into the public sector it has to be done, it is argued, between public agencies with very similar goals and organisational characteristics so that actors actually perceive differences of qualitative improvements in delivering similar services to constituencies." (Kourzin, 1999, p125)*

They note that each type of public sector agency has different constraints which make it difficult to implement procedures that work well elsewhere.

3.5 Voluntary Sector

3.5.1 Voluntary Sector

The voluntary sector has a key role to play in the provision of services to individuals experiencing poverty and social inclusion, and in campaigning for their

rights. There are almost 59,806 paid staff in Scottish charities - equivalent to about 49,000 full-time posts. The wider voluntary sector - including English-registered charities working in Scotland and voluntary organisations who are not registered charities - is estimated to employ nearly 100,000 people. Nearly 300,000 Scots regularly act as volunteers. The majority work for small organisations with incomes under £25,000; 60 per cent of them are female (SCVO website, 1999).

Funding for the voluntary sector comes from a wide range of sources. In addition to the statutory sources of funding noted above, voluntary organisations can seek funding from a range of grant making trusts, ranging from large established trusts such as Lloyds/TSB Foundation Charity Projects (Comic Relief) and BBC Children in Need, to small trusts and bequests that distribute only a few hundred pounds every year. Each grant making trust will require projects to be accountable for the funding they receive; some of the larger trusts have very detailed monitoring and evaluation processes.

The Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (2003) note that voluntary organisations in Scotland contribute to community regeneration by providing services to marginalised groups, giving a voice to communities of place and interest and filling gaps in market provision. They state:

> "Because of their independence, their access to resources denied to public sector agencies, their clear focus on the needs of their constituencies and their usual closeness to users, voluntary organisations are able to add value to expenditure. One form of added value crucial for regeneration communities is social capital." (SCVO, 2003, p1)

3.5.2 Monitoring and Evaluating Voluntary Sector Projects

Community development principles underpin much of the work undertaken in the voluntary sector. A 1996 research project undertaken for the Scottish Office noted that there was a dearth of evaluation of community development practice, either quantitative or qualitative. This resulted in the development of a series of indicators for community development, through a project entitled "Achieving Better Community Development (ABCD)".

One of the outcomes of the ABCD project was a guidebook assisting in planning and evaluation of projects, with the development of indicators tables giving examples of potential outputs and outcomes from community development projects.

One example of a larger trust is the Lloyds Foundation for Scotland. The Foundation receives 1%, of the pre-tax profits of Lloyds TSB, 19.46% of which is distributed in Scotland, a sum of around £6.7 million. As part of this research, an interview was undertaken with the Deputy Chief Executive for the Lloyds Foundation for Scotland who outlined the monitoring and evaluation process for projects which applied to them. She noted that they asked projects who applied to them for funding to supply five 'SMART' objectives, against which they would be monitored, namely specific, measurable, attainable, results-focussed and timely objectives . The projects were asked to update these objectives on an annual basis, and 50% of projects that received funding were visited by the Foundation. There was a large degree of flexibility in the monitoring process.

She noted that in establishing who should receive funding, the Foundation used a number of assessors who visited projects. As the number of applicants always exceeded the amount of funding, there was then a discussion between the assessors about who should receive funding before a final decision was made. The final decision on who should receive funding was made by a Board of Trustees.

3.6   Regeneration Partnerships

3.6.1 Historical Perspective

Central and local government have responded to the long term deprivation of areas through targeted social inclusion projects. Alcock (1993) examines the history of targeted social inclusion strategies. He noted that such strategies grew out of the views that the poor were in some way different and unable to grasp the

opportunities available to them to escape poverty. It was also perceived by policy makers to be a "cheap" way of tackling poverty.

Maclennan (1998) in the keynote address at the National Regeneration Convention noted the long term consistency of area poverty:

> *"Very often areas that are deprived and disadvantaged now have been deprived and disadvantaged in the last census and the censuses in 1980, 1970 and 1960. If you look at the poorest areas in London now, they were also poor areas 60, 70, 80 years ago." (Maclennan, 1998)*

Early targeted poverty initiatives were often closely based on existing American initiatives. The initial programmes were education based (Education Priority Areas) before moving on to wider projects (Urban Aid, Community Development Projects). Alcock (1993) notes the growth in advice and welfare rights work that grew out of these projects.

Scotland has had a range of regeneration initiatives targeted on deprived areas. Dundee SIP (1998) note that

> *"Urban regeneration in Scotland has evolved into a distinctive approach, which relies on the geographical targeting of aid, the principles of partnership and empowerment and the implementation of initiatives within a strategic framework."* (Dundee SIP website)

The major source of funding of social, economic and environmental improvements of urban areas in Scotland has been the Urban Programme, with funding being targeted on the most deprived ten per cent of urban Census enumeration districts within Scotland. Urban Programme grants provided 75% of the capital and revenue funding, with the remaining 25% coming from local authorities. In order to access Urban Programme funding, projects had to meet a range of criteria set up by the Scottish Office, including:

> ❖ *"The demonstration of a direct and specific benefit to deprived areas, or to particular sections of the community;*
> ❖ *The creation of a new asset, resource or service;*
> ❖ *The demonstration of initiative;*
> ❖ *Sponsorship by a local authority."* (Dundee SIP, 1998, p2)

Examples of regeneration initiatives in Scotland are outlined below.

Community Development Programme

The *Community Development Programme* was established in 1969 as part of the Urban Programme with 12 projects across the UK. The Scottish project was based in Paisley. The projects were to provide feedback to central government on the impact of policies and services, and action research was a large element of the work with each project having a research team. Loney (1983) notes of the Community Programme:

> *"Set up on the basis of social pathology notions of poverty, which essentially blamed the poor for their plight, the 12 projects located in deprived areas, quickly focused their attention on government and the wider socio-economic system."* (Loney, 1983, p1)

New Life for Urban Scotland Initiative

The *New Life for Urban Scotland Initiative* was announced in 1988 and focused on four areas of Scotland: Castlemilk in Glasgow, Ferguslie Park in Paisley, Wester Hailes in Edinburgh and Whitfield in Dundee. These were all peripheral housing estates of varying size. The initiative had an emphasis on partnership work between the local Councils and the private sector in order to facilitate the regeneration of the areas.

Poverty 3 Programme

The European Community's *Poverty 3 Programme* (1989 - June 1994) consisted of 29 action projects and 12 Innovatory Initiatives throughout the European Community. The Pilton Partnership in Edinburgh was established in 1990 as part of this initiative. The final report of the Partnership notes that the programme focus was on tackling the poverty, social exclusion and powerlessness of Europe's least privileged citizens. The programme set a number of guideline's:

"Encourage the participation of the least privileged groups
Build partnerships between Government, local authorities and other
public and private agencies
Tackle the many facets of poverty in a multi-dimensional way
Make sure that poverty was an issue at local and national level." (Pilton
Partnership, 1994, p4)

The Partnership prioritised four areas:

- Childcare

- Unemployment and employment

- Education and training

- Welfare benefits

The types of project developed included a childcare action group, a Job Skills
Club, benefit take up campaigns, the "Barri Grubb" food co-op and the
establishment of a local Business Support Group.

Priority Partnership Areas/Regeneration Programmes

Priority Partnership Areas encouraged city-wide strategies on urban regeneration
and more specific proposals for measures to address the problems of social and
economic disadvantage. Funding was made available on a competitive basis. In
November 1996, PPAs were designated in Aberdeen, Dundee, Edinburgh,
Glasgow, Easterhouse, Inverclyde, North Lanarkshire, Renfrewshire, South
Ayrshire and West Dunbartonshire. *Regeneration Programmes* covered smaller
areas which have similar concentrations of disadvantage. The PPAs have all
been converted into Social Inclusion Partnerships (see Section 3.13).

3.6.2 Issues

Alcock (1993) raises several concerns about targeted social inclusion initiatives.
First, he notes that the overall resources that have gone into such work are
relatively small and that much of these limited resources go to fund professional
salaries. Second, he voices concern about the pathological model of poverty that
underpins some of the "self-help" projects. Finally, he raises concern about those

people living in poverty who are not in a targeted area, for example, poor people living in rural areas who will not benefit from this form of social inclusion initiative.

Several commentators have raised concerns about the increasing number of partnerships required to access funding [Taylor (1999), Collins (1999)] and the effect this has on community activists. Jackie Haq, a community activist in Scotswood, Newcastle noted:

> *"When you look at the job description for a community representative, the first part is, one there's no pay, two, there's long hours with no set limit, and the hours increase the more you get involved. You can either end up with burn-out, like stress or overload, or you can end up as the unpaid community expert, who moves from one regime to the next, so you get on from City Challenge to SRB to New Deal." (Haq,1998)*

There are also issues connecting to the competitive bidding process of accessing regeneration funds. Turok and Hopkins (1997) noted the problems with the PPA bidding process thus:

> *"...the lack of an open process of selection, the failure to apply criteria consistently, and the failure to ensure that the need criteria was applied as anything other than a basic qualifying standard. Further to this might be added the dis-benefits for the losers of a competitive selection process, which may involve the loss of innovative policy design for local areas, the disruption of established programmes and the effects on working partnerships which may break up of become fragmented as a result of a set back in the outcome."* (SIP Monitoring and Evaluation Unit, 1998, p6)

3.6.3   Monitoring and Evaluating Past Regeneration Projects

Regeneration projects in Scotland have been evaluated using a range of qualitative and quantitative methods, as Table 3.5 illustrates.

Table 3.5: Evaluations of Regeneration Projects

Title of assessment	Nature of the project	What was assessed	Value for money considerations	Intangible outputs considered
"Value for money in the Community Programme"	Evaluation of a national project providing temporary employment for long term unemployed	The terms of reference were "to review the current arrangements for helping long term unemployed people through the Community Programme and to report on its effects, outputs, and presentation in terms of benefit to the community and value for money for the taxpayer".	An explicit VFM study, it looked at the added value provided by the CP by looking at the outputs • Improving individuals' prospects of getting training and permanent employment • Providing a service or asset to the community	Noted the wider economic and social benefits including greater stability, less crime, less demand on health services but did not quantify. Noted the lack of information about the benefit of CP to the community.
"Assessing the impact of Urban Policy"	Assessment of the overall impact of central government urban policy in England over the last decade.	• Quantitative or statistical analysis which examines the relationship between expenditure and socio-economic outcomes in a sample of 123 English authorities (comprised of the 57 UPAs, 40 similar 'marginal' authorities and 26 'comparator' authorities) to enable comparisons between places which have received more and less public assistance. These financial inputs are related to five measures of outcomes (unemployment, job change, small firm creation, house price change and migration of 25-34 year olds). • Qualitative information from surveys of the recipients of policy; both the residents of inner urban areas and of employers who operate within big cities; and • Qualitative information from discussions with engaged in policy implementation.	Used regression analysis to examine the relationship between expenditure and socio-economic change.	None of the indicators used attempted to measure intangible outcomes.
"Partnership against poverty and exclusion? Local regeneration and excluded communities in the UK"	UK element of a transnational research programme looking at the role of partnership in promoting social cohesion.	"Each national research study included a number of elements and these provide the structure for this publication: • an overview of the national policy context for local partnership , including the nature and extent of problems of poverty and social exclusion and with special reference to the policies and perspectives of different partners and interests. • A 'portfolio' of examples of local partnership, illustrating different dimensions of current practice • In-depth analysis of the structure, working methods and outcomes of local partnership by means of three detailed case studies • Conclusions and policy recommendations for those involved in partnerships at the local level and also for national and EU programmes."	Did not examine the value for money implications of partnership.	Noted the intangible gains from partnership for example, co-ordination, integration of policy and resources and improved responsiveness to the needs of excluded communities and social groups, but did not identify indicators for measuring this.

Title of assessment	Nature of the project	What was assessed	Value for money considerations	Intangible outputs considered
"City Challenge Interim National Evaluation"	Evaluation of national regeneration project aimed at attracting external investment into disadvantaged city areas.	• Addressing questions about the design, implementation and progress of City Challenge as a national policy instument for tackling urban regeneration; • Draw out lessons of good practice; • Assess the progress of the City Challenge to date; • Develop a research model to inform the final evaluation.	Measured private sector leverage, additionality and value added benefits, and noted the following benefits: • It enabled a more strategic and comprehensive approach to problems; it allowed developments requiring substantial pump priming to take place • It speeded up developments which would otherwise have proceeded in a much more piecemeal way, it at all; • Its spatial targeting induced confidence and therefore triggered investment and related activity; • It enabled activity targeted on groups who would otherwise have been neglected or excluded.	None. All indicators measured tangible changes e.g. house completions, jobs, improved derelict land, floorspace created, business start ups.
"An evaluation of the Urban Development Grant Programme"	Comprehensive review of the first four years of the the Urban Development Grant (UDG)	"The purpose of this study has been to carry out a comprehensive review of the first four years of (UDG) programme in order to provide: (i) An evaluation of the impacts and value for money of UDG projects in responding to their objectives, and an assessment of the factors that have been particularly important in governing variable performance levels; (ii) An assessment of the benefits of the UDG programme in terms of the economic, social and environmental effects of the projects; (iii) An operational review highlighting those institutional arrangements and procedures which appear to have had the strongest influence on performance; (iv) A set of recommendations on the future decisions of the UDG programme and its administrative stucture and procedures."	Looked at the cost per job, private sector gearing and the failure to success rating of applications.	None. Did not look at less tangible measurements, but noted that they were concentrating on primary rather than secondary impacts due to the study taking place very soon after the end of the UDG programme.
"Final evaluation of the Enterprise Zones"		The achievements of the Enterprise Zones were to be assessed in the light of two broad yardsticks of performance, namely: • The extent to which Zones have maintained and/or generated additional economic activity and employment, both on-Zone and in their local areas; and • The extent to which Zones have contributed to the physical regeneration of their local areas through the provision of infrastructure, environmental improvement and the stimulation of the property market.	Looked at private sector leverage, hectares of land developed, number of companies in the Zones and their characteristics and the cost per job. Measured for additionality, displacement, deadweight and multipliers.	None. Did not assess intangible outputs of outcomes.

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Title of assessment	Nature of the project	What was assessed	Value for money considerations	Intangible outputs considered
Interim evaluations of the Castlemilk, Ferguslie Park, Wester Hailes and Whitfield Partnerhips	Four separate evaluations of area based Urban Partnerships. All evaluations worked from the same brief.	The Castlemilk researchers noted their objectives as: ♦ To record the evolution of the partnership since its inception and record significant shifts and developments; ♦ To analyse baseline and subsequent survey data in order to assess the impact of the Partnership to date; ♦ To evaluate the utility of the Partnership concept and its form, impact and functioning and impact in the Partnership area; ♦ To inform and contribute to thinking about the future form and direction of the Partnership initiatives in particular and regeneration policies in general.	Measured for additionality and displacement. Noted the difficulty of undertaking proper cost-benefit analysis due to the high number of intangible benefits, timescales, and difficulties of linking outcomes with objectives. Displacement calculations were also questionable as there was no actual monitoring information about the impact on other areas.	Noted the difficulties of proving causality between e.g. health and improved housing (Castlemilk). Acknowledged that many of the benefits were intangible but felt it would be a "highly artificial" exercise to assign a financial value to them" (Ferguslie Park).

Missing pages are unavailable

3.7 Social Inclusion Partnerships

3.7.1 Social Inclusion Partnerships

Social Inclusion Partnerships (SIPs) are local umbrella bodies made up of representatives from statutory bodies such as local authorities and health boards, the voluntary sector, community representatives, Universities and Colleges and to a lesser degree the private sector. Their task is to develop local strategies and fund local projects to tackle social exclusion. Partners are expected to contribute resources from their mainstream budgets to the work of SIPs. The Government has called this 'bending of mainstream budgets'.

The Scottish Executive (1999) note that the Social Inclusion Partnerships are structured around three main principles – the need to prevent further exclusion from happening, the need to co-ordinate approaches to tacking existing exclusion, including focusing on the sustainability of initiatives, and the need to look at innovative new approaches to regeneration.

21 Priority Partnership Areas and Regeneration Programmes were converted into Social Inclusion Partnerships on April 1, 1999, 3 new SIPs were fast tracked and were designated on 18 November 1998 and 23 New Social Inclusion Partnerships were designated on 2 March 1999.   These are distributed as follows:

Table 3.6: Social Inclusion Partnerships

SOCIAL INCLUSION PARTNERSHIPS IN SCOTLAND'S CITIES
• There are three area-based SIPs in Edinburgh - the North Edinburgh SIP, the South Edinburgh SIP, and the Edinburgh Strategic Programme; • There is one area-based SIP in Aberdeen - the Great Northern Partnership; • There are two area-based SIPs in Dundee covering parts of Ardler, Kirkton, Mid Craigie and Hilltown; and • there are nine area-based SIPs in Glasgow, working in Glasgow North, Greater Easterhouse, the East End, Drumchapel, Gorbals, Greater Govan, Greater Pollok, Milton and Springburn / East Balornock.
SOCIAL INCLUSION PARTNERSHIPS TARGETING DISADVANTAGED GROUPS IN SCOTLAND'S CITIES • in Edinburgh, a 'people-based' SIP tackles the challenges faced by excluded young adults;

- in Dundee there are two 'people-based' SIPs - the Dundee SIP for young people, and the Dundee Healthy Alliance SIP, tackling the problems faced by young carers; and
- in Glasgow there are three 'people-based' SIPs tackling the problems faced by people leaving care; prostitutes and women at risk from prostitution; and people from ethnic minorities.

SOCIAL INCLUSION PARTNERSHIPS IN TOWNS AND RURAL COMMUNITIES

- in Inverclyde, there is a SIP covering parts of Port Glasgow, Greenock and other local neighbourhoods;
- the Paisley Partnership is tackling disadvantage in eleven communities in Paisley and the surrounding areas;
- the West Dunbartonshire SIP tackles disadvantage in parts of Clydebank and Dumbarton;
- the East Renfrewshire SIP addresses the problems faced by communities in Levern Valley;
- in North Lanarkshire, there are two area-based SIPs - the Motherwell North SIP and the North Lanarkshire SIP, operating in and around Wishaw and North Airdrie;
- in South Lanarkshire, there are two area-based SIPs - the Cambuslang SIP and the Blantyre / North Hamilton SIP;
- in South Ayrshire, there are two SIPs - the Girvan Connections SIP, and the North Ayr SIP;
- in East Ayrshire, the East Ayrshire Coalfield Area SIP tackles disadvantage in the ex-mining communities around Auchinleck and Cumnock;
- the North Ayrshire SIP is tackling disadvantage in a number of communities in North Ayrshire, including Ardrossan, Saltcoats, Stevenson and part of Irvine;
- the Falkirk SIP operates in neighbourhoods including Langlees and Bainsford;
- the Stirling SIP is tackling disadvantage in communities in and around Castleview and Raploch;
- the Clackmannanshire SIP operates in neighbourhoods in south and east Alloa;
- in Angus, there is one SIP tackling disadvantage in Arbroath;
- in Fife, there is one area-based SIP, addressing the problems faced by communities in Methil, Buckhaven, Benarty, Lochgelly and parts of Kirkcaldy and Dunfermline;
- there is one SIP in Argyll and Bute, operating in communities in Soroba, Dalintober, Dunoon, Kirkmichael and Ballochgoy; and
- the Highlands Well-being Alliance is tackling exclusion in communities in the Highlands.

SOCIAL INCLUSION PARTNERSHIPS TARGETING EXCLUDED GROUPS IN TOWNS AND RURAL COMMUNITIES

- in East Lothian, the Tranent Youth and Community Partnership is tackling exclusion of young people;
- in North Lanarkshire, the South Coatbridge SIP is tackling disadvantages and inequalities in health amongst local residents;
- in Fife, the Fife Ethnic Minority SIP is addressing disadvantage amongst people from ethnic minorities in Fife;
- in Moray, the Moray Youthstart SIP is tackling the challenges faced by young people;
- in Perth and Kinross, the SIP is addressing exclusion amongst young people leaving care;

- the Scottish Borders SIP is addressing the challenges faced by young people in the area; and
- in West Lothian, the SIP is again tackling disadvantage in young people.

The Social Inclusion Partnerships were established through a competitive bidding process, with funding being allocated to the bids deemed to be of the best quality, rather than the Scottish Executive using information on deprivation across Scotland to target resources based on need. This means that resources are not necessarily targeted in the areas in most need of additional funding, and also that there will be individuals living outside the SIP boundaries who are equally in need.

3.7.2 Monitoring and Evaluating Social Inclusion Partnerships

Social Inclusion Partnerships are the most recent form of regeneration initiative, and obviously the monitoring and evaluation of the SIPs is at an early stage. However, the Scottish Executive have provided detailed guidance regarding the monitoring and evaluation they expect to see undertaken. They outline the reasons for monitoring and evaluation thus:

> *"...monitoring and evaluation is necessary in order to:*
> - *provide a framework in which objectives are set in terms of realistic targets and realistic resource assumptions and timescales;*
> - *allow progress towards the achievement of objectives to be monitored;*
> - *allow scrutiny of cost-effective operation at activity level;*
> - *provide feedback for management purposes;*
> - *enable objective assessment of where adjustments and improvements might be made in order to ensure maximum impact towards regeneration goals;*
> - *allow examination of the mechanisms of programme delivery (this would include effective partnership teamwork and the involvement of the private and voluntary sectors and the community);*
> - *giving funders assurance that investment in being put to effective use;*
> - *to learn lessons for the future." (Scottish Executive, 1999)*

The guidance outlines a range of compulsory indicators that geographically based SIPs must address in a monitoring plan. The process is as follows:

Figure 3.1 - Scottish Executive monitoring requirements for SIPs

Defining the Social Inclusion Partnership's **vision and objectives**

⇩

Defining the **indicators** that will be measured

⇩

Setting **targets** for each indicator which define the outcomes that the SIP would like to achieve

⇩

Putting together the **baseline** information for the indicators that have been identified

⇩

Setting out the SIP's **'inputs'** in a resource schedule

⇩

Putting together a plan for measuring the **compulsory indicators** and the other indicators that the SIP has chosen

⇩

Setting out all of the above in a **monitoring plan**

⇩

Making quarterly **financial returns**

⇩

Summarising progress and setting out forward strategies in an **annual report,** and **regular appraisal** by the Scottish Executive

⇩

Interim and final **evaluations**

(Scottish Executive,1999)

The Guidance provides suggestions of indicators using pre-existing sources of information and also survey work; some examples are given in Table 3.7:

Table 3.7: Potential Indicators for Social Inclusion Partnerships

COMPULSORY	
Factual	Opinion based
Examples: ❖ Total number of homes ❖ Movement in recorded crime ❖ Participation in leisure activities ❖ Employment rate of adults	Examples: ❖ Satisfaction with the area ❖ Fear of crime ❖ Desire to move outwith the SIP area
ADDITIONAL	
Factual	Opinion based
Examples: ❖ Policing arrangements ❖ Social/leisure organisation ❖ Training of community group staff	Examples: ❖ Satisfaction with the neighbourhood ❖ Individuals and families 'empowered'

3.8 Issues in Monitoring and Evaluation

3.8.1 Introduction

The above sections have outlined the current practice in monitoring and evaluation social inclusion projects. This section draws out some of the key issues. One issue to be addressed is that monitoring and evaluation systems operate at a number of levels, and attempt to achieve a number of aims. Within an individual project, there may be systems aimed at providing individuals with information about their personal development, as well as monitoring and evaluation information that is aimed at establishing organisational effectiveness. In projects that are part of a programme, such as Social Inclusion Partnerships, there must also be a method of intergrated project outputs into a wider programme.

3.8.2 Establishing Individual Achievement

There has been a growth in the use of frameworks and soft indicator techniques within the social inclusion sector as a method of assessing client personal development. There are a variety of tools in use; three of the most relevant for social inclusion are noted below:

Rikter Scale

The Rikter Scale is an assessment and evaluation tool that uses a scale from 0 to 10. It is used as a tool that allows individuals to assess their progress in discussion with an advisor.

Achieving Better Community Development (ABCD)/Learning Evaluation and Planning (LEAP)

The Achieving Better Community Development programme was designed to enhance the practical skills of community development workers and agencies in planning and evaluating projects, programme and policies, and was run by the Scottish Community Development Centre. From this participative evaluation model a framework for monitoring and evaluation was developed known as the Learning Evaluation and Planning (LEAP). The LEAP model notes:

"In order to be credible within the values and principles of community learning mechanisms for review must be participative." (LEAP, 2000)

This participation recognises a wide range of influences and activities that impact on the evaluation of community development, and provides a series of tables that aim to assist in evaluation. Each table is laid out as illustrated below:

Figure 3.2: LEAP Indicator Development Tables
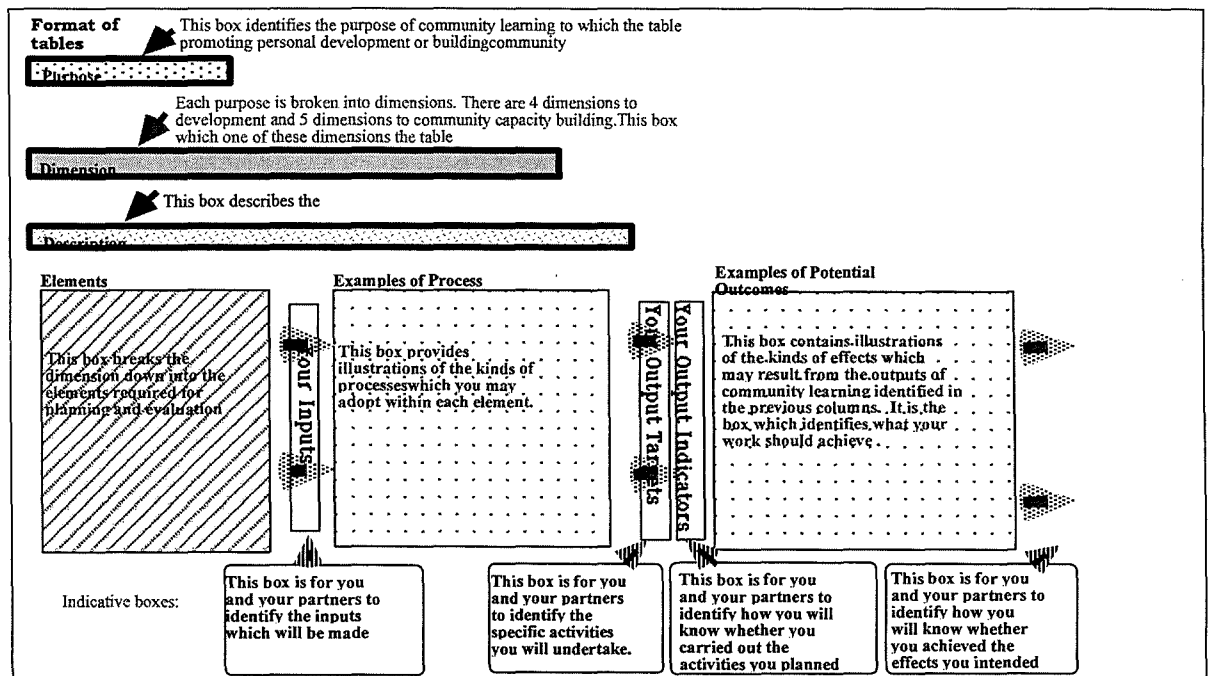
Scottish Community Development Centre (2000)

Bridges to Progress

The Bridges Project is an organisation working with disadvantaged young people based in Haddington, East Lothian. The Project, working with the Aberdeen Cyrenians and the National Schizophrenia Fellowship Scotland, was keen to improve the systems of measurement that they used to measure the personal development of the young people with who they were working. They note:

"For disadvantaged young people, gaining qualifications or getting a job can seem like distant goals. And yet, projects commonly see individuals developing in ways which increase their own self-reliance and consequently their employability. Social policy makers and practitioners now recognise the importance of being able to demonstrate this kind of individual

progression. This is why there is increasing attention on 'soft' measurement.

Bridges to Progress is an evidence-based model for measuring individual progression toward self-reliance and employability, particularly for the most vulnerable people within society. It focuses on 'soft' measurement, that is measurement which is based on qualitative assessment, but also includes some 'hard or quantitative measurement'. (Bridges Project, 2001, p1)

The framework provides 49 standards toward which an individual, working with a member of staff, may decide to work. The framework provides a series of tables on which an individual assesses themselves against a range of core skills. The Project stress that this is a tool for individual planning and personal development, and does not allow a comparison between individuals or projects.

3.8.2 Establishing Service Effectiveness

Assessing Quality

Martin and Kettner (1996) discuss performance measurement in human services programmes (social work programmes)and quote a study that found a common set of quality dimensions that tend to be important to the customers of human services programs, regardless of the type of service. The five major quality dimensions were: reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy and tangibles, which were explained as follows:

> *"Reliability means providing services in a consistent fashion; always being friendly, polite and considerate (assurance); always attempting to understand client needs (empathy); always speaking with clients in understandable language (communication); and so forth."* (Martin and Kettner, 1996, p43)

Tangibles are the appearance of the facilities, equipment, personnel and published materials involved in the programme delivery.

There are many areas of common ground between human services/social work projects and social inclusion projects, and it is likely that the concerns of users are

similar. In order to adequately reflect the quality of a project a measurement system has to be able to reflect whether or not a project is meeting the intangible needs of clients listed above.

In trying to assess the effectiveness of social inclusion initiatives Whitting (1989)makes the point that relying on quantitative analysis can lead to misdirection of resources:

> *"Social and economic welfare programmes generate outputs which cannot be measured solely in monetary or cost terms. There is a danger therefore that this [Cost Benefit] analysis is more readily used in those areas where benefits are more easily expressed in financial terms. Consequently, this might lead to a redistribution of resources to those areas where analysis has been easier to apply rather than to those areas where services are more effective." (Whitting, 1989, p4)*

3.9   Limitations of Existing Methods of Measurement

3.9.1 Introduction

Chapter Two concluded by considering the qualities that an effective monitoring and evaluation system would have based on the issues arising from the review of the literature. This chapter has examined the realities of how monitoring and evaluation has been, and is currently being, undertaken. The section examines how well the realities of monitoring and evaluation address the theoretical requirements identified for a monitoring and evaluation system. It identifies where there are potential gaps and limitations to existing systems. It identifies areas where further investigation are necessary, and this feeds into the research question and objectives outlined in Section 4.2.

Reflecting the structure of the previous chapter, Sections 3.9.2 to 3.9.5 examine the implications of the terminology, the client group issues, the difficulties inherent in identifying measurable outputs and outcomes, and the difficulties in providing usable information. Each Section examines the practical implications of

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operationalising the theoretical requirements of social inclusion monitoring and evaluation systems as outlined in Section 2.7.

3.9.2 Implications of the Terminology

As noted in Section 2.2.1, how we choose to define poverty and exclusion ultimately affects the method of tackling poverty we choose, which in turn impacts on how we will evaluate the effectiveness of that measure. An emphasis on the poverty side of the equation would suggest a need for measures to increase individuals' and households' incomes; these are then measurable through the range of poverty lines noted in Section 2.3.3.

However, if poverty is seen as only one part of a wider problem of social exclusion, a much more holistic approach to tackling the issue is necessary. Monitoring and evaluation systems will need to reflect the work undertaken by different agencies working in the same area, and will have to be able to deal with the impact of indicators on each other. It would be of interest to establish the views of practitioners working in the field of social inclusion of the appropriate terminology to describe their work, and to establish their understanding of the implications of the terminology for monitoring and evaluation.

If the aim of social inclusion initiatives is to address the quality of life issues implicit in social inclusion, then a method of assessing these improvements in terms of quality of life is necessary. A further consideration of the usefulness of quality of life as a measure would be of use.

3.9.3 Client Group Issues

Section 2.7.2 identified that social inclusion is a subjective process, that is, only the individual concerned can identify if they feel included. However, most of the attempts to monitor progress concentrate on objective indicators, such as the total number of homes and participation in leisure activities.

Figure 3.3: Objective and subjective data

```
                          ┌─────────────────────┐
                          │  Social Inclusion   │
                          │     Projects        │
                          └─────────────────────┘
              ↙                                        ↘
      ┌──────────────────┐                    ┌──────────────────────┐
      │  Local sample    │                    │  Quantitative        │
      │  surveys         │                    │  data sets           │
      └──────────────────┘                    │  • Census            │
       ↙              ↘                        │  • Scottish          │
                                               │    Household         │
                                               │    Survey            │
                                               └──────────────────────┘
┌──────────────────┐          ┌──────────────────────────┐
│ Subjective data  │          │ Objective data           │
│ • Fear of crime  │          │ For example:             │
│ • Resident       │          │ • Use of leisure         │
│   satisfaction   │          │   facilities             │
│                  │          │ • Participation in       │
│                  │          │   voluntary activities   │
└──────────────────┘          └──────────────────────────┘
```
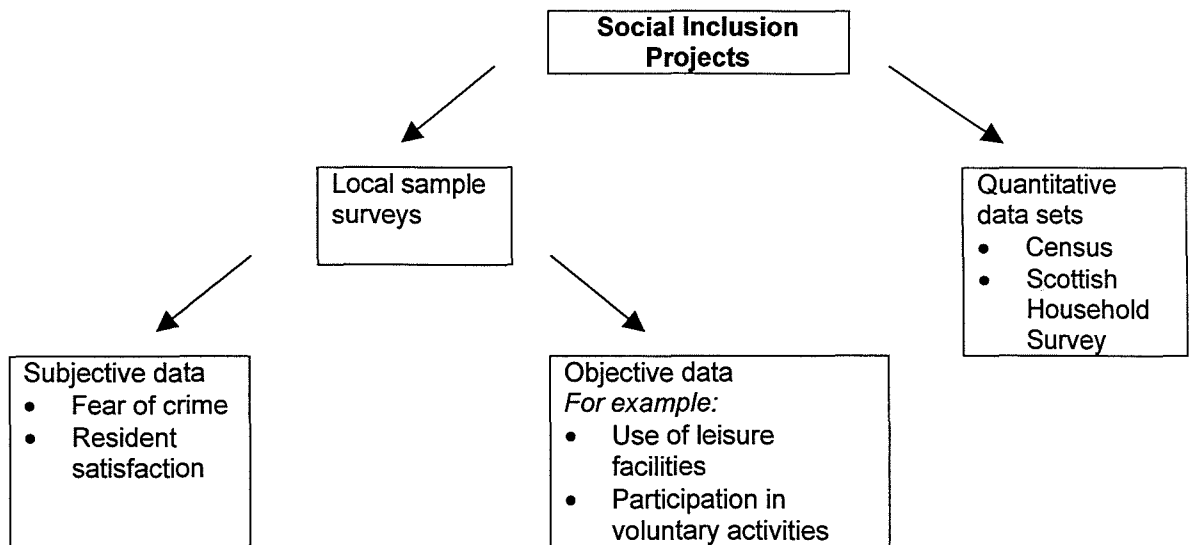
As Figure 3.3 illustrates, sample surveys of local residents can be used to gain both objective and subjective information. However, to date they have been used mainly to gather objective information, with the only subjective information widely sought being "fear of crime" and "resident satisfaction"; this is discussed in more detail in Section 3.9.4.

Section 2.7.3 identified that there was a wide range of individuals at risk of exclusion, and noted that any monitoring and evaluation system must be capable of capturing this diversity of experience. It would be of merit to discuss with practitioners and policy makers how they solicit the opinions of project users and residents, and the relative ability of individuals to participate in the existing monitoring and evaluation systems.

3.9.4 Identifying Measurable Outputs and Outcomes

The Scottish Executive Social Justice targets, and the monitoring guidance given by the Scottish Executive to Social Inclusion Partnerships identify a range of outputs for social inclusion projects. This section examines the issues that arise from a consideration of these outputs.

As noted in Section 3.9.3 above, there are few subjective indicators included in the outputs and targets. There are several possible reasons for this. First, it may be considered that these issues are not measurable with any degree of accuracy. Second, may be that it is thought that there is not sufficient comparator evidence to allow triangulation. Thirdly, it may be that there are concerns about the comparability of information obtained on subjective issues, and it usefulness for targeting resources or comparing performance. Finally, it may be that this information is not held to be significant and useful for monitoring and evaluation (or other) purposes. Table 3.8 summarises this information.

Table 3.8: Assessing subjective issues

	Is it measurable with any degree of accuracy?	Is there comparator information available for triangulation?	Is it significant and for whom?
Fear of crime	• Issue if anyone can actually assess their own crime fear level. • Methodological issues based on the nature of assessment i.e. closed or open questions.	Reported crime statistics	Significant for politicians – perceived local and national electoral issue Significant for policy makers – shows crime prevention policies are working Significant for practitioners – shows crime prevention initiatives are working Significant for individuals – quality of life issues
Resident satisfaction	History of use as a measure.	Outward migration rates from area	Significant for politicians – perceived local electoral issue Significant for policy makers – shows investment in area working Significant for practitioners – shows initiatives are working Significant for individuals – quality of life issues
Self confidence	Number of techniques for	Uptake of training, education and	Significance for politicians and policy makers not

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	Is it measurable with any degree of accuracy?	Is there comparator information available for triangulation?	Is it significant and for whom?
	assessing self-confidence developed and in use.	personal development opportunities[1]	developed Significant for some practitioners as a recognition of their project's worth Significant for individuals – quality of life issues
Relationships with family and friends	Techniques of measurement not yet well developed.	Divorce and separation rates, children taken into care, levels of domestic abuse.	Significance for politicians and policy makers not developed Significant for some practitioners as a recognition of their project's worth Significant for individuals – quality of life issues

It should be noted that there are limitations to the use of measurements such as fear of crime. Farrall *et al* (1997) note that there are several difficulties with the approach, including discrepancies between using open and closed questions and questioning the assumption that anyone can make an accurate self assessment of their own crime fear level. It would be of interest to discuss with practitioners and policy makers the usefulness of the measures 'fear of crime' and 'resident satisfaction'.

There is some evidence to suggest that policy makers are becoming more aware that there are intangible benefits that are worth measuring in social inclusion work: contrast the quotes below, the first from the evaluation of the *Community Programme* in 1986 , and the second from the evaluation of the *New Life for Urban Scotland Initiative* in 1999.

> *"What are the outputs?*

---

[1] The Monitoring Framework includes an optional indicator "Individuals and families 'empowered'" which it describes as the number of people learning to read, drive, completing confidence courses etc

Providing temporary work for unemployed people has a value in itself in giving individuals a period of useful activity as an alternative to the depressing routine of unemployment. This is not to be underestimated. There are many people to whom CP has provided new hope and opportunity and whose morale and health has improved as a result. The wider social and economic benefits - in terms of greater stability, less crime, less demand on the health services and so on - are difficult to quantify but should not be discounted.

*In a sense, however, those are the automatic benefits of a programme which provides work and **it is setting the sights of CP too low to regard them as an end in themselves**. The added value of CP comes from the results of provided temporary work in terms of:improving individuals' prospects of getting training and permanent employment: and a service or asset for the local community."* (Normington et al, March 1986, p35) [emphasis added]

"One of the more difficult issues in the evaluation was the evaluation of the impacts on the quality of life of the residents. There are a large number of different issues that are covered under the heading of 'quality of life'. The approach adopted in this study focused on the levels of general satisfaction for individuals and how that related to various outcomes such as housing mobility, housing tenure, labour market status, incomes, crime, health, education and involvement in the community...None of these important issues could be assessed within the scope of this evaluation and we would suggest that further research should be considered for these issues." (Cambridge Policy Consultants, 1999, p189)

Thus, while an increasing importance on intangible outcomes may be found by policy makers (or at least by public policy researchers), there is still evidence that it is not undertaken as a matter of course. It would be of interest to discuss further whether outcomes such as improved confidence of project users are routinely monitored, and any difficulties inherent in attempting to quantify intangible items.

A key issue identified by individuals living in poverty was the impact of poverty on their relationships with friends and family. It would be of interest to discuss with practitioners and policy makers whether this is an area where they feel that social inclusion projects have an influence, and if it is currently being monitored.

The descriptions of social exclusion and inclusion in Sections 2.2.2 and 2.2.3 noted that social inclusion was a process, and that a useful system of monitoring

and evaluation needed to reflect this, rather than merely providing a 'snapshot' of provision. A research project on 'soft' indicators noted difficulties with regard to assessing partial outcomes:

"Success is commonly measured by easily managed quantifiable measures which can be objectively verified. Such 'hard' outcome-based systems are basic monitoring tools to which funding can be attached to individual or cohort attainment targets. The information is important, because it does demonstrate whether or not the beneficiaries of a programme or course have achieved the targets and in the required proportions. However, beneficiaries can only pass or fail externally pre-determined standards which are set at the same levels for all.

The weakness of a 'stand alone' system based on quantifiable evidence in working with vulnerable groups, is that it does not recognise the progress made towards attainment and reward it." (Bridges Project *et al*, 1999, p4)

It would be of interest to discuss further the efforts made by practitioners and policy makers to account for partial outcomes.

3.9.5 Providing Usable Information

Section 2.7.5 noted that useful monitoring and evaluation information must provide information that allows assessment of a project or programmes performance, and also provides a basis for future targeting of resources. Section 2.6.7 highlighted that monitoring and evaluation could be undertaken using both qualitative and quantitative approaches, and it would be useful to know if both these approaches are used, and the merits of each. Section 2.6.2 identified that comparison was a key element of monitoring and evaluation and it would be useful to discuss the issue of comparisons of outputs between projects with practitioners. Section 3.9 noted a number of confounding factors in attempts to monitor and evaluate and it would be of interest to establish the views of practitioners on the difficulties and limitations they have encountered in their attempts to evaluate social inclusion projects.

3.10 Summary

This chapter has illustrated that poverty and social exclusion are addressed by all levels of government, in policies ranging from the benefits system through to the funding of individual social inclusion projects. The establishment of the Social Exclusion Unit at the UK level, and the Social Inclusion Unit at the Scottish level means that there is now a government department charged with co-ordinating social inclusion policy, and importantly, monitoring the effectiveness of these policies.

This chapter concluded by looking at the key issues that are specific to the monitoring and evaluation of social inclusion projects, and raised a number of issues for further discussion. These issues form the basis of the research objectives, which are outlined in Section 4.4 of the following chapter. The issues raised in this chapter are discussed further in Chapter Five, Six, and Seven by clarifying with policy makers and practitioners whether these issues are relevant to them, and identifying potential improvements.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH METHOD

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapters have outlined current policies and practices in addressing social inclusion, and have looked at the monitoring and evaluation systems currently used to evaluate social inclusion projects. This chapter outlines a methodology for examining the limitations of existing systems of monitoring and evaluation of social inclusion projects. It identifies a research paradigm, a method of sample selection, a method of data collection, and a method of data analysis.

4.2 Aims and Objectives of the Research

In Chapter One the research question and a number of related objectives were outlined as follows:

Research Question

"To what extent do the existing systems of monitoring and evaluation in Scottish social inclusion initiatives recognise the particular nature of social inclusion?"

This chapter outlines a research method for obtaining answers to this question. At the end of the research it is anticipated that a list of key issues for policy and practice in evaluation will be developed, that could either be addressed immediately or could form the basis of further qualitative or quantitative research.

4.3 Research Paradigm

The research is of an applied nature, and relates to public policy. This was the starting point for consideration of the appropriate research methods. Majchrzak (1984) defines policy research thus:

"Policy research is defined as the process of conducting research on, or analysis of, a fundamental social problem in order to provide policy-makers with pragmatic, action-oriented recommendations for alleviating the problem." (Majchrzak, 1984, p12)

For Majchrzak, policy research translates into a particular research approach; he notes:

"Policy research begins with the social problem and attempts to induce concepts and causal theories as the study of the social problem progresses. Referred to as empirico-inductive, this approach contrasts sharply with the traditional scientific hypothesis-testing approach" (Majchrzak, 1984, p19)

Consideration was given to a number of approaches within the two broad paradigms of positivism and social constructivism. The positivist paradigm emphasises the "scientific" measurement of social phenomena, and assumes that individuals can be measured in an objective fashion by the researcher through the use of empirical research techniques. The social constructivist view is that there is no such thing as objective reality, and that reality is socially constructed and given meaning by people. The positivist paradigm lends itself most easily to quantitative methods of data collection, such as closed question questionnaires, while the social constructivist view makes use of qualitative research such as interviews, focus groups etc. Easterby-Smith et al (1991) illustrate the impact of the above paradigms on research methodology thus:

Table 4.1: Key features of positivist and phenomenological paradigms

	Positivist Paradigm	Phenomenological Paradigm
Basic beliefs	The world is external and objective.	The world is socially constructed and subjective.
Researcher should	Focus on facts. Look for causality and fundamental laws. Reduce phenomena to simplest elements. Formulate hypotheses and then test them.	Focus on meanings. Try to understand what is happening. Look at the totality of each situation. Develop ideas through induction from data.

Preferred methods include	Operationalising concepts so that they can be measured. Taking large samples.	Using multiple methods to establish different views of phenomena. Small samples investigated in depth or over time.

A number of limitations can be identified to either approach. Guba and Lincoln (1994) note that using a quantitative methodology can result in a lack of understanding of the context of the research. This can mean that important variables that could influence the research are ignored, and could also make the relevance of the research limited as it may prove impossible to replicate if issues of context are not addressed. Quantitative research is useful for an understanding of what is happening but provides less information about individual's motives and intentions. On the other hand, qualitative research, is, of necessity, undertaken on a smaller scale than quantitative research, which has implications for how generalisable the findings of the research will be. Katz, quoted in Foddy (1993) summarised the concerns about qualitative research thus:

"... four questions are repeatedly raised about qualitative field research. These concern the probability that observations are selectively reported so that it is impossible to guage the extent to which they are typical; the probability that the very act of conducting the research influences the respondents' behaviour; the fact that interpretations typically have very low levels of reliability because of the low level of control over the selection of data for analysis; and the difficulty of replicating findings." (Foddy,1993, p16)

After consideration of both approaches, it was decided that the most appropriate research method would be a qualitative approach for the following reasons. First, social inclusion projects vary in their aims, methods and timescales, but in all cases they aim to improve the situations of their participants, therefore a methodology that draws on the experience of participants is useful. Second, as the first part of the research question seeks to identify the intangible variables resulting from social inclusion work, a qualitative approach is necessary that allows both staff and users to express their own experiences of social inclusion initiatives. Walker (1993) notes

"What qualitative research can offer the policy maker is a theory of social action grounded on the experiences – the world view – of those likely to be

affected by a policy decision or thought to be a part of the problem."
(Walker, 1993, p19)

Third, this is exploratory research, aimed at looking at the "why" questions, with many of the who, what, when and where questions addressed in the literature review. For this reason it was thought that a qualitative approach allowed scope for identifying the key issues and difficulties, without imposing the researcher's views on the participants. Marshall and Rossman (1995) summarise the advantages of a qualitative approach thus:

> *"The most compelling argument is to stress the unique strengths of the [qualitative] genre for research that is explanatory or descriptive, that assumes the value of context and setting and that searches for a deeper understanding of the participant's lived experiences of the phenomenon."*
> *(Marshall and Rossman, 1995, p60)*

Fourth, Chapter Two identified a wide range of influences on the formation of social inclusion policy. The adoption of an *a priori* hypothesis runs the risk of focusing on one influential factor at the expense of other equally valid issues that would result from exploratory research with a more holistic approach; the broader research objectives of a qualitative approach mean that while there is a degree of focus to the research, the scope of the research is wide enough to pick up issues not identified in the literature reviews. Finally, the adoption of a qualitative approach also allows for a social constructivist acknowledgement that the research is not value free; the questions asked and the methods used reflect the interests of the researcher.

However, it is recognised that the criticisms of the qualitative approach noted by Katz above had a great deal of merit, and steps were taken to address these concerns throughout the research process. These steps are detailed in the sections 4.4 to 4.6.

Qualitative research does not have the hard division between the collection and analysis of data that is present in positivist approaches; Easterby-Smith *et al* (1991) note:

> *"If the researcher is undertaking her research from a social constructivist perspective, then she will attempt as far as possible not to draw a*

distinction between the collection of data and its analysis and interpretation". (Easterby-Smith et al, 1991, p104)

Therefore, it was necessary to give an early consideration to how the data was to be analysed, with consideration given to the two broad approaches of grounded analysis or content analysis. Grounded theory was first proposed as an approach by Glaser and Strauss (1967) in *"The Discovery of Grounded Theory".* They proposed that the best method of arriving at a valid analysis of research was to use the evidence that was generated by the research as the basis for conceptualisation and categorising. They expressed strong criticism of existing methods of analysis noting:

> *"Verifying a logico-deductive theory generally leaves us with at best a reformulated hypothesis or two and an unconfirmed set of speculations; and, at worst: a theory that does not seem to fit or work... A grounded theory can be used as a fuller test of a logico-deductive theory pertaining to the same area by comparison of both theories than an accurate description used to verify a few propositions would provide." (Glaser and Strauss, 1967, p29).*

In a pure application of grounded theory, participants would be given only a general research area to discuss; Glaser and Strauss note:

> *"The initial decisions for theoretical collection of data are based only on a general sociological perspective and on a general subject or problem area."* (p45)

In considering this approach it was felt that it might not give specific enough information to address some of the questions that had arisen from the literature review. As an approach, grounded theory can be difficult to use well, and may result in information being gained from participants that is not particularly useful; Jones (1985) notes:

> *"... researchers are more likely to get good data, and know what data they are getting, if the interviewees are told at the outset what the research topic is, even if initially in relatively broad terms, and why the topic is of interest."* (Jones, 1985, p48)

It was decided, therefore, to use a semi-structured research instrument, which would then be analysed using content analysis. Content analysis can be

described as a research tool used to determine the presence of certain words or concepts within a text. To conduct a content analysis on any such text, the text is coded into categories which could be on a variety of levels such as word, phrase, sentence, or theme, and then examined using one of content analysis' basic methods: conceptual analysis or relational analysis.

In order to ensure that the theory emerging from the research is genuinely reflective of the views of the respondents it was decided to use an inductive approach to generating the codes and categories used to reduce the data. This is discussed further in Section 4.9.

Figure 4.1 illustrates the choices that have been made at each stage of the research process.

Figure 4.1: Decisions undertaken in the research process
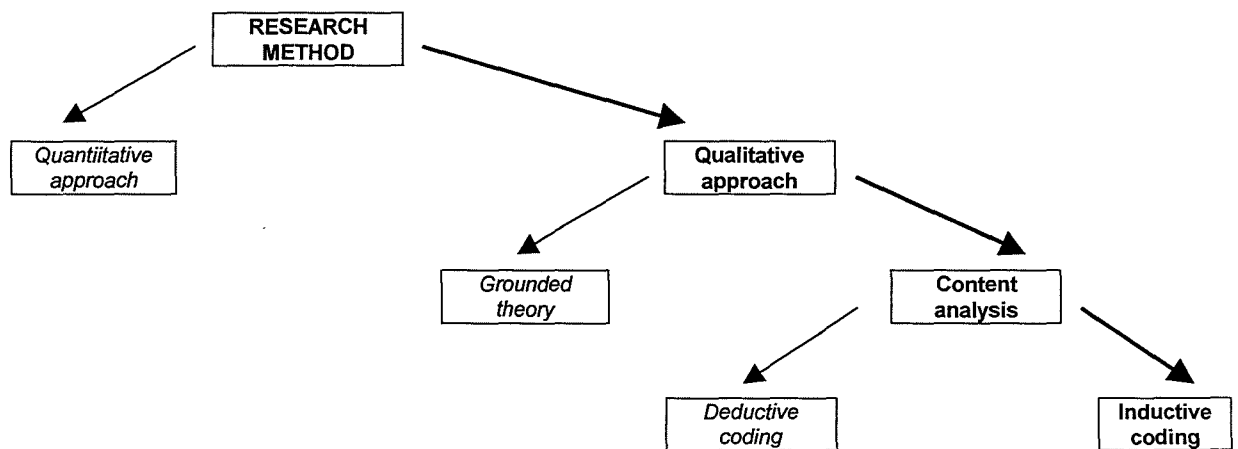
4.4 Research Considerations

There were a number of research considerations of both a practical and theoretical nature. On a practical level, consideration was give to whether access to individuals working in this area would be forthcoming. Rossi and Freedman (1993) note that a realistic 'site' for research is one where

> *"... (a) entry is possible; (b) there is a high probability that a rich mix of the processes, peoples, programs, interactions, and structures of interest are present; (c) the researcher is likely to be able to build trusting relations with*

*the participants in the study; and (d) data quality and credibility of the study
are reasonably assured."* (Rossi and Freedman, 1993, p69)

After initial discussions with the Scottish Executive and the Scottish Council for
Voluntary Organisations it was noted that access was likely due to the public
sector culture of evaluation where individuals were used to participating in such
research. All the proposed research was with professional workers, who, again,
are used to participating in research, and finally it was an area of interest to staff
who would therefore be more likely to participate. These assumptions proved to
be well founded in most, but not all, cases, and are discussed further in the
Section 4.6.

On a theoretical note, the research aims to address the research criteria of validity
and reliability. Rossi and Freeman (1993) distinguish between measurement
reliability and validity thus:

*"A measure is reliable to the extent that in a given situation, it produces the
same results repeatedly... A measure is valid to the extent that it measures
what it is intended to measure."* (Rossi and Freeman, 1993, p230)

These are discussed in more detail below.

Validity is a key concept in any research project, and can be broken down into
internal and external validity. Internal validity examines the extent to which the
research process produces results that are likely to be accurate, and external
validity examines the extent to which findings of research can be generalised to
other situations. Within positivist research, validity can be increased through
techniques such as randomisation of the sample, and large sample sizes. Validity
raises particular issues in a qualitative context, with a wide variety of opinion
regarding how valid the finding of qualitative research are, and whether it is even
an appropriate term to discuss in relation to qualitative research.

Winter (2000) highlights the key differences between validity in quantitative and
qualitative research thus:

*"The traditional criteria for 'validity' find their roots in a positivist tradition, and
to an extent, positivism has been defined by and bolstered along by a
systematic theory of 'validity'. Within the positivist terminology, 'validity'*

resided amongst, and was the result and culmination of other empirical conceptions: universal laws, evidence, objectivity, truth, actuality, deduction, reason, fact and mathematical data to name just a few. It is within this tradition and terminology that quantitative research is traditionally defined. Qualitative research, arising out of the post-positivist rejection of a single, static or objective truth, has concerned itself with the meanings and personal experience of individuals, groups and sub-cultures. 'Reality' in qualitative research is concerned with the negotiation of 'truths' through a series of subjective accounts. Whereas quantitative researchers attempt to disassociate themselves as much as possible from the research process, qualitative researchers have come to embrace their involvement and role within the research. For quantitative researchers this involvement would greatly reduce the validity of a test, yet for qualitative researchers denying one's role within research also threatens the validity of the research."
(Winter, 2000, p6)

The reliability of the research is reflected in the likely ability of a different researcher to get similar results if repeating the exercise with a different group of interviewees. The likelihood of this happening can be diminished in two ways: first by bias in the sample used and second by bias created during the process of the research. Kirk and Miller (1986) distinguish between diachronic, synchronic and quixotic reliability, with diachronic reliability referring to the stability of an observation through time, and synchronic reliability referring to the similarity of observations within the same time period. They define quixotic reliability thus:

> *"'Quixotic reliability' refers to the circumstances in which a single method of observation continually yields an unvarying measurement. The problem with reliability of this sort is that it is trivial and misleading."* (Kirk and Miller, 1986, p41)

In relation to 'quixotic reliability' the example that is often given is a broken thermometer which gives the same reading every time it is used, but it is obviously not an accurate reading. This example encapsulates the relationship between reliability and validity; for a measure to be valid it must be based on a reliable method and instrument, but the existence of a reliable research method and instrument does not necessarily ensure validity.

Easterby-Smith *et al* (1991) note with regard to the phenomenological approach, the key question on validity is *"Has the researcher gained full access to the knowledge and meanings of informants?"*. For reliability the key question is *"Will similar observations be made by different researchers on different occasions"?* and for generalisability (external validity) the question is *"How likely is it that ideas*

and theories generated in one setting will also apply in other settings?" (Easterby-Smith *et al*, 1991, p41). These research considerations are given further discussion in the Sections 4.6 to 4.9.

4.5　Ethical Issues and Confidentiality

A key issue in undertaking research is the maintenance of ethical standards at all stages of the process, from the recruitment of participants, to the production and distribution of research findings. There are particular ethical considerations specific to qualitative research; the Market Research Society note:

> *"From the ethical standpoint, the potentially intrusive nature of qualitative research means that emotional well-being is an area of particular concern. The objectives of the study do not give researchers a special right to intrude on a respondent's privacy nor to abandon normal respect for an individual's views."* (Market Research Society, 1998, p4)

Several organisations produce guidelines aimed at maintaining ethics in research. The Market Research Society produced the following principles on undertaking qualitative research:

"Ethical:

- *Respondents shall be honestly and comprehensively informed about the qualitative research in which they are taking part.*
- *Respondents shall openly be asked to give their consent to take part and to any subsequent attributable use of their comments (and any other material arising from the group/interview).*
- *Undertakings made to respondents shall be honoured.*
- *The research shall respect the interests of clients.*
- *Respondents shall be treated with respect at all times.*
- *The rights of respondents shall be paramount.*

Technical:

- *In devising research processes and procedures, the primary concern shall be to ensure the quality and reliability of the information."* (Market Research Society, 1998, p4)

Consumers for Ethics in Research is a forum that promotes debate about ethics in medical research and note the autonomy of people who are the subject of research. They note that research should be transparent, that is, there should be an undertaking to publish the results of research. Research should be undertaken in partnership, with equity being a key feature, and research reflecting the priorities of users and the communities. Finally, research should be accountable,

with researchers and their funders accountable to the public and participants of research.

After considering the above issues, it was decided that the research in this thesis would be undertaken with the following key principles:

- *voluntary participation by participants*
- *informed consent of participants*
- *minimising risk of harm to participants and others/confidentiality*
- *transparency*
- *quality and reliability*

These ethical standards were built into the process as follows:

Recruitment of participants

Individual participants may suffer from their participation in research if they are unhappy about participating, or feel vulnerable in the process. No pressure to participate was put on individuals who appeared reluctant to participate. Full background details on the research was provided at the time of the interview request. Information was also provided about the researcher and potential participants were made aware of the researcher's background in social inclusion. In addition, all the individuals being interviewed were from professional backgrounds and were used to the idea of research; as such they did not present a particularly vulnerable research group.

Interview procedure

Interviews can be a difficult situation; participants were permitted to decline to answer particular questions within the interview schedule and efforts were made to hold the interview at a location convenient for the participant. Consent was also sought to tape record the interviews. There is potential in a research situation that an individual may suffer harm from participating, either due to the response of other people to their comments, or through the effect on their own sense of well being of participating. Issues of monitoring and evaluation are not particularly emotive, and the participants are being interviewed about issues in their work, rather than personal life. However, in order to ensure that participants felt free to

express their own opinions, it was decided that the interviews should have a degree of confidentiality.

Writing up and dissemination of findings

All participants were sent a copy of their interview transcript to allow for verification and amendment of transcripts in order to maintain confidentiality. No identification was made of the individuals who participated other than the organisations for whom they worked, and no quotes were attributed to individuals.

The issues of quality and reliability are dealt with throughout the rest of this chapter.

Table 4.2: Maintenance of ethical standards in the research process

	Recruitment of participants	Interviews	Distribution of findings
Voluntary participation by participants	• No pressure to participate was put on individuals who appeared reluctant to participate.	• Participants allowed to decline to answer particular questions • Interviews at a location suitable for participant.	• N/A
Informed consent of participants	• Full background details on the research and the researcher were provided at the time of the interview request.	• Consent sought to tape-record interviews.	• N/A
Minimising risk of harm to participants and others/ confidentiality	• Maintenance of confidentiality.	• Maintenance of confidentiality.	• Verification and amendment of transcripts permitted to maintain confidentiality. • No identification was made of the individuals who participated other than the organisations; • No quotes were attributed to individuals
Transparency	• Efforts made to explain the research process.	• Efforts made to explain the interview process.	• Findings of the research and notes on methodology sent to all participants.

	Recruitment of participants	Interviews	Distribution of findings
Quality and reliability	• Efforts made to minimise bias in sampling.	• Efforts made to minimise bias in interview process.	• Efforts made to minimise bias in writing up.

4.6 Sample Selection

The purpose of the research was to identify the limitations of existing forms of monitoring and evaluation of social inclusion projects, building on the gaps identified in the literature review, and to identify possible improvements. In order to undertake the research it was necessary to identify a pool of experts. As a proxy for expertise, the fact that a person has worked in the field for a number of years in a senior position was used, and there were screening questions in the interview schedule to establish this.

Consideration was given to the degree of focus of the research. Two main routes were identified. First, consideration was given to using a focused sample that concentrated on one sector, such as Social Inclusion Partnerships, or voluntary sector projects, and with individuals in a particular role, such as project managers, or funding agencies. The advantage of a very focused sample was that it would have allowed a high proportion of the population to participate in the research, which would greatly add to the internal validity and reliability of the research.

The second approach considered was to undertake the research with representatives of a range of organisations, and a range of roles. After considering both these approaches, the latter one was selected. The main reason for this was that the literature review identified a number of issues that indicated that different participants in the monitoring and evaluation process may have different needs and difficulties with the process. For example, the needs of funding agencies and project managers in social inclusion projects could be quite different, and it was hoped to explore this further in the research process.

Therefore, within the pool of experts attempts were made to control for organisation type (SIPs/voluntary sector), role (monitoring

officer/funder/independent evaluator/activist) and geography
(urban/rural/suburban).

Interviews were sought with key players involved in the policy and practice of
monitoring and evaluation of social inclusion projects. These included:

- individuals involved in making social inclusion policy and strategy, such as the
  Scottish Executive, local government and voluntary sector organisations;
- individuals involved in monitoring and evaluation at programme level;
- individuals involved in monitoring and evaluation at project level;
- individuals involved in the evaluation of programmes/projects such as
  consultants and researchers.

A sampling framework was developed to ensure that a cross-section of individuals
were involved, as outlined in Table 4.3. Representatives from each of the five
identified groups – funding/policy, policy, evaluation, programme and project –
were then selected as part of the research process.

Table 4.3: Sampling Framework For Empirical Research

Area	Level	Organisation	Population (No. of orgs)	Sample & number	How sample were identified	Actual number interviewed
Funding/policy	European	• Scottish Executive – Objective Three	1	Total population (1)	N/a	1
		• European Partnerships – Objective Two	3	Sample (2)	Sample (2)	2
	Scottish Executive	• Social Inclusion Division	1	Total (1)	N/a	0
		• Regeneration Division – funding of SIPs	1	Total (1)	N/a	0
	Local Government	• CoSLA	1	Total (1)	N/a	0
		• Local authorities	32	Sample (3)	Purposive by geographical spread	2
	Voluntary Sector Funders	• Organisations providing funding to voluntary organisations addressing poverty and disadvantage	Unknown	Sample (2)	Purposive by size of funder	2

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Area	Level	Organisation	Population (No. of orgs)	Sample & number	How sample were identified	Actual number intervie wed
Policy	Voluntary sector	• Organisations contributing to policy on poverty and social inclusion	Unknown	Sample (4)	Sample – key organisation	4
		• Scottish Social Inclusion Network members		Sample (4)	Sample	2
Evaluation	Mixed	• New Life for Urban Scotland	4	Total (1)	Sample	1
		• Social Inclusion Partnerships	47	Sample	Sample	2
		• Projects aimed at improving the quality of evaluation	Unknown	Sample (1)	Sample	1
Programme	Social Inclusion Partnerships	• SIP Programme Management	47	Sample (5)	Purposive by geographical area and type	6
Project	Social Inclusion Partnerships	• Front line voluntary sector projects	Unknown	Sample (10)	Purposive by SIP and by type	13

Funding/policy

Europe: Two of the European partnerships dealing with Objective 2 were approached and were able to participate – the Strathclyde European partnership and the East of Scotland European Partnership. The Objective 3 Partnership for Scotland also participated.

Scottish Executive: The Scottish Executive, as the major body setting and funding social inclusion policy in Scotland was felt to be very important to the research. The Social Inclusion Division was contacted and agreed to a meeting. However, they felt that the interview schedule fell outwith their guidelines for participation in research, and they declined to participate.

Local government: The Convener of the Social Inclusion Research and Information Group, a group of local authority representatives involved in

monitoring and evaluation in local authorities, was contacted. A representative of Fife Council agreed to be interviewed.

A previous interviewee had indicated that West Lothian Council was undertaking a Best Value review of the work of their local voluntary organisations. They were contacted and agreed to be interviewed.

The representative organisation for local authorities, the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities, were contacted but declined to be interviewed as they were not directly involved in the monitoring and evaluation of social inclusion projects.

Voluntary sector funders: The Community Fund, part of the National Lottery, were approached but declined to participate.

Lloyds TSB Foundation agreed to participate, but not to undertake the formal interview. A tape-recorded interview outlining their methods of evaluation was undertaken instead.

Policy

In addition to the above organisations, a number of organisations were contacted who undertook work that contributed to the development of social inclusion policy, without having a substantial role in funding social inclusion work undertaken by other organisations. Interviews were sought with a number of members of the Scottish Social Inclusion Network. The Scottish Trade Union Council and the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations agreed to be interviewed, but both the Shelter and the Scottish Community Foundation representatives declined to be interviewed as they had not been regular attendees at the meetings. The Equal Opportunities Commission did not respond attempts to contact them.

Community Learning Scotland has had a strong involvement in evaluating community learning, and were interviewed.

Two voluntary sector organisations involved in awareness-raising work around poverty issues were contacted and were interviewed: the Poverty Alliance and Lothian Anti-Poverty Alliance.

The Scottish Poverty Information Unit were also contacted but did not respond.

Evaluation

Two organisations who had a role in evaluating Social Inclusion Partnerships were suggested to me by SIP programme managers, and agreed to be interviewed: Partners in Economic Development and the University of Dundee.

The Bridges Project had taken a leading role in developing a range of soft indicators for use in monitoring and evaluation and agreed to be interviewed.

MVA Consultants were involved in the evaluation of the New Life for Urban Scotland regeneration partnerships and agreed to be interviewed.

Programme and projects

Social Inclusion Partnerships were sampled to give a geographical spread, and a breakdown of urban, sub-urban and rural SIPs. These SIPs were then contacted again and asked to suggest possible contacts for projects within their SIPs that might be willing to participate.

Within the individual Partnerships, a range of organisations were interviewed. Within this sample there were a range of organisations, from those who provided services to the whole community within the SIP areas, to those which provided services to a particular client group.

Client groups served by the sample were:

- Young people
- Young people with learning difficulties

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- Individuals from ethnic minority communities
- Individuals with mental health issues
- Women on low incomes
- Parents under stress

A summary of organisations who participated and who were unable to participate is given in tables 4.4 and 4.5.

Table 4.4: Organisations that participated in the research

Organisation	Description	Funding/ Policy	Policy	Evalu-ation	Program	Project
ESEP	Policy and funding body for European funding (Objective 2) in East of Scotland.	X				
WSEP	Policy and funding body for European funding (Objective 2) in West of Scotland.	X				
Objective 3 Partnership	Policy and funding body for European funding (Objective 3)	X				
Lloyds TSB	Funders of social inclusion projects.	X				
LAPA	Voluntary sector policy and campaigning body.		X			
Poverty Alliance	Voluntary sector policy body. Members of SSIN.		X			
SCVO	Umbrella body for voluntary sector – member of SSIN Evaluation Action Team.		X			
STUC	Members of SSIN Evaluation Framework Action Team.		X			
Volunteer Development Scotland	Voluntary sector body dealing with volunteering issues		X			
West Lothian Council	Local authority involved in best value for voluntary organisations		X			
Community Learning Scotland	Voluntary sector body dealing with community learning issues		X			
Fife Council	Social Inclusion R & I Group member		X			
Bridges Project	Evaluation project on soft indicators.			X		
MVA	Evaluators			X		
Partners in Economic Development	Evaluators Falkirk CURP.			X		
Univ. of Dundee	Evaluators of Dundee area based SIPs.			X		
Argyll & Bute SIP	Rural SIP covering 4002 pop.				X	
Clackmannanshire Council	Council contact for Alloa SIP- area based for 5571 people.				X	
Craigmillar SIP	Estate based SIP – 11500 pop.				X	
Falkirk CURP	Pilot interview				X	
FRAE Fife SIP	Thematic SIP – ethnic minority.				X	
Greater Pollock SIP	Largest SIP, covering 43 000 pop.				X	
West Lothian SIP	Thematic SIP – young people.				X	
Clackmannanshire Council	Environmental ILM					X
Living and Learning in Clackmannanshire	Adult education project					X
Clackmannanshire Council	Interventions for recovery – Psychological services					X
Capacity Building Project	Craigmillar SIP – capacity building project					X

Organisation	Description	Funding/ Policy	Policy	Evalu-ation	Program	Project
Craigmillar Arts	Craigmillar SIP – community arts project					X
Routes to Employment	Falkirk CURP project – adult guidance project					X
Camelon Education Centre	Falkirk CURP project – community education					X
Falkirk Women's Technology Centre	Falkirk CURP project - adult training project					X
Community Development Health Project	Dundee SIP Project – health project					X
Youth Sports Development Officer	Dundee SIP Project - social inclusion through sport					X
Homestart	West Lothian SIP Project – parents & children					X
Transition Project	West Lothian SIP Project – young people with learning difficulties leaving care					X
Next Steps	Argyle & Bute SIP Project					X
Total (36)		4	8	4	7	13

As Table 4.5 below illustrates, there was a marked difference between the organisations who participated, and those who declined to participate in the research. None of the programme or project level organisations that were approached declined to participate, whereas accessing the views of key funders, and those involved in policy was much harder.

Table 4.5:   Organisations that declined to participate in the research

Organisation	Description	Funding/Policy	Policy	Evaluation	Program.	Project
Shelter	SSIN member (not regular attender)		X			
Scottish Council Foundation	SSIN Member (not regular attender)		X			
Community Fund	Declined – no reason given	X				
Scottish Executive	Declined – outwith their guidelines	X				
Equal Opportunities Commission	No reply		X			
Scottish Poverty Information Unit	No reply		X			
CoSLA	Declined - no direct involvement		X			

In total 36 people were interviewed. Of these, the majority had worked in social inclusion for a number of years, as the table below illustrates:

Table 4.6:   Length of time respondents had worked in social inclusion

Time scale	Number of respondents
Four years or less	7
Five to Nine	6
Ten to fifteen	5
Fifteen to twenty	3
Twenty plus	6
Not recorded	1

Nine of the respondents had job titles that reflected their front line co-ordination and management roles, with another five having field work related job titles. Nine respondents had titles relating to non-front line management positions, and four had research based titles.

The organisations the respondents worked for had a wide range of outputs, namely:

- Outputs relating to young people (14)
- Outputs relating to employment and childcare (15)
- Outputs relating to income (4)
- Outputs relating to learning (18)
- Outputs relating to health (8)
- Outputs relating to volunteers (3)
- Outputs relating to community (13)

- Outputs relating to community safety (3)
- Outputs relating to information (14)
- Outputs relating to isolation and confidence building (7)
- Outputs relating to housing and environment (5)
- Outputs relating to equality (6)
- Strategic outputs (13)

More information on the respondents and their organisations can be found in Appendix B.

Reliability, validity and generalisability

In order to ensure reliability, attempts were made to keep the sample bias to a minimum in the following ways. First, discussions regarding the sampling framework were held with SCVO and the Scottish Executive to ensure that no relevant organisations were ignored. Second, efforts were made to include all the key organisations that should be interviewed, and there was a purposive sampling of the others.

As noted above all of the primary research was carried out by one person, whose attitudes could unconsciously bias the research. This was addressed by keeping the role of the interviewer to a minimum. Attention was paid to the assumptions of the interviewer and potential areas of difficulty. As a practitioner in the field of anti-poverty there is a familiarity with the language and issues in the area of research which affects interviews about with colleagues and with "non-professionals" involved in anti-poverty work either as service users or volunteers.

There are limitations to the above methodology, particularly in terms of external validity. In choosing to undertake qualitative research, of necessity only a small fraction of people involved in the monitoring and evaluation of social inclusion projects were involved. It is hoped that by interviewing the key players at a policy level, and a representative sample of practitioners, that the results will have generalisability.

4.7 The Research Instrument

Having identified the research paradigm and the research sample, further consideration was given to the best method of eliciting the responses of participants. A range of methods were considered that would be appropriate for the research topic and the participants. Consideration was given to the use of case studies, that is examining in detail the context of monitoring and evaluation with a number of organisations. This would have provided very detailed information about the application of monitoring and evaluation to social inclusion projects. However, as case study work is very intensive, it would have been possible to undertake work with only a very small number of organisations which would have impacted on the generalisability of the findings. For this reason it was decided not to use a case study approach.

A second approach that was considered was the use of focus groups, bringing together a number of individuals with an interest in social inclusion monitoring and evaluation and asking them to discuss a range of topics related to social inclusion. The advantage of this method is that it can involve a large number of people, and the discussion can stimulate individuals to discuss issues which may not occur to them in a one-to-one interview. The disadvantages include the fact that quieter members of the group may feel unable to participate, therefore there is the potential for bias with the views of more assertive members of the group being taken as representative. In addition, there is the possibility for bias in the recording of the discussion of the focus groups, with difficulties such as two people speaking at the same time. For these reasons, it was thought that focus groups were not appropriate for the research.

After considering the above options it was decided that the best quality of information would be received through using in-depth interviews.

King (1994) notes that the goal of any qualitative research interview is:

> *"... to see the research topic from the perspective of the interviewee, and to understand how or why he or she comes to have this particular perspective."* (King, 1994, p14)

This may not happen, for two main reasons, namely, problems in undertaking the interview, and problems with the interview schedule. This section looks first at the nature of in-depth interview, before moving on to examine the construction of the interview schedule.

In-depth Interviews

When undertaking research with human beings a number of considerations have to be taken into account. Human beings have a degree of self-awareness that affects their behaviour, and they constantly interpret the social situations in which they find themselves. This behaviour has been labelled 'symbolic interactionism'. Foddy (1993) describes this world view thus:

> "... symbolic interactionists claim that social actors in any social situation are constantly negotiating a shared definition of the situation; taking one another's viewpoints into account; and interpreting one another's behaviour as they imaginatively construct possible lines of interaction before selecting lines of action for implementation." (Foddy, 1993, p20)

Symbolic interactionism obviously has an impact on the interview situation for both the interviewer and interviewee; Foddy describes the impact thus:

> "The most basic implication of symbolic interaction theory for social researchers is the hypothesis that the meaning ascribed to social acts is a product of the relationship within which those acts take place. Symbolic interaction theory predicts that respondents will constantly try to reach a mutually shared definition of the situation with the researcher." (Foddy, 1993, p21)

Jones (1985) echoes this view, noting that individuals construct the meaning and significance of their realities, and noting the role in-depth interviews have to play in this:

> "... to understand other persons' constructions of reality we would do well to ask them (rather than assume we can know merely by observing their overt behaviour) and to ask them in such a way that they can tell us in their terms (rather than those imposed rigidly and a priori by ourselves) and in depth which addresses the rich context that is the substance of their meanings (rather than through isolated fragments squeezed onto a few lines of paper)." (Jones, 1985, p46)

Consideration, therefore, was given to an interview process which would ensure, as far as possible that the interpretation of the interview situation by the interviewer and interviewee were as similar as possible. This was helped to a large extent by the fact that all the interviews were undertaken with individuals who worked in a professional environment where research was a fact of life. The other steps taken to address interpretation are noted below in the section on constructing the interview schedule, and procedures used to collect the data.

Constructing the Interview Schedule

In constructing the interview questions care was taken to refer to the existing body of literature that identifies potential problems with wording, and to try to ensure that the questions produced answers that were relevant to the research. Bouma and Atkinson (1995) make the following point:

> "Researchable questions have two basic properties. First, they are limited in scope to certain times, places and conditions... The second property of a researchable question is that some observable, tangible, countable evidence or data can be gathered which is relevant to the question."
> (Bouma and Atkinson, 1995, pp 13-15)

Belson, quoted in Foddy (1993) notes sixteen categories of difficult question:

1. *"Two questions presented as one.*
2. *Questions with a lot of meaningful words.*
3. *Questions which include qualifying phrases or clauses.*
4. *Questions with multiple ideas or subjects.*
5. *Questions that contain difficult or unfamiliar words.*
6. *Questions that contain one or more instruction.*
7. *Questions that start with words that are meant to soften them.*
8. *Questions with difficult phrases.*
9. *Hypothetical questions.*
10. *Questions that are dependent upon prior questions for meaning.*
11. *Questions with negative elements.*
12. *Inverted questions.*
13. *Questions including either 'if any' or 'if at all'.*
14. *Questions that are too long.*
15. *Questions that include both present and past tenses.*
16. *Questions in which the singular and plural cases are used."*
    (Foddy, 1993, p51)

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Definitions

Consideration was given to whether or not to provide interviewees with a set of definitions of the key terms used in the interview. One disadvantage of giving interviewees a pre-set definition is that it might stop them talking about their own understanding of the term, as they might feel that the definitions they were given were the "correct" definitions, when in fact all of the terms could be defined in a number of ways. However, on balance it was decided that it was more useful to ensure that everyone was using the terms in a consistent way, and interviewees were asked if they were happy with the definitions used. The terms defined were:

"Quantitative"   Quantitative information is based on quantities and numbers, such as the number of users of a project, and demographic information. Quantitative methods of collecting information include "tick box" questionnaires and surveys.

"Qualitative"   Qualitative information is based on the opinions and views of users and/or evaluators. Qualitative methods of collecting information include interviews (groups or individuals), focus groups, observation, recording by diary, or any other method that is based on the opinions of users or evaluators.

"Outputs"   Outputs are the results of the operation of your project.

"Users"   Individuals who make use of the services provided by social inclusion projects.

"Poverty"   Poverty can be defined as *"individuals, families and groups in the population can be said to be in poverty when they lack the resource to obtain the types of diet, participate in the activities and have the living conditions and amenities which are customary, or are at least widely encouraged or approved, in the societies to which they belong. Their*

resforces are so seriously below those commanded by the average individual or family that they are, in effect, excluded from ordinary living patterns, customs and activities." (Townsend, 1979, p31)

"Social exclusion"	Social exclusion can be defined as *"A (British) individual is socially excluded if (a) he/she is geographically resident in the United Kingdom but (b) for reasons beyond his or her control, he/she cannot participate in the normal activities of United Kingdom citizens and (c) he/she would like to so participate."* (Spicker, 1998, p11)
"Social inclusion projects"	Social inclusion projects aim to give their users the skills, knowledge, advice and support they need to participate in their community and in wider society.

Screening Questions

A key aim within the sample was to establish a pool of "experts" who would could speak with authority about social inclusion and monitoring and evaluation. A number of screening questions were used to establish this:

- *What is your name?*
- *Which organisation do you work for?*
- *What is your job title?*
- *How long have you worked in the area of social inclusion and poverty?*
- *Do you currently have any responsibility for monitoring and evaluating your project or programme? If so, please say briefly what this is.*

A further question was asked to provide more background on their project or programme.

- *In your opinion, what would you say are the five key outputs from your project/programme?*

The information gained from these questions can be found in its entirety in Appendix C.

The research questions

The rest of the questions related to the research question and objectives set out in Chapter One, and were based on information gained from Chapter Two. Explanations of the questions are given below:

<u>What is being monitored and evaluated?</u>

The first three questions centred on issues of definitions. The Literature Review highlighted range of definitions that have been developed to describe disadvantage. The following questions aimed to tease out the usefulness of the different definitions, and the implications for monitoring and evaluation of the use of these terms:

- *How relevant is the term social inclusion as a description of what your project/programme does?*
- *What are the key outcomes of social inclusion projects in general? Are any of them difficult to quantify? If so, why?*
- *What are the differences between measuring poverty, social exclusion and social inclusion?*

This was followed by several questions relating to what it was possible to measure; the first of these questions was based on the information in the Literature Review regarding the development of quality of life indicators:

- *Can an individual's quality of life be measured? Can improvements to people's quality of life be measured in the context of social inclusion projects?*

A second question on measurement was based around the use of opinion based information; the Literature Review noted that the Scottish Executive Social Justice

Annual Report contains only one indicator based on opinion based information, namely fear of crime, and that the geographical SIPs are required to establish resident satisfaction in their area. The following question aimed to assess how useful these measures were, and if there was other, equally valid, opinion based information:

- *Is there monitoring information based on individual's opinions that would be useful to have? "Resident satisfaction" and "fear of crime" are examples of opinion based information that are used to evaluate social inclusion projects. Are these useful measures?*

In the CPAG research project noted in the Literature Review, which interviewed people living in poverty, respondents had highlighted psychological issues of poverty such as the effect it had on relationships and on confidence. In addition, a number of frameworks have been developed to assess confidence and job readiness. These issues were followed up in the interview:

- *Are users' relationships with family and friends improved by participation in social inclusion projects? Can this be assessed?*
- *To what extent can improvements in participants' self confidence be measured?*
- *To what extent can partial outcomes such as movement toward job readiness be measured?*

How is monitoring and evaluation being undertaken

Social Inclusion Partnerships have received funding to establish the views of local residents, for example, through People's Panels. The following question aimed to establish the success of these initiatives:

- *What are the best ways to gather the opinions of local residents? How can this be linked back to the work of social inclusion projects?*

One key area was the issue of reflecting the quality of service provision, and the role of participants' views of their experience. These were covered by the following questions:

- *Can quantitative indicators reflect issues of the quality of service provision?*
- *How well can participants in social inclusion projects assess how they have benefited from their participation?*

A key issue is the use of monitoring and evaluation information in targeting resources, and the role of qualitative information in this process. Questions were included establish the extent to which comparisons could be made between projects based on qualitative information, and if these comparisons could be used to target resources:

- *To what extent is it possible to compare qualitative information gained from participants in one project with qualitative information gained from participants in a similar project?*
- *To what extent should funding agencies consider qualitative information when targeting resources?*

<u>Future developments in monitoring and evaluation</u>

Respondents were given the opportunity to talk more about their own organisation's monitoring and evaluation:

- *How could the monitoring and evaluation information that your project/programme currently collects be improved?*

A final open-ended question was posed to interviewees to allow them to expand on any areas that they felt merited further discussion.

- *Do you have any other comments on the issue of qualitative research in evaluating social inclusion projects?*

A copy of the questionnaire is included in Appendix A for reference purposes.

Validity, reliability and generalisablity

For qualitative research to be valid the researcher must be assured that s/he has *"gained full access to the knowledge and meanings of informants".(Easterby-Smith et al, 1991)* This can fail to happen if the interview process does not provide clear and unambiguous questions; the steps undertaken above were aimed at minimising any mis-interpretations that could undermine the reliability of the results.

Foddy (1993) notes that the principal causes of error in the gathering of data through survey procedures are:

[a] *"Respondents' failure to understand questions as intended;*

[b] *A lack of effort, or interest, on the part of the respondents;*

[c] *Respondents' willingness to admit to certain attitudes of behaviours;*

[d] *The failure of respondents' memory or comprehension processes in the stressed conditions of the interview; and*

[e] *Interviewer failure of various kinds (e.g. the tendency to change wording, failures in presentation procedures and the adoption of faulty recording procedures)."* (Foddy, 1993, p2)

In order to address these potential threats to the validity of the research the following steps were taken. The use of a semi-structured interview ensures that all interviewees are asked the same questions, and all the research was undertaken by the same researcher which permits a high degree of consistency between the interviews. Effort was taken to ensure that the language used in the interview was appropriate to interviewees.

The interview schedule was piloted, with the initial interview being undertaken with a Social Inclusion Partnership Programme Manager. The initial interview schedule had made use of a closed question, with respondents asked to rate how strongly they felt about the issue. They were then asked to expand on their views. The initial interview showed this to be cumbersome, and the questions were re-worded as open questions which worked better. The first five interviews were treated as

pilots, with minor changes made after the second and third interviews. After this point no further changes were made.

4.8 Procedures used to collect data

This section covers the data collection process, from initial contact with potential participants, to the verification of the typewritten transcripts of the interviews. Organisations were contacted initially by letter. The letter outlined the research project and requested an interview. Additional information about the project, including information on the background of the researcher, and a copy of the interview schedule were also enclosed; copies of this documentation can be found in Appendix A. This initial contact was followed up by a telephone call, where arrangement were made to interview that person, or a different contact if that was suggested.

Almost all of the interviews took place at the premises of the organisations whose representative was being interviewed, with two being held at Napier University.

The first five interviews were used to pilot the interview schedule. After the first interview substantial changes were made, with the questions being re-written from closed questions to open questions; this interview was then excluded from the subsequent analysis. Minor changes were made to wording as a result of the next two interviews. By the fourth interview no further changes were made to the schedule.

The interviews were undertaken over a twelve month period, starting in May 2001 and ending on the 1st May 2002. The interviews lasted between one and one-and-a-half hours each. All the interviews were tape recorded, with the participants' permission.

It was noted that there are issues relating to the analysis of verbal data that impact on the data collection process. Lemke notes:

> *"The language people speak or write becomes research data only when we transpose it from the activity in which it originally functioned to the activity in*

which we are analysing it... Because linguistic and cultural meaning... is always highly context-dependent, researcher-controlled selection, presentation, and re-contextualisation of verbal data is a critical determinant of the information content of the data." (Lemke, 2002, p1)

Lemke further notes problems in the transcription process:

"The process of transcription creates a new text whose relations to the original data are problematic. What is preserved? What is lost? What is changed? Just the language of medium from speech to writing alters our expectations and perceptions of language. What sounds perfectly sensible and coherent may look in transcription ... confused and disorganised. What passes by in speech so quickly as not to be noticed, or is replaced by the listener's expectations of what should have been said, is frozen and magnified in transcription. Normal spoken language is full of hesitations, repetitions, false starts, re-starts, changes of grammatical construction in mid-utterance, non-standard forms, compressions and elisions..." (Lemke, 2002, p2)

Lemke notes a tendency in transcription to 'clean up' the text, and preserve only whole word utterances. He cautions against this, noting that information on emphasis, value-orientation, humour and irony, amongst other issues, may be lost.

In light of this it was decided to transcribe the taped interviews *verbatim*, and to refer back to the tapes if there was uncertainty about the tone of particular utterances. Some of the interviews were typed up by the researcher, with the rest being passed to a professional typist. In order to ensure that the two sets of transcripts were comparable, the following conventions were agreed:

"Please include:

Laughter [LAUGHTER]

Long pause [Pause]

Short pause [...]

Em, eh, ah etc" (Researcher's note to typist, 03 07 01)

The *verbatim* transcripts were sent to all interviewees to allow them to clarify what they had said, and to check for any inaccuracies as a result of transcription. Most interviewees did not respond, with only two sending back amended scripts. One respondent amended her script to remove all verbal hesitations, and the other

requested that a reference to a project manager be removed as it would have identified the project manager.

Reliability, validity and generalisability

While working in the research field can be an advantage in establishing credibility with interviewees and establishing rapport, there is also a risk of assuming that the researcher understands what interviewees may be alluding to without actually stating it. Interviewees may also make assumptions about the type of answers they give to a colleague working in the same profession; concerns about confidentiality or a concern to give an answer that concurs with the current wisdom in social inclusion work may inhibit answers. These issues were addressed with a conscious effort on the part of the researcher to clarify through non-directive probes the exact meanings of interviewees responses. The confidentiality of the research and the exploratory nature of the interviews was also explained.

4.8   Methods of Data Analysis

The research generated many thousands of words, and it was necessary to find a method of reducing the texts. Miles and Huberman (1994) describe data reduction thus:

> "Data reduction refers to the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting and transforming the data that appear in ... transcripts." (Miles and Huberman, 1994, p10)

The research was analysed by qualitative content analysis using inductive categories. Mayring notes of qualitative content analysis:

> "The main idea of the procedure is to formulate a criterion of definition, derived from [the] theoretical background and research question, which determines the aspects of the textual material taken into account. Following this criterion the material is worked through and categories ... deduced. Within a feedback loop those categories are revised, [and] eventually reduced to main categories and checked in respect to their reliability. If the research question suggests quantitative aspects (e.g. frequencies of coded categories) [they] can be analysed." (Mayring, 2000, p4)

The process followed is illustrated below:

Figure 4.2:   Model of Inductive Category Development
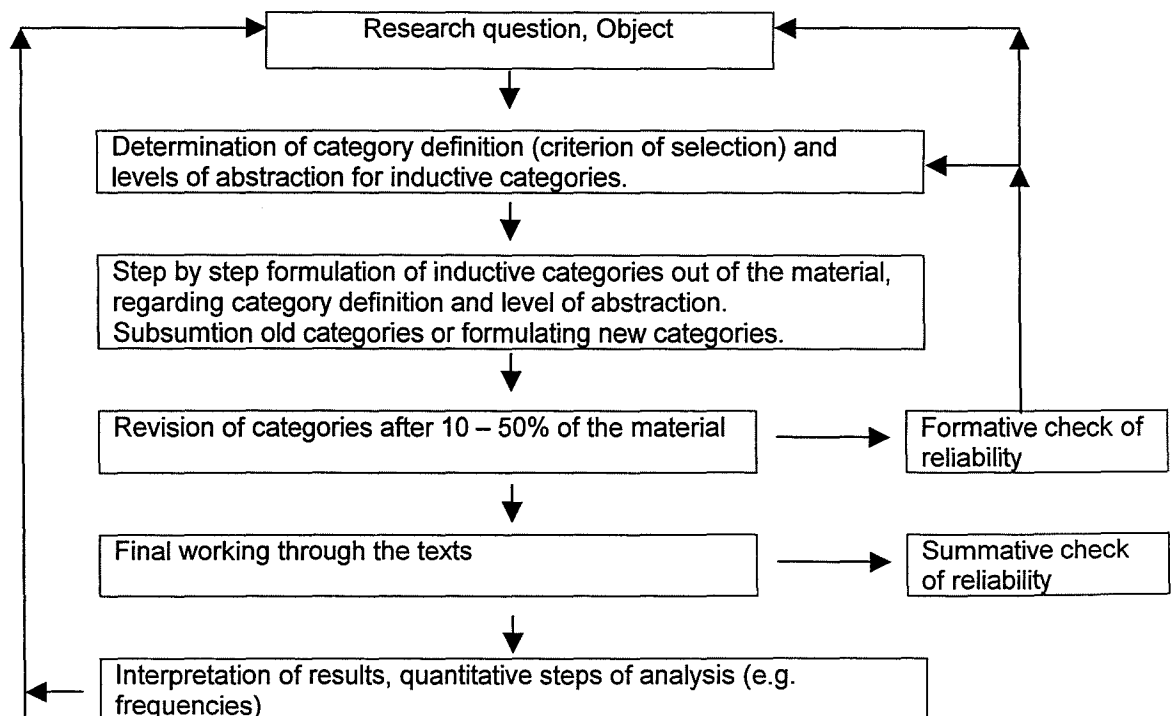
(Mayring, 2000, p4)

An initial review of the scripts highlighted a number of emerging themes. These were grouped and coded into theme codes and sub-theme codes. All codes were given a one line definition to aid consistency of application.

Substantial changes were made to the initial codes. The initial codes were derived from a reading of the first six transcripts, and when these were applied to later transcripts it was found that the codes were not always appropriate. This meant, on the one hand, that large numbers of comments were coded to 'Other' categories, and on the other hand, some codes had only one or two comments in them. Therefore extensive re-coding was undertaken with the aim of achieving a more workable level of abstraction. A full list of the final codes can be found in Appendix D .

These codes were applied to the transcripts using a qualitative data analysis package called "N-Vivo" (see below). Having applied the codes, the frequency with which each code was applied was noted.

Computer issues

A variety of computer applications were used during the research, and are summarised below.

Information gathering	The Internet was used as an information gathering tool. Information was gained from particular web-sites, such as the Scottish Executive Social Justice website and the Lothian Anti-Poverty Alliance website. In addition, search engines were used as tools to identify sites of potential interest. The browser used was Microsoft Internet Explorer, and the search engine most commonly used was Google.
Data storage	A word processing package was used to write up notes and to transcribe the tape recorded interviews. The package used was Microsoft Word.
Data analysis	A qualitative data analysis package called "N-Vivo" was

utilised to code the transcripts. N-vivo allowed all items with a particular code to be pulled out together, and allowed cross-transcript comparisons to be run.

Kell (1997) reviews the advantages and disadvantages of using qualitative data analysis packages. On a positive note, use of computer packages have the potential to make the process of analysis more transparent and rigorous. However, there is a danger of losing the context of the research.

N-Vivo coding provided a useful way of addressing a question-by-question analysis, but also had two potential dangers. First, in analysing across the transcripts there was a danger of the context of comments being lost; this was particularly true as N-Vivo allowed a very high level of extrapolation. A second issue was the danger of comments being lost as they were not made under the 'appropriate' question. In order to address these issues, each transcript was re-read and compared to the question-by-question analysis to check for omissions or representations. N-Vivo was used to provide a level of abstraction of 10 to 20 responses to each issue, with a final abstraction done from a paper copy, in order to allow the context of the remarks to be noted.

4.10 Summary

This chapter outlined the methodology for undertaking the research, including the methods of sample selection, data collection and data analysis. The next three chapters analyses the results of the research.

CHAPTER FIVE: THE NATURE OF SOCIAL INCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

The introduction stated the research question, and a number of research objectives that the research is aiming to address. The methodology chapter outlined how research was undertaken to establish the views of practitioners and policy makers on a number of issues relating to the research question. This chapter moves on to identify what has been learned from the respondents' views in relation to the research question.

The research question asked

"To what extent do the existing systems of monitoring and evaluation in Scottish social inclusion initiatives recognise the particular nature of social inclusion?"

The literature review identified that there are a number of issues that are specific to social inclusion, namely, the idea of inclusion as a process, the subjectivity of inclusion, the holistic nature of inclusion and the wide range of potential clients for social inclusion projects that follow from this. While all the elements are present to some degree in other related terms such as poverty or quality of life, in social inclusion all of these elements combine.

There are a number of reasons why Scottish social inclusion projects may not adequately recognise the specific nature of social inclusion. The literature review identified a number of potential barriers:

- There were a number of definitions of social inclusion, and that the term was open to differing interpretations; if key players do not share a vision of what social inclusion is, or if there is a lack of clarity regarding the terms this may result in the specific elements of social inclusion not being addressed.
- There is a range of targets that social inclusion projects and programmes were working toward; the targets that are being used to measure the impact of social

inclusion projects may not be an appropriate or complete reflection of social inclusion.

- A range of methods for monitoring and evaluation were identified; the methods that projects are using to assess if they are meeting these targets may not be appropriate for social inclusion, or the resources available may be overly constraining.

- It was identified that social inclusion is a broad concept involving individuals with a wide range of needs; the different client groups may not all be participating in the process equally.

If the above difficulties arise, the information that is provided by the monitoring process may accurately reflect the issues inherent in social inclusion.

Dealing with the above constraints helped form the basis of the conceptual model developed in this thesis for an ideal monitoring and evaluation system for social inclusion projects and programmes. The conceptual model has the following key elements:

- A paradigm that accurately reflects the nature of social inclusion.
- Research methods that follow logically from this paradigm.
- Methods of resource allocation that build on this research.

The model will now be applied to the themes emerging from the interviews to identify how well the existing systems fit with the ideal model. This chapter addresses the paradigm of social inclusion; the next chapter examines the methods currently in use to solicit opinions; and Chapter Seven analyses the methods of resource allocation in use.

In order to maintain the confidentiality of the responses, each respondent was assigned a code, which noted their role, but not their identity. The following codes were used:

E (1- 3)	*Respondents involved in an evaluatory role*
F (4-6)	*Respondents involved in a funding role*
P (7-15)	*Respondents involved in a policy role*
PG (16-21)	*Respondents involved at programme level*
PJ (22-34)	*Respondents involved at project level*

As noted in the methodology chapter, the quotes from respondents have been provided verbatim.

5.2   The nature of social inclusion

Implicit in any theory are a number of underpinning assumptions regarding values, the meaning of terms, and the outcomes that should be pursued. This section examines how well the key terms are understood by practitioners, and how well they are felt to reflect the work they are undertaking.

As discussed in the literature review, a wide range of terms are in use to describe deprivation including: relative poverty definitions (Townsend, 1979); social exclusion (Scottish Office, 1998: Spicker, 1998); social inclusion (Scottish Executive, 1999); and social justice (Scottish Executive, 2002).   Participants in the research were asked how relevant they felt the term social inclusion to be as a description of the work of the project or programme. Given the diversity of views on the appropriate terms to use noted above, it would seem reasonable to expect a variety of views on the usefulness of 'social inclusion'. However, the responses to the question were overwhelming positive, with respondents seeing social inclusion as relevant to their work (Appendix C Table 1.0). More neutral viewpoints were also identified:

> *"I don't have too much of a problem with the term social inclusion. I don't think it's great by any means but I've not had anybody else come up with anything better" (PG20)*

The view of social inclusion as a 'shorthand' term echoed the definition of social exclusion offered by the Prime Minister Tony Blair (Scottish Office, 1998).

On the negative side, a concern was raised that the key issue was economic (Appendix C Paragraph 1.4):

> "I'm conscious that we've defined and re-defined social what fundamentally is about poverty and I think poverty is a more helpful concept at the end of the day."

The literature review identified several key elements to inclusion, noting that social inclusion reflected an approach that emphasised participation, that was process driven and was holistic. 'Social inclusion' was used in the interviews in a variety of ways, and three strands emerged: social inclusion as a theory, as an approach and as a piece of terminology.

Social inclusion was seen as a theoretical notion, which provided a conceptual basis for action. It recognised the importance of participation in society (Appendix C Paragraph 1.9) and in the democratic process (Appendix C Paragraph 1.10), reflecting the definition of social inclusion given by Spicker (1998) in the literature review:

> "It's probably fairly relevant, em, in that what we are trying to do is to look at all the issues that affect the lives of people in the community. So, that its not a case of just looking at poverty, it's also about looking at the whole issue of people's ability to take part in society, their ability to compete in the job market, their ability to compete in the education system." (PG17)

With regard to social inclusion as an approach, some respondents remarked that the term reflected the partnership work being undertaken and the work being undertaken in the voluntary sector. In addition, it was said that the social inclusion approach encompassed a wide range of issues (Appendix C Paragraph 1.12):

> "What we are also trying to do in the Partnership is to involve as many of the local agencies as we can do so that it becomes like an inclusive response to the issues that are raised in the area." (PG17)

This reflected the Scottish Executive's view of the purpose of SIPs being to co-ordinate efforts to tackle exclusion (Scottish Executive, 1999).

The main concerns about social inclusion were, however, terminological with concerns that the term was jargon, and was not meaningful to the clients with whom projects were working. Reflecting the concern raised by the Scottish Executive Central Research Unit (1999) that the concept of social exclusion could pathologies and stigmatise individuals, there were concerns expressed that social inclusion was not a term that potential clients would use to describe themselves, individuals not accessing services, or 'pigeon-holing' of individuals with reference to their income status (Appendix C Paragraph 1.19):

> *"It's just the nature of largely white, largely middle class, largely well educated, driven, caring professions in the public sector that need to create, em, words like social inclusion to bring their strategies round and actually it has very little meaning to people in the community, in a direct sense. Em, obviously social inclusion is a massive agenda in the Scottish Executive and good on them for doing that. Em, I wouldn't say that social inclusion per se, em, is it central to what we do? Yes, but it's not grasped by the community. It's not grasped." (PG21)*

> *"I don't think it is relevant necessarily to the people that we are working with. It is relevant to the people that fund us, I suppose, because that is the term they invented, and the term they use, and perhaps they understand. So, in terms of, em, getting funding we have to speak the language which uses these words. But I don't think...it's not words that members of this community use about themselves, or about their friends." (PJ28)*

This lack of understanding of the term is of concern, as it may mean that individuals in need are not accessing services due to their lack of awareness of the term. However, the literature review noted that more readily understood terms such as 'poverty' had a stigma attached to them, with people unwilling to admit to being poor, or not recognising that they could be considered as living in poverty. Policy makers and practitioners have to use some term to describe tackling deprivation and disadvantage, and, overall, 'social inclusion' appears to have many qualities to recommend it as a neutral, non-emotive term. With regard to positive aspects of the term, it was noted that it was better than previous terms such as 'Priority Partnership' or 'social exclusion', and that the term recognised the social aspects of deprivation (Appendix C Paragraph 1.13). The research identified that social inclusion was a relevant term for the respondents, at least as a label for what they were trying to achieve. In order to establish further respondents' perceptions of the nature of social inclusion, respondents were

asked what they perceived to be the key outcomes of social inclusion projects (Appendix C Paragraph 2.1).

A range of outcomes were identified, including:

- Participation;
- Equality of opportunity;
- Confidence/capabilities for individuals;
- Confidence/capabilities for communities;
- Accessing services;
- New ways of working;
- Tackling poverty and social exclusion;
- Work with young people;
- Education and training;
- Employment.

The key issue for many respondents was participation, with tackling poverty as an outcome noted by only four respondents. However, education, employment and confidence building were all seen as important, all of which have an impact on an individual's, or communities' ability to tackle exclusion. It may be that rather than identifying 'tackling poverty' as a separate issue, respondents identified these issues as all having an indirect effect on poverty, either by raising individuals incomes or providing other benefits, such as the social interaction gained from being in employment. Despite being identified in the literature review as a key issue for individuals living in poverty (Beresford *et al*, 1999), none of the respondents identified improved relationships as an outcome of social inclusion projects.

The discussion of the outcomes of social inclusion projects highlights the assumptions that respondents make about the purpose of social inclusion projects. The emphasis on participation in the cited outcomes of social inclusion projects relates well to the Government's view of social inclusion and Social Inclusion Partnerships. Social inclusion was well understood by respondents, and their

views of it were in line with the Scottish Executive's vision of the purpose of Social Inclusion Partnerships, consequently it is likely that the Executive and the agencies working to implement social inclusion are all working to a similar agenda.

5.3 The role of employment in social inclusion

Although respondents were largely positive about social inclusion, there were a minority of concerns regarding the role of employment in tackling social exclusion. Unemployment was noted in the literature review as a determinant of poverty (Scottish Poverty Information Unit, 1997; Scottish Office Central Research Unit, 1999). Respondents raised a number of issues regarding the role of employment in social inclusion, raising concerns about the quality of the jobs on offer, competition between agencies involved in employment, parental expectations of employment opportunities for young people with learning difficulties and one respondent felt it was not the role of the SIPs to find people employment, but rather to work on the barriers that stop people even looking for work (Appendix C Paragraph 10.19):

> "It's not the SIPs' jobs to get people work, and to concentrate on the economic front of things. I don't think so. I think there's enough of that kind of service around, and the new one shop agency is much more recognising that as well. So actually put the responsibility where its due for that, but concentrate much, much more on the eternal barriers that people have got that prevents them believing in the first place that its even worth them looking for a job." (P10)

This is an interesting approach, the idea that the key role of the Social Inclusion Partnerships should be to address aspirations; the emphasis in the outcomes on participation and confidence would indicate that this type of work is being undertaken, but the Scottish Executive model of the SIPs does not emphasise this aspect.

There was also a concern that social inclusion did not adequately tackle the issue of poverty and unemployment, which was seen as fundamental (Appendix C Paragraph 1.16):

"When we're talking about young people not taking part in education, young people taking part in crime, you know, people then tend older adults not take part in education, you know why are those things happening and I think you look to there where it where it comes from, and it does, it comes from poverty and unemployment." (PJ24)

These views suggest a belief in a causal link between poverty and crime; the existence or otherwise of such links have been the cause of much debate between politicians, with a shift in policy since 1997 to recognise that such links do exist. It is interesting to note this criticism of social inclusion not recognising these terms, particularly as the definition used by the Prime Minister Tony Blair of social exclusion highlights the problems of both unemployment and crime (Scottish Office, 1998), and the Social Exclusion Unit has highlighted that the cycle of decline almost always starts with lack of work (Social Exclusion Unit, 2000).

Employment statistics provide some readily available tangible outputs, and several respondents commented on the Government's emphasis on employment as a route out of exclusion. However, there are also non-tangible outcomes of gaining employment of both a positive and negative nature. Accessing employment addresses issues of isolation and can impact positively on individuals' mental health, but in contrast, poorly paid employment may not actually provide a route out of poverty, and can also contribute to ill-health. It may be that the accessibility of outputs and data relating to employment has resulted in a lack of emphasis on outcomes. In addition, not all individuals who are socially excluded are in a position to seek employment, for example, pensioners, and social inclusion provides, perhaps, a better description of work undertaken to support these individuals.

With reference to the conceptual model element 'Clearly defined, relevant and understood aims', the previous discussion identified that the term 'social inclusion' was well understood, and was widely felt to be relevant to the work that respondents were undertaking. However, the main criticism of the term was that it was not meaningful to the users of social inclusion projects, and it was a term that was imposed by policy makers, rather than a description that project users would use to describe themselves. A second area of contention was the role that employment should play in the Social Inclusion Partnerships, with respondents

providing a diversity of views between those who thought that tackling employment was key to addressing social inclusion, and those who thought that this was not the role of the SIPs. These issues are discussed further in Chapter Seven.

5.4   Measurability

The above section examined the relevance of social inclusion and its related concepts. Building on this, this section examines the issues regarding the measurability of social inclusion, social exclusion and poverty. Respondents were asked if they thought there were differences between measuring poverty, social exclusion and social inclusion. This was a question that many respondents found difficult to answer, and their answers highlighted a complex interplay between social, economic and cultural factors relating to poverty, inclusion and exclusion.

A number of different methods for establishing poverty levels have been used such as deprivation indices (Social Exclusion Unit PAT 18), household surveys (Mack and Landsey, 1984; Scottish Household Survey), poverty lines (McDermott, 1998) and benefits measures (Scottish Poverty Information Unit, 1995), and many of the issues these methods raised were commented upon by respondents. A diversity of views emerged from the interviews regarding the differences between measuring poverty, inclusion and exclusion. Three themes emerged; the differences between poverty and inclusion/exclusion, the relationship between income and poverty, and the differences between inclusion and exclusion.

The first view was that poverty was easier to measure than inclusion/exclusion, due to the fact that poverty was more quantifiable, and it is easier to provide objective standards or benchmarks for poverty (Appendix C Paragraph 4.4):

> *"I think a lot of poverty is seen as something that is much more quantifiable in terms of people seem to measure it as a GDP or something like that. You only earn so many per cent of whatever the mean wage is for a male in the country. So poverty I think sometimes always seen as something that much more quantifiable." (F5)*

This corresponds to the measures identified in the literature review such as the Households Below Average Income measures identified by McDermott (1998).

Stitt (1994), Alcock (1993) and Murray (1990) outlined a range of causes of poverty and a range of non-financial causes were identified by respondents, contrasting with the views expressed previously. In the view of some respondents, social inclusion was quite different from poverty, and they highlighted different root causes of poverty from exclusion, noting culture, psychological reasons and issues such as lack of access, gender, racism, amongst other issues as the cause of exclusion, rather than lack of resources. (Appendix C Paragraph 4.12 and 4.13):

> *"Social exclusion and inclusion is more about, it's more about cultural things. Yes, the amount of money is important, and no doubt about it, if you don't have a job, that's one big exclusion, reason for exclusion. But it's not the only reason. People may be excluded because they are a different colour, or then their language at home is a different language, they don't feel they have the skills. They may feel that they don't have skills in computing, which many, very routine jobs ask for now in the adverts. So social exclusion and inclusion is a lot more difficult to tie down than poverty." (PG16).*

The use of 'culture' here is in contrast to Murray's (1990) views of a negative 'culture' existing amongst an underclass which prevents them from accessing employment, with this respondent linking culture more explicitly to discrimination. However, the range of issues discussed cover a range of exclusion, including issues of active or institutional discrimination *("because they are a different colour"*), and issues where individuals self-select themselves out of participation *("they don't feel they have the skills")*. Addressing these different types of discrimination requires very different approaches. Many of the SIPs have projects which do aim to address the excluded status of individuals and communities through skills development and raising aspirations. However, addressing the more pervasive structural issue of racial discrimination is much harder to address through a project-based approach.

In contrast to the previous views on poverty, a second school of opinion was that poverty and social inclusion/exclusion were very similar, noting that they were all very wide terms dealing with the same issues (Appendix C Paragraph 4.8):

"Well, it's not been helped by the inter-changeability of the terms being used by the Executive and others. And I'm probably as guilty as anybody else of sometimes using the words social inclusion or social exclusion actually in a poverty related situation. So, because social exclusion does include poverty, it's not, and even some of the other areas of exclusion, like racism, you know, exclusion because you are disabled, or a woman or whatever, all tend to have a poverty relationship, so that people are also more likely to be living in poverty." (P7)

It is interesting to compare the issues raised in this quote to the groups identified as at risk by the Scottish Poverty Information Unit (1997), which identifies both disabled people and women as groups at an increased risk of poverty. The quote presents a challenge to identify instances of exclusion which are not in some way linked to an increased risk of poverty, and it could be argued that many individuals are excluded through their own characteristics such as lack of confidence. However, as lack of confidence is also likely to have an impact on your ability to find and keep well paid employment there could also be an increased risk of poverty. In reality, therefore, the factors that contribute to an individual being at risk of exclusion are likely to be largely similar to the factors that contribute to an increased risk of poverty.

Other relationships between the terms were also raised, with two highlighting the circular nature of exclusion and poverty and one noting that social inclusion encompassed poverty but did not emphasise it (Appendix C Paragraph 4.10):

"Well, I know we have this debate all the time and it's like, you know, if I was going to there, I wouldn't start from here. Is poverty a result of social exclusion? Do you eradicate poverty by increasing the inclusion elements in that? Probably not. But poverty can be a barrier to actual participation so it really there's a number of dimensions there" (P13)

The relationship between poverty and income was also commented upon, again with a diversity of views regarding whether income was the main aspect of poverty and or whether the term poverty could be interpreted as wider than just income (Appendix C Paragraph 4.5):

"I think poverty ... I think we are more interested in the whole social inclusion stroke social justice arena, because it allows us to look far more at the whole issue of.. I suppose that whole quality of life, and how do we pull

everything together to see that there's been an impact made upon the area as a whole, rather than, perhaps, just certain selected individuals. I think for us, if we just look to poverty, which we would merely be looking at people's monetary deficiencies" (PG17)

For these respondents, there was more to poverty than just lack of money, and any move to address poverty would have to be undertaken in a holistic manner. Increased income levels would not solve all an individual's problems, therefore it was necessary to go beyond income and look at the individual's relationship with the wider world – social inclusion. The quote also makes an implicit link between social inclusion and quality of life, an issue which will be returned to later in the chapter.

With regard to the differences between the terms inclusion and exclusion, the majority of respondents who commented on the issue thought that there was very little difference:

"I'm not convinced there's a huge difference between your exclusion and inclusion, I think they are just two sides.. for me they're two sides to the same coin." (PG17)

Of the respondents who saw an intrinsic difference between the two terms, one said that inclusion was something that is actively done, whereas exclusion is a state of being:

"I think they're intrinsically different. Social inclusion, certainly in terms of this project, we're actually here to include members of the society into the project and regenerate the community and hopefully enable people to not feel excluded in various parts of their life. Social exclusion is when people, as a result of other people not giving them opportunities to be included, is something that they actually are." (PJ27)

Other respondents remarked that they had a framework for measuring exclusion, but that a low score on this did not necessarily signify inclusion, and that *"the absence of evidence is not evidence of absence"* (Appendix C Paragraph 4.17). One respondent noted the importance of focussing on inclusion in measurement (Appendix C Paragraph 4.17):

"I mean, exclusion to me is not being included – ha ha ha – so it is – you know, it's two sides of the same coin and you would seek to measure – yes, you could measure – you could measure the positive but I actually tend to focus on the negative. Not – not that I'm a negative person – [LAUGHTER] because if that is the problem you're trying to – you're trying to identify, it people who're not – who are experiencing poverty as opposed to people who are not in poverty. You know, you're trying to measure the problem rather than those who don't experience the problem " (P8)

These contrasting quotations highlight the fact that we cannot assume that individuals actually feel included, merely by the absence of obvious issues of exclusion. It is also interesting to discuss the use of indicators that relate to positive and negative concepts. For example, in setting out to measure inclusion we might use indicators such as attendance in a particular project, but the fact that a person has attended does not necessarily mean they feel included. Therefore, there is a need for more sophisticated indicators such as the number of times an individual contributes to meetings. However, the same case could be made for exclusion indicators; the fact that someone chooses not to participate in activities does not mean that they feel themselves to be excluded. An analogy can be made with the monitoring of health issues, where the absence of illness in an individual is not necessarily an indicator of well-being.

Although the question specifically referred to measurement, few respondents to this question actually addressed issues of the differences between measuring the different concepts. However, a few key points were made relating to measuring process, norms and the difficulties of measuring awareness raising. These issues are addressed below.

The need to measure the process of inclusion was raised (Appendix C Paragraph 4.12):

"I think poverty is one that can be measured on a quantitative level. So I mean a measure which tries to gauge someone's economic position in life, or someone's physical position they may be living in a house, or a flat or maybe in a family where both parents are working, I think that's slightly different from trying to measure exclusion or inclusion, because that is a process, and exclusion or inclusion is not something that you could quantify at one point in time. It's about people's lives and how they change, eh, and

*whether or not people's households, people, communities either moving
into forms of exclusion or moving out of exclusion into inclusion." (E1)*

The above quotes offer an interesting contrast between measuring the problem
and measuring the process. In any effective monitoring and evaluation system
there will need to be elements of both; there will be a need for baseline information
on where and individual, or a project, is starting from, and also a method of
measuring change. The literature review highlighted the relative lack of
longitudinal studies undertaken to measure poverty.

The importance of having norms against which to measure inclusion was raised:

> *"Yes, but I mean, if you, em, take a particular sort of population em, and
> you had a concept of, em, what the normal life in that population is, that
> they eat meat twice a week, and have access to a cinema, and take their
> kids to the seaside or whatever the norm is in that community, em, (clears
> throat), you can't measure exclusion from those norms unless you have a
> conscious hold on what the norms are." (P14)*

The existence of norms or benchmarks is a key issue in the monitoring and
evaluation of social inclusion projects. As the quote highlights, without a
conscious awareness of the societal norms it is impossible to establish when
exclusion is occurring. However, what the respondent does not address is the
degree to which individuals choose not to emulate the norm; in this example how
would you measure individuals who choose to abstain from meat for idealogical or
health issues, compared to those who could not afford to purchase meat?

A final area of difficulty that was raised was measuring awareness raising work,
equality and individual experience (Appendix C paragraphs 3.3 to 3.9):

> *"Can you measure equality? Everybody will have different views and
> opinions whether they've got an equal kind of opportunity or right or
> whatever within society. And I don't know how you would kind of measure
> that. I think a lot of it's to do with ensuring that the projects that are on the
> ground are kind of offering the opportunities, the facilities, resources are
> there for folk and hope that people are able to come forward and take up
> some of these chances. But that's not always the case. Some people find
> it a bit more difficult to get involved in things within their area than others.
> I'm not really sure if you can measure equality. If you can, I'd like to know
> how." (PJ25)*

This quote illustrates that measuring issues such as equality has the same difficulties associated with it as social inclusion in terms of the subjectivity of the issues. Experiencing exclusion or discrimination is a personal experience that is not always readily apparent without talking to the individual concerned.

The literature review identified a diversity of opinion on the underlying causes of poverty, such as lack of resources (Townsend, 1979), social pathology (Alcock, 1993), and culture (Murray, 1990), and this diversity was reflected in the respondents' opinions discussed in this section. One school of thought in the responses related the measurement of poverty to income measurements, highlighting a view of poverty that saw its roots in economic issues. A second set of opinion identified the issue of culture, and noted the difficulties of identifying adequate measurements in this area; it should be noted, however, the respondents use of the term 'culture' was quite different from that used by Murray (1990). A similar diversity was identified between respondents who identified poverty as being as wide a term as social inclusion, and those who regarded inclusion as substantially different. Finally, little difference was seen between measuring inclusion and exclusion, with the terms being regarded as 'two sides of the same coin'.

5.5 Subjectivity of Poverty and Inclusion

An important issue that was raised regarding the measurement of social inclusion was that inclusion was a subjective state. Further respondents said that poverty was also subjective (Appendix C Paragraph 4.19). Reflecting Townsend (1979) one respondent highlighted the difference between relative poverty, and the subjectivity inherent in inclusion/exclusion measurements:

> *"I think your definition of poverty, from what I understand, is a definition of relative poverty as opposed to absolute poverty and I suppose that's I think relatively easy to define in some objective terms. Whereas I think social exclusion and social inclusion are much more difficult to define because it's probably more important that the views of those who are regarded to be included or excluded are taken into account. So there's a personal dimension and there's a subjective dimension to definitions about inclusion and exclusion which is probably more difficult to quantify than a definition of poverty." (PJ29)*

Reflecting the findings of Stone (1996) and Beresford (1999) who noted that individuals were reluctant to describe themselves as 'poor' as this term carried a degree of stigma, or they did not identify their situation as one of poverty, there was also a degree of subjectivity with regard to whether individuals considered themselves to be poor or excluded. One respondent concurred with these opinions (Appendix C Paragraph 4.19):

> "Em, poverty is a ... it definitely is visible, and it definitely exists. But a lot of people are, this is what we have got to remember, a lot of young people are quite happy the way they are being excluded. A lot of young people that I've come across are quite happy the way they are, you know, they're quite happy not having a job, em, playing their playstation, you know, in the house on their own." (PJ31)

The literature review highlighted the psychological aspects of poverty. Therefore, unless a very narrow definition of absolute poverty is used, which none of the respondents used, there is a need for some degree of research soliciting the opinions of individuals if we are to establish if inclusion or exclusion have taken place, or if individuals feel they are experiencing poverty.

The implications of this are far-reaching. If social inclusion is truly a subjective state then policy-makers could only confidently state that they were achieving social inclusion after extensive survey work establishing that individuals did feel included. In addition, their definition of 'feeling included' might not match that of policy makers.

With regard to the concept of 'realistic and measurable targets' the discussion in this section identifies a major constraint. In reality, it is never going to be possible to obtain all the opinions of all the potential users of a project. Even if the resources to do so were forthcoming, there will always be individuals who will not, or cannot, participate in research which places a large constraint on the accuracy of assessments. Therefore in reality policy makers are, to a large extent, reliant on the information gained from proxy indicators, and the focus of concern then becomes the accuracy of the indicators and the assumptions that underpin them. This issue is returned to in Chapter Seven.

5.6   Quality of Life

In the previous section the views of respondents was sought on issues relating to social inclusion. However, a body of research that has been undertaken around issues of quality of life (Tolley and Rowland, 1995; Scottish Community Development Centre, 2000). Many of the issues relating to social inclusion also relate to quality of life; indeed the indicators currently under development by the government to measure quality of life include poverty and social inclusion as a subset (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, 2003). It may be that quality of life offers an alternative, or complementary, approach to social inclusion in assessing the impact of regeneration projects. This section examines respondents' opinions of the usefulness of quality of life measures.

Respondents were asked if they thought an individual's quality of life could be measured (Appendix C Paragraph 5.1). All the respondents were positive about the idea that quality of life could be measured, but most respondents gave qualifications to the accuracy of the measurement (Appendix C Paragraph 5.2 and table A10). Respondents answered this question in two distinct ways, identifying individual assessments of their quality of life, and the use of proxy indicators for improved quality of life.

The first view was a strong feeling that quality of life is a highly subjective term, and changes in quality of life could only be confirmed by the individual concerned, in line with the views outlined in the literature review by Tolley and Rowland (1987) and the Scottish Community Development Centre (2002):

> "I think only by the person who's affected. At the end of the day I think whether the person believes that they have a good.. what's my view of what my quality of life that I want, that I aspire to and that I have at the moment is quite different from somebody else's. Because what I make choices about may be quite different, therefore I think when we are talking in a context of social inclusion, that that has to be the perception that that local person had." (PG17)

This reflects the issues raised earlier regarding the subjectivity of social inclusion, identifying that many of the issues of subjectivity also apply to quality of life definitions.

The second view was to identify a number of proxies, for example good health, or adequate housing, which could reasonably be assumed to impact on individuals', and communities', quality of life (Appendix C paragraphs 5.3 to 5.21):

> *"I think there is a range of measures that can be used. As I said the measure about income levels, the measure about the access to transport, access to facilities, access to a range of things such as education provision, whether it be non-vocational or vocational education provision, evening classes, things like that could be measured. There's also a thing about their house and what they live in. What is available within the house, in terms of the, do they have the normal standard living conditions, that a large percentage of the population take for granted." (P11)*

This quote is reflective of the work outlined in the literature review on household surveys (Mack and Lansey, 1984). In contrast to the above view outlining the subjectivity of quality of life, the quote identifies a number of tangible, measurable indicators. However, being able to answer yes to these indicators is no indication that the individual themselves feels they have a good quality of life, and it may be that the issues that impact on their quality of life are much harder to measure, such as the quality of their personal relationships or the extent to which their aspirations are being met.

Respondents were asked if improvements in quality of life could be linked back to participation in social inclusion projects (Appendix C Paragraph 5.1); respondents were overwhelmingly positive about the idea. (Appendix C Paragraph 5.24). Some respondents observed that it could be assumed that participants in projects had improved quality of life, for example, because they were no longer so isolated (Appendix C Paragraph 5.27):

> *"Yeah, definitely. Definitely. Especially for the supported accommodation. But there's a client actually moving on the 28th December, that's someone moving somewhere else and they'd actually said it's the emotional support that's what is actually one of the biggest keys for this project, that it provides. And at the start that client's quality of life was not good, destructive relationship, we actually provided them with a home, for them and their kids, so, and they'd actually said like they didn't know actually*

what they would do if it wasn't for this project, they didn't know where they would be." (PJ31)

The idea that it can be assumed that individuals' quality of life has benefited by their participation raises an interesting question for monitoring and evaluation regarding whether we should attempt to evaluate it at all, or whether it is implicit and further investigation is not required, echoing the issues raised by the contrasting quotes in the literature (Normington *et al*, 1986; Cambridge Policy Consultants, 1999).

Some respondents said that this kind of information was obtained in feedback form and anecdotal evidence to staff (Appendix C Paragraph 5.28):

> *"Certainly in the reports when we produce reports, you can see, you know, the quantities that have come through the door - here are the numbers, here are the statistics, here are the people that have achieved, here are the people that have found employment or went to college. Here are the people, most importantly, that said, this actually benefited me ha ha ha yeah." (PJ27)*

A number of limitations were identified. Rossi and Freeman (1993) made a distinction between gross outcomes, that is all the outcomes that have taken place, and net outcomes, the outcomes relating specifically to an intervention; identifying net outcomes was a concern raised by a minority of respondents who thought it was not possible to attribute improvements in participants quality of life to participation in a particular project with any degree of accuracy (Appendix C Paragraph 5.30), highlighting the other influences that could impact on individual's feelings about their quality of life (Appendix C 5.31):

> *"I mean, arguably arguably you can but, you know, how robust that argument is, I suppose, is up to - I mean, you could have - you could say - say one of the things that you were that you were deciding was in your list of things which determined quality of life. Say that was a job. Now, at what level are you able to determine that the job became available to the individual because of their involvement in the project or just because there was a general improvement in the state of economic wellbeing that meant that more jobs were being created. So it it with things with things like that, it's difficult. You you couldn't say with any accuracy, I don't think, that that person got the job because of the social inclusion partnership." (P15)*

The respondent raises a key issue regarding isolating the impact of social inclusion projects, but does not discuss if he thinks the individual concerned could identify the influences upon them getting the job, reflecting the importance identified in the literature on assessing additionality (HM Treasury, 2003).

The responses reported in the above section identified that quality of life was regarded as useful and could be linked back to the work of individual social inclusion projects.

5.7 Opinion Based Information

In the preceding sections there has been some discussion regarding the subjectivity of social inclusion, poverty and quality of life. In order to delve deeper into the issues relating to opinion based research, respondents were asked if they thought that there was information based on individual's opinions that it would be useful to have (Appendix C Paragraph 6.1). A range of responses were forthcoming; several comments were made that related to the mechanics of soliciting opinions, with respondents discussing coverage, with one noting that small sample size could be an issue, one raising the issue of self-selection and another respondent articulating the difficulty of getting the opinions of people who were excluded (Appendix C Paragraph 6.16).

Respondents highlighted the influence of external issues on individual's opinions (Appendix C Paragraph 6.18):

> "if you ask people's opinion in [name of local authority] about, em, their quality of life and their living environment and their services and their work, transport and all the rest of it what always comes out as a key issue is dog fouling. [LAUGHTER] All the time. And [pause] that's the thing like with asking questions like that. That's fine and, you know, that's what what people are saying. A lot of the time that's influenced there's been a big campaign and there's been pressure group at play parks complaining and all the rest of it. It was kind of influenced on that and I think everybody realised that although that came top of the list as something to do, that, like, you know, if we'd done the same survey just after [local employer]

announced it's closure, things would have been different and so on."
(PG20)

The reasons for the emphasis on what would appear to be quite a trivial issue can be speculated upon. Rossi and Freeman (1993) identify 'interfering events' which can distort evaluations, and the development of a high profile campaign on the issue of dog fouling may be an example of an interfering event. However, it may be that rather than this being an issue of most importance in individuals' lives, this is the issue that they feel the Council can act upon, or should act upon.

Issues were raised relating to the reliability and credibility of opinion based information, with one respondent noting that research had to have credibility with both funders and local people, reflecting the discussion in Chapter One regarding the range of stakeholders in social inclusion projects. The second respondent opined that it was difficult to relate people's opinions to issues over which policymakers had no control; he speculated that this might be why fear of crime was used as a measure of social inclusion because policymakers feel they can influence it (Appendix C Paragraph 6.19):

> *"It's not an easy thing to do to get direct, reliable measurement of people's, em well, you may be able to, it's difficult enough just to get a reliable measure of what people are feeling. It's pretty difficult but it's even more difficult to relate what people are feeling at any one time to the sort of conditions which policymakers have some chance of influencing so it's pretty ha ha pretty difficult to even attempt to raise I think." (P14)*

Implicit in this respondents quote is the issue that monitoring systems are developed from the top down, and that systems are developed to respond to the needs of policy makers rather than reflecting the issues of concern to communities.

Opinions were solicited on two opinion-based indicators which are widely used in the monitoring of social inclusion projects: resident satisfaction and fear of crime. As noted in the literature review, resident satisfaction is a compulsory indicator for geographical social inclusion projects; respondents highlighted the importance of

resident satisfaction as a measure (Appendix C Paragraph 6.3) and stressed the importance of the right questions being asked (Appendix C Paragraph 6.4):

> *"I do think these are quite useful measures, you know, sort of asking people to rate things like, you know, their satisfaction within the area, maybe has that changed in the past 5 years. Because at the end of the day, you know, that it's how people feel when they live within that area that is the important thing, you know. Obviously you do need to have services available within the area, you do need to have a sort of environment which isn't all boarded up shops, you know, those sort of issues. But is all that beyond that fabric isn't it? There's that other element which is really the element that you're working at, you just change the fabric in the hope that it will produce that feeling which is the sense that people do belong in society and are involved in society and feel a part of it, you know." (PJ22)*

This respondent suggests asking people to rate how their satisfaction with the area has changes, but this is notoriously difficult to do, as individual's memories are not always accurate, and their expectations change over time. However, longitudinal measures which compare the same individual's satisfaction over time do give this kind of information.

The issue of whether 'residency' was a useful concept in measurement was raised (Appendix C Paragraph 6.5), when asked if resident satisfaction was a useful measure:

> *"I think resident satisfaction is [useful] up to a point, although I'm never sure about the word 'resident'. Resident always seem to imply a choice about where you reside, and a lot of people living in really deprived areas don't have a lot of choice about where they reside. So, I don't know if they think of themselves as residents or just tenants, that's more likely. But I think it does play a part because I think it is about that feeling either of powerlessness or a feeling of inclusion." (P7)*

This comment reflects the discussion in Section 1.3 regarding stakeholders in social inclusion and raises an interesting question regarding whether the opinions' of individuals who have a very limited choice in whether or not they participate need to be solicited in a different manner.

Respondents commented on the role that resident satisfaction information should play in a regeneration project, noting the need to ensure that residents had benefited from the process, linking resident satisfaction information to other information, the empowering nature of the process and the use of Social Inclusion Project People's Panels to solicit residents opinions (Appendix C Paragraph 6.6):

"It's those sort of needs which are people's opinions, people's understanding which we need to tap in far more subtle ways if we are to reduce the risks of regeneration activity. That those most marginalized groups may become victims to it and so getting access to that sort of qualitative information – what it is that actually is important to people – to how people survive in very marginalized circumstances – is essential to improving – to ensuring that (a) they're no worse off by the process of regeneration and (b) one would hope – ha ha ha – less – less excluded as a result of the process or less marginalized, less disadvantaged, i.e. less poor." (P8)

This comment contrasts with the earlier discussion, and the views of Normington *et al* (1986) regarding whether individual's quality of life can be assumed to have improved through an intervention taking place, and strongly makes the case that, in his opinion, such assumptions cannot be made. This quote also uses 'qualitative information' as a description of opinion based information, although, of course, this information could also be gathered by quantitative methods.

The respondents who discussed project users' satisfaction were working with a diverse range of client groups reflecting the groups identified at risk of poverty by the Scottish Information Poverty Unit (1995), and respondents highlighted the different needs of different client groups in evaluation. Respondents outlined the steps they took to solicit the opinion of children and young people, families and trainees (Appendix C Paragraph 6.8 and 6.9)

With respect to fear of crime, it was noted that fear of crime often bore little relation to actual crime rates but fear of crime still led to people amending their behaviour. Respondents also remarked on the impact that the media had on fear of crime (Appendix C Paragraph 6.11):

"The other thing I would say about the fear of crime, again there's imperceptables here, where elderly people may feel it's a threatening situation to them, when in fact the threat is being delivered to someone

else. But they, nevertheless feel involved in that atmosphere, so in other words, when you go down to the shops if there are a large group of youths who are harassing other youths, they may never be the subject of an attack by that gang, but nevertheless, just the atmosphere that is generated is something that they are frightened of, and that's something that we need to ask them about." (P7)

This quote highlights that fear of crime is a highly subjective indicator. Fear of crime amongst older people was an indicator used in the annual Social Justice targets, and a range of research which identified the limitations of fear of crime as a measurement was identified in the literature review (Farrall *et al*, 1997). It was noted that specific client groups had other issues relating to fear of crime, with ethnic minority communities, young people with learning difficulties and young people cited as having particular issues (Appendix C Paragraph 6.14). Respondents detailed the role that regeneration initiatives had on tackling fear of crime such as community policing and CCTV (Appendix C Paragraph 6.12 and 6.13):

"I had a joke with the community policeman because first of all when it went on site and we were at a meeting together and the vandalism was just terrible just terrible by young kids and, em, and it was really disheartening and really difficult, you know. Every time anything was done, you'd come back the next day and it had been knocked down and, em, I think the trainees and the company and everybody was really disheartening and, em, we had the community policeman was telling me that burglaries had gone down. [LAUGHTER] While vandalism was right up." (PJ24)

This quote reflects the fact that there is a story behind the statistics, and that indicators cannot be used in isolation without looking at the underlying reasons.

5.8 Confidence

Respondents were in agreement that clients' confidence was improved by participation in social inclusion projects, but varied in the extent to which they thought this was measurable. A number of potential methods for assessing confidence were discussed, as outlined below:

- See change over time;
- Need to ask the participant directly;

- Proxy indicators;
- Soft indicators;
- Part of the evaluation process.

Reflecting the comments made to the question about quality of life, respondents again identified a dichotomy between observing a change in an individual's confidence, and extrapolating an improvement from proxy indicators.

Respondents noted that if you were working with people over a period of time you saw changes in people's confidence (Appendix C Paragraph 9.5), while several respondents said that questions about confidence were already part of their evaluation processes (Appendix C Paragraph 9.7 and 9.8). Some respondents highlighted the need to talk to the participants and residents directly (Appendix C Paragraph 9.11):

> "When I do the family review, there are questions but I get into a conversation with the family. 'Cos I've known them, because I'm the first person to meet them from [name of organisation]. Em, and I can ask "is this any better", "is that any better" "are you feeling better about that or better about this". And somebody this month actually said very definitely yes, I feel much more confident now. Somebody else was so, she said I never thought I would get a job, I never had the confidence before. And that was a direct result of having a volunteer. So, yeah, that's how we measure it. By asking people." (PJ23)

However, there are always difficulties in asking individuals to reflect back in this manner, due to the limitations of memory. Some projects have addressed this through the use of soft indicator frameworks, and respondents discussed frameworks they had found useful with 'Myself as a Learner' and the Rikter Scale being cited as examples (Appendix C Paragraph 9.13). Other methods that were listed by respondents were video diaries and the use of written work (Appendix C Paragraph 9.15):

> "It's quite crude in one sense, you know, it's got five or six, em, statements, and therefore it loses a lot of the fine grain stuff, but then it's not reasonable to put up a greater number of statements that are clearly distinguishable from each other. So, em, you can actually get some shifts in confidence that would not be picked up by that kind of crude framework, so yes there

would be a margin of error. And, em, people do feel differently about themselves on different days, so it's not that they are wrong one day and right the next, it's just that they do feel differently, and therefore their answer is different. And sometimes people's score goes backwards. For example, you can actually have a question that said I do understand all the ways in which I can find out about possible vacancies, and somewhat could start a work-related programme and score themselves quite highly on that, and on the first day of the course they realise they don't use you know contract announcements in newspapers, they don't use their informal contact with people that are in employment, so by the end of that day 'oh blimey! I thought I was a four I'm actually a two'. You know, that doesn't mean that that experience hasn't been good for them, it means that they are starting from a new baseline of greater realism about where they are. " (E2)

This quote highlights the fact that soft indicator frameworks can be empowering to the individuals who use them as they provide information that allows the individual to chart their progress. It identifies their use as a personal development tool, but as a wider measure of quality their impact is unclear.

Issues were discussed regarding collecting soft indicators; it was noted that there were external influences on individuals that affected their self-confidence from week to week, another said that soft indicators has highlighted a difference in confidence levels between groups accessing their services through different routes and a respondent from a funding agency stated that a recognised framework for assessing self-confidence would be useful (Appendix C Paragraph 9.23). One respondent observed that the public sector could learn from development in human resources in the private sector (Appendix C Paragraph 9.25).

"I think it would have to be something that came from a respected organisation that had developed it, this is a model for measuring self confidence and it was subject to some sort of scrutiny from agencies who operate in that field if you like." (F5)

This quote highlights a recurring theme from respondents, that is, the need for any monitoring and evaluation system to have a degree of credibility with the proposed audience for the research.

Respondents identified different indicators that could be used as proxies for increasing confidence, including getting a job, attending events, speaking up at meetings and becoming activists or volunteers (Appendix C Paragraph 9.17).

However, with these indicators there still remains the difficult of attributing causality to a particular project or programme, reflecting the discussion of gross/net outcomes (Rossi and Freeman, 1993).

Respondents raised concerns about trying to measure increases in confidence, noting issues of objectivity, judgement and justification (Appendix C 9.20):

> *"Em, but yeah, I would think the working assumption would be of course if community activists access services of course their confidence will be improved but I I wouldn't know how I would go about measuring that in a scientifically respectable way. I suppose I would just tend to go along and ask them. [LAUGHTER] You feel more self confident now than you were before you joined the service, em, but I dare say that would not be a respectably, a scientifically respectably way to do it." (P14)*

This quote emphasises a lack of confidence in using qualitative research methods, and again highlights a need for the credibility of the research methods to be established.

The importance of community confidence was also raised; one respondent said that this was especially an issue for ethnic minority communities, and observed that a measure of success would be addressing the stigma some communities felt was attached to where they lived. Another respondent remarked that there were many individuals in the community who were not lacking in confidence and who had high expectations of services (Appendix C Paragraph 9.22):

> *"a lot of the people a lot of the people that seem to use these courses aren't exactly unconfident. They're they're quite forthright and they they've got high expectations of what the service is supposed to be providing for them. Em, and if they don't get it, they'll be the first to actually say which is fine, em, but we probably know that and they'll they might say, oh yes, we're more confident now but they were pretty confident to start with." (PG18)*

The confidence identified here related to residents in an area with a long history of regeneration, and of working in partnership with local residents. It may be that residents in more newly established regeneration areas are not as confident.

This section identifies that changes in confidence can be measured by observation, participant information, the use of proxy indicators and the use of soft

indicators, such as those identified in the literature review, for example, Learning Evaluation and Planning (LEAP) (Scottish Community Development Centre, 2000). However, difficulties were identified with these measurements, including the difficulties of isolating the impact of projects on individuals' confidence, and concern about the credibility of some of the methods identified.

5.9   Partial Outcomes

Respondents were asked if they thought it was possible to measure partial outcomes such as job readiness (Appendix C Paragraph 10.1). Many of the issues raised were the same as those discussed under the confidence question. However, the key difference between the two issues were that job readiness has a pre-identified target; confidence was being gained along with other skills, and the needs and expectations of employers form a part of this target.

Respondents highlighted a number of elements to job readiness (Appendix C Paragraph 10.4), and identified a number of barriers to finding employment (Appendix C Paragraph 10.5). Respondents noted that participation in community activities was often the first step toward employment (Appendix C Paragraph 10.11), highlighting that social inclusion projects have an important role to play in increasing individuals' employability. Another respondent said that many of the participants in their project were not looking for employment (Appendix C Paragraph 10.10), which contrasts with the comments made previously where respondents thought that the key issue in inclusion was jobs.

Respondents identified a qualitative aspect to assessing job readiness, noting that it was a matter of judgement for staff. One funding agency remarked that they would not necessarily expect information about job readiness to be in quantitative form, and the method of measurement was discussed (Appendix C Paragraph 10.6):

> *"Quantitatively it can probably be done, in terms of giving you an indication of people's learning activities, their training, looking at qualifications and whether or not they are moving toward a position, for an individual however it might be a question of confidence, it might be a question of opportunity.*

Some may be difficult to gauge, and I think that's more the qualitative aspect of research work." (E1)

This view was echoed in a discussion regarding the psychological aspects of job readiness that could be assessed by speaking to the individual (Appendix C Paragraph 10.12):

"I do think that is the reality, again it is very individually focussed and what you are asking, I think you are asking for judgements. And you might ... I think you can ask people who have been involved in a particular project where they think they are, and you might also be asking staff to make judgements as well. And whether you necessarily believe they necessarily want to get into that type of assessment..." (PG17)

This quote emphasises again the subjectivity of many of the attempts to monitor and evaluate, and raises the issue that individual participants and staff might actually find these types of analysis uncomfortable.

A respondent observed that indicators were useful in order to prevent people with a long journey into employment from becoming de-motivated, and another respondent noted that frameworks could only be used to compare like with like (Appendix C Paragraph 10.13). Another opinion was given that a job readiness course had been a success if people were closer to being job ready (Appendix C Paragraph 10.14):

"as unemployment falls then we are dealing more and more with people who are more distant from the labour market. In other words, their journey through unemployment is much longer. And unless they can see that they are making progress towards a job and that is measurable, and they can be presented with it then they soon lose heart, so in terms of motivation and commitment and just keeping people engaged." (E2)

The difficulty of finding an adequate measure for job readiness was discussed, but a contrasting view was also expressed that job readiness was one of the easier indicators to establish, noting it was easier to establish than self-confidence because there was the yardstick of getting a job (Appendix C Paragraph 10.17).

5.10 Relationships

Beresford (1999) noted the impact that living on poverty has on relationships and therefore respondents were asked if users' relationships with family and friends are improved by participation in social inclusion projects (Appendix C Paragraph 8.1).

Respondents identified areas of relationship stress where social inclusion projects could help, or were already helping (Appendix C Paragraph 8.5), although a distinction was made between projects that were established to deal with family relationships, such as family support schemes, and ones that impacted indirectly on family relationships, for example, by tackling isolation (Appendix C Paragraph 8.3):

> "The sort of groups, the community person, the community partnership team and things, you know, and then they're learning the skills of negotiation and working together and developing relationships, you know, the same as any of us. I'm not sure that's – you know, that's a bit sort of – I mean, we all improve in those things as we start to participate, don't we?" (PJ24)

This respondent raises again the idea that certain things are implicit in participation, and therefore not worthy of measuring. However, it is a large assumption that participants in social inclusion necessarily have a positive experience. Martin and Kellner (1996) highlighted the quality dimensions of projects, namely reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy and tangibles; if any one of these dimensions is inadequate individuals are likely to have a poor experience which could leave them less confident and less likely to participate than before. The key issue for measurement systems is separating the issues that impact on participant confidence that projects have control over (such as the attitude of staff) from the ones over which they have no, or very limited control (for example personality clashes between participants).

Respondents highlighted a number of ways in which the impact of social inclusion projects on participant's relationships could be measured, as outlined below:

- Ask the participant;
- Ask the participant's friends/family;
- Use of related indicators.

These are discussed in turn below.

It was noted that the participant themselves could provide useful information (Appendix C Paragraph 8.7), and another suggestion was asking the participant's family (Appendix C Paragraph 8.8) and six respondents identified relevant indicators, such as the number of contacts an individual has, or the amount of time they spend volunteering (Appendix C Paragraph 8.9). Other suggestions were made that suggested involving project staff in measurement (Appendix C Paragraph 8.10).

"But, so the question is 'are users' relationships improved?' Certainly, and it may be to assess that better you may ask the user and you may also try to ask their family as well. You know, there may be some form or a visit to the family might be a useful thing, you know, with a very user-friendly form." (PJ28)

However, not all of the impacts on relationships were positive, and respondents highlighted negative impacts on relationships such as the negative impact on an individual's homelife that can be caused by the pressures of being a community activist (Appendix C Paragraph 8.20) and the negative response of family members to the changes in individual's brought about by their participation in a social inclusion project (Appendix C Paragraph 8.21):

"I think we have to be ... realistic about the fact that people may want more, and that can put strains on a relationship. Yeah? Aspirations don't necessarily make for happy, you know, for happy relationships if it's about changing the relationship. So I think the answer to that is yes, it's a lot of what we are trying to do but let's be realistic, and say that there are strains on people's relationships in every community." (PG17)

This quote brings out two key themes in the monitoring and evaluation of social inclusion projects. It raises the issue of the limits to the responsibility of policy

makers, and the need for realism in assessing these limits. The second theme is linking the situation in social inclusion partnership areas with those of the wider community, with the respondent drawing attention to the difficulties with relationships that exist in all communities.

Another respondent said that unhappy relationships could be what the project was dealing with:

> *"a lot of family members can do a lot of damage within families. If you take it to extremes you are talking about abuse. And [name of organisation] volunteers can help where there has been abuse. There may be families, parents who have been abused in the past, and they can talk through that with their volunteers." (PJ23)*

In this situation, a more distant relationship with family might actually be a positive indicator, highlighting the difficulties of identifying relevant proxy indicators in this area.

In response to the question about relationships, respondents identified issues of 'word-of-mouth' recommendations of their projects, and noted that this was seen as a positive indicator of the quality of the project experience for participants (Appendix C Paragraph 8.24):

> *"I can only talk through my own experience with this project then and, you know, you get people coming along that traditionally don't get involved in community activity like, say, that might come along and be fairly apprehensive about getting involved in whether it's a meeting or a class of some sort or whatever and as a result of that, you can see them becoming more confident, you know, and they'd then start to come along and get involved in all sorts of other things and it's the spin offs from that, that then start to experience in terms of, you know, husbands, wives, mothers, daughters or whatever, starting to come along and engage in some of your activities." (PJ25)*

It may be that the number of word-of-mouth recommendations could also provide a useful indicator of the effectiveness of a project.

5.11 Chapter Summary

This chapter identified a range of issues regarding definitions and indicators. Respondents were positive about the relevance of social inclusion as a description

of what they were trying to achieve. Concerns were raised regarding social inclusion, noting that it was jargon that was not understood by project users and residents. The role of employment in social inclusion was raised, with a diversity of opinion regarding whether or not this should be the focus of the work of the Social Inclusion Partnerships. The subjectivity of social inclusion was also discussed, and the implications this had for the need to solicit opinion-based information.

With regard to the scope of monitoring and evaluation, the above indicators were used to varying degrees. While quality of life and confidence were issues that all respondents were able to address, on the issues of job readiness and relationships it was observed that there was a difference between organisations that were working directly to address these issues and other that had an indirect effect. The project and programme managers from social inclusion partnerships recognised the importance of resident satisfaction, user satisfaction and fear of crime as important issues. It is interesting to note that none of the respondents identified improvements in relationships, unprompted, as an outcome of social inclusion projects. However, when they were asked directly about the issue respondents identified a large number of areas where projects were already helping individuals with relationship issues.

With regard to how areas such as the impact of projects on participant's quality of life, confidence and participant's relationships are best assessed, there were two broad areas identified. One way of addressing issues was through the use of proxy indicators – for example there are quite sophisticated indicators to assess quality of life and which can be easily established by a third party. The second method of assessment is by asking the participants themselves, in order to identify opinions that only they can know. This dichotomy arose in answers to several of the interview questions.

A number of limitations were identified. Respondents highlighted a number of issues that called into question the accuracy of the assessments. A key issue was the representativeness of samples, and the small sample size. Respondents also found it difficult to isolate the impact of their projects from the other wider initiatives taking place, and from other influences on their clients' lives.

The next chapter moves on to examine the different methods used in social inclusion projects to consult project users and residents, the needs of beneficiaries from these methods, and concludes by examining the usefulness of the information provided for evaluation and targeting of resources.

CHAPTER SIX: CONSULTING THE BENEFICIARIES OF SOCIAL INCLUSION PROJECTS AND PROGRAMMES

6.1 Introduction

The previous chapter identified a number of key issues relating to the terminology and the scope of the indicators that could be used to measure the impact of social inclusion projects and programmes. This chapter returns to the research questions, and examines the methods used to establish user and resident opinions and the needs of participants/beneficiaries in the evaluation process, and identifies their role in assessing the impact of social inclusion projects.

6.2 Methods

Respondents to the research identified a range of methods currently being used to obtain the views of residents and project users, namely:

- Audits;
- Community Profiling;
- Evaluations;
- Focus Groups;
- Informal methods;
- People's Panels and Household Surveys;
- Surveys and questionnaires;
- Other methods.

More information about the methods used can be found in Table A18 in Appendix C. The above list highlights a range of approaches, with many respondents using a range of techniques to gather opinions. There were different approaches identified between research that involved individuals actively expressing an interest in participation, and methods that attempted to take the research to the community. Participants identified a number of the strengths in the different methods they had identified. Citizen's Juries were identified as having particular strengths:

"I would hesitate to say what way is the best but I think clearly citizens juries offer some advantages, in that you're not just taking a snapshot of people's opinions according to the criteria that other people have chosen. You're actually trying to probe and encourage people to deliberate upon their own opinions and test them against other people's." (P14)

Focus groups were also positively identified:

"The community have responded to focus groups, I think partly the reason for this is that it is a way of discussing an issue with the community on their terms" (E1)

One participant described a door-to-door health survey her organisation had undertaken thus:

"a fabulous way to access the opinions of people because, as I say, it was people who weren't coming out necessarily and using services and when people consult" (PJ33)

However, the respondent noted the cost of these types of survey and noted that it was not something they would be able to do on a regular basis.

Similarly, a variation was identified between one-off consultations with local residents or project users, and research where the same individuals were returned to time after time, such as the Panels, or the Street Agent initiatives:

"And there's dangers here that people might say you are just pestering folk, but what they were reflecting was the more that they went back, was the more quality of relationships established, and the more quality of information was being shared. So, first thing it was dog fouling, the fifth time it was about Jimmy being bullied at school. So you can start to, you can, I think one of the things I would say to you is that the building up of a relationship with people over a period of time can help you to overcome the tendency to get basic stuff that everybody groans at about what people are looking for." (P10)

The latter initiatives allowed a relationship to develop between parties in research, with respondents noting that better quality information was received when there was a degree of mutual trust established.

It was identified that monitoring and evaluation, if undertaken with consideration for the participants, can be an empowering process for individuals and communities, particularly if they have an involvement in shaping the research. One respondent called for the local community to be drawn into the evaluation process, and for their expectations and level of understanding to be considered (Appendix C Paragraph 16.34):

> *"I'll just reiterate my earlier point about when that type of research is being undertaken, especially when it relates to local communities, then local communities should be engaged in looking at particular measures that take account of the expectations, the existing levels of understanding and draws that into the evaluation process, and there is some recognition made that the locals, what may have been, as I said the differences between what agencies and funders may think is qualitative, compared to what communities think is fair measures." (P11)*

However, the individuals most likely to get involved in monitoring and evaluation individuals are those that are actively involved already, and therefore are not typical.

In addition, evaluation could be a motivating tool for project and programme staff, and was useful in countering negative media coverage of SIP areas (Appendix C Paragraph 16.36). However, a number of difficulties and issues were identified which meant that monitoring and evaluation were not undertaken as effectively as possible. These are outlined below.

The representativeness of opinion was an issue, with respondents highlighting that the number of people actively involved was very small and that it is often people who are already involved that are consulted, such as individuals involved in People's Panels or Citizen's Juries, although it was noted that within this limitation these methods worked well. This concentration of consultation could be problematic, as resources could be targeted based on the opinions of a few relatively articulate individuals, rather than the needs of the wider community, and there was also an issue regarding whether people who actively choose to get involved in research are representative of the community as a whole. There was also an issue about how reflective of the wider community the views of individuals who were actively involved were; it was raised that the 'average' person does not

attend interviews or focus groups, or fill in questionnaires (Appendix C paragraphs 12.25 and 12.26)

"The, that's a real difficult one in terms of how you define participants. Because, as I mentioned earlier, in fact I didn't go into detail earlier, the, how you define participants in the social inclusion projects, as usually the people who know about the project, or participate at some level, or receive funding through the agencies that are involved. For many people who live in communities, there is a, a real lack of understanding and knowledge about what the social inclusion project is all about." (P11)

Yet in looking for active participation from residents, it was observed that responses to adverts in the press were very low. Respondents also noted the time resource required to get larger numbers, and the costs relating to this. Door-to-door surveys were thought to be much more representative, although with limitations and very resource intensive. One respondent was of the opinion that you could only really get to know individuals' opinions by working and living with them over a period of time:

"Well, it's all a bit purist but be with them. Like consistently. Go and work with them. Live with them. Now, if that's not possible, you know, be with them over a long period of time. Get to know what their value base is, get to know what they believe in, get to know what's precious to them... If you want to know about kids, why do you call a public meeting. Don't call a public meeting. Hang about the chip shop with them and when they shout at you, you're a pervert, hanging about and chatting them up and all that, you get over all that stuff eventually. You need to be there for weeks and weeks and weeks. If you want to go where adults are, why do you call a public meeting? They don't work. Go to the supermarket" (P13)

As the respondent identifies this is a 'purist' approach, and would be very demanding both of staff time and emotions, and very resource intensive. However, it does reflect to a degree the action research approach of former initiatives such as the Community Development Programme (Loney, 1983).

Respondents observed that the people that were not being reached in evaluations were probably the most in need; without accurate information on their needs it is difficult to target work effectively, or to know how to improve services. The key question regarding non-participation is why individuals do not, or choose not to

participate. Is it that they are unaware of the project, they feel it is not useful or there are real, or perceived, barriers to participating in research? Any effective monitoring and evaluation system has to be able to address this issue, because the actions required to improve the targeting of resources will be different depending on why individuals are not accessing services.

The respondents worked with a wide range of client groups, and it was noted that the approaches needed varied from group to group. There was a variety of techniques mentioned that did not rely on written media which helped to facilitate the participation of individuals with literacy problems. A major influence on the quality of the information received was the degree of trust between the interviewer and interviewee. The issue of 'dog-fouling' arose again as an example of a seemingly trivial issue raised in interviews, compared to issues of bullying when a greater degree of trust was obtained. However, the resources needed to gain the trust of interviewees was raised as a concern.

With regard to who undertakes the research, it was identified that external researchers could add 'credibility' to the evaluation of a project. However, it was also noted that some particular client groups may find it difficult to respond to questions from someone they do not already know well, an instance of this being the work undertaken with people with learning difficulties. The issues of credibility of the information and trust recurred throughout the interviews, with many of the references to credibility illustrating an uncertainty about how well regarded the information would be by policy-makers and funders. It may be that the respondents did not feel they had a good enough understanding of the research methodology to be able to defend their findings if they could not provide statistics to back them up, and feel uncertain about the best way to present qualitative findings in a way that would be of use to funders and policy makers.

Respondents commented on the need to have an element of tracking in the monitoring and evaluation, with interviewees being re-interviewed over a period of time, and efforts being made to track the progress of participants, and previous participants, in training programmes.

Respondents identified a number of informal attempts to gain feedback from residents and project users.

> "I do try to make sure I go on site and wander around and talk cos people know me, so that the trainees and the people on site, as well as the residents who live there, so they know who I am and that I'm accessible and they can come and say things and it will make a difference. Because then, I think, if people start to trust you, then they will start to talk to you honestly about things but they know if somebody just parachutes in and says, what do you think about this, and then parachutes out again." (PJ24)

As this informal information cannot feed into funders monitoring systems, it illustrates a genuine commitment to seeking feedback in order to make improvements to the service delivered, rather than evaluating purely to meet the needs of funders.

Respondents remarked that their clients were in danger of suffering from survey/form filling 'fatigue'. Consultations with local residents in SIP areas could result in survey fatigue; one respondent noted that as new ways of consulting were tried there is now a danger of communities being 'focus-grouped to death'.

> "time and resources is always a major factor when you are decided you are having focus groups, you could go on with, another consideration would be although communities are questionnaired to death, we wouldn't want them to be focus grouped to death." (E1)

One respondent opined that this was exacerbated by different funders requiring different performance information; another respondent said it would be very useful if a household survey could be designed for the public sector to gather information.

> "People are probably surveyed to death. Could we ever invent or get the public sector organisations to agree that there was a simple – a one off opinion feeder that allowed attitudes to be captured towards a whole range of different types among the sector." (P9)

This was also true of project users who were sometimes asked to fill in a range of evaluation forms to meet the needs of multiple funders.

In summary, respondents identified a range of methods to gain the opinions of project users and residents, including audits, community profiling, evaluations, focus groups, informal methods, people's panels and household surveys, and surveys and questionnaires. While largely positive about these methods, respondents identified a number of concerns including the cost of undertaking research, the representativeness of the responses, the quality of the responses and the dangers of 'survey fatigue'.

6.3 Needs of beneficiaries

The above section addressed the methods in use to solicit the opinions of project users and residents; this section addresses how well participants are able to engage with these processes. The Scottish Poverty Information Unit identified a range of individuals deemed to be at an increased range of poverty (SPIU, 1995). These individuals will all have different needs and abilities with reference to participating in the monitoring and evaluation of social inclusion projects. The issue was raised of how well projects knew their users: respondents thought it would be useful to have more information on who their users were, with one noting that it was hard to get even basic information (Appendix C Paragraph 15.34), another noting it would be useful to have more feedback from users about the questions they should be asking (Appendix C Paragraph 15.35).

Respondents thought that participants could assess how well they had benefited from their participation in social inclusion projects accurately (Appendix C Paragraph 12.3) with some respondents noting that participants were best placed to comment.

> "How well? I'm sure they're in a better position than the professionals to tell you how they benefit from participation? [LAUGHTER] I just thought of how that might not work but I think the point stands. I think people are best placed to tell you how they've benefited from these things and if you didn't believe that, then you certainly don't believe any social science because you would have to think that people are best placed to tell you are themselves." (E3)

However, the ability of respondents to say how they had benefited is dependent on how effective the methods are in soliciting their views.

One respondent stated that a significant minority could articulate how they benefited and one respondent working with volunteers thought that they were very good at assessing how well they had benefited (see Appendix paragraph 12.14). Another respondent thought participants were better placed than staff to comment, and one respondent said that participants would leave if they were not happy (Appendix C Paragraph 12.5). However, there is an issue regarding the difference between clients and customers. Participants may not leave if there is nowhere else for them to go, even if they are not happy with the service.

It was noted that participants could identify practical changes and hard outcomes that had resulted from their participation, for example accessing services such as childcare or gaining qualifications (see Appendix paragraph 12.8):

> "I suppose through the hard outcomes - if they've got qualifications, if they've got jobs, if they've moved into training that they wouldn't have accessed or considered accessing before starting on the project. But, again, I think we're back to the soft indicators if their time keeping's improved, if they're committed, if they work more effectively in a team, if they communicate with people in a way they didn't before. Probably for the individuals, that's a better way of measuring their success in a project and the benefits." (F4)

There remains, however, a problem with linking individual improvements back to participation in a particular project; the individual concerned may have a number of interventions in their life at any one time, or their confidence may improve for completely unrelated reasons. This quote highlights the difference between hard and soft indicators; it may be that it is easier to link soft indicators to the work of a project because the individual is discussing their confidence, or other issue, in relation to a particular project.

A number of issues were identified that impacted on individual's ability to assess how much they had benefited. Unsurprisingly respondents noted that participants' ability to assess how they had benefited would vary between participants, and two

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respondents observed that it would vary between projects (see Appendix paragraphs 12.10 and 12.11). One respondent commented:

> *"Yes, I mean it depends on the person entirely. Some people, like I say, will say something like "my volunteer's brilliant" or "my volunteer is great" and that's it, you won't get very much more than that. Em, but they'll be other ways that she shows that she values that, like I say, by being there every time the volunteer visits." (PJ23)*

This quote also identifies that an individual's feedback may not always be verbal; several other issues relating to verbal skills in evaluation were raised, including the issues that it was more difficult for the views of people with poor verbal skills to be heard, and that people with poor verbal skills might show that they value the service in other ways (Appendix C paragraphs 12.22 and 12.23):

> *"Some people are just naturally more able to describe well what they got out of something. For other people the fact they came, and yeah they feel good about it, I wouldn't be here otherwise would I? [They laugh] I mean really it doesn't help us in terms of a beautiful evaluation of a specific programme or project. It doesn't help us in the least somebody telling us that. So what we tend to do is we go to the people who can describe how this helped them, with their kids, and they feel better going down the road, and I can now do this and they can describe those things to us, but the reality is, the guy that tells you in four words, yeah it was good, no problem, well he's still feeling good about it what's wrong with it? But I think we do still rely on people with verbal skills, definitely." (PG17)*

Respondents might also be unwilling to be honest about their feelings if they anticipated this would result in a negative outcome:

> *"I think the risk would be they don't want to be critical of the organisation. You've had some help so you'd better say the place is good because if not, then the Council will no fund them any more. So, yeah, people could be skewed by that." (P12)*

Respondents also noted client specific issues, identifying that children and young people found this kind of analysis particularly difficult (see Appendix paragraph 12.13). One respondent said that special efforts had to be made to get the views of dementia sufferers, rather than that of their carers (see Appendix paragraph 12.15) and one respondent observed that some people with learning difficulties found non-concrete ideas difficult (see Appendix paragraph 12.16):

"It really just depends because some young people I work with are very articulate, very able to express themselves and other young people would find non-concrete ideas very difficult. But if you put it in terms of, do you know I think again it's quite hard to compare. Are you happier now than you were last year? That's a difficult concept because sometimes time is a different concept but if you did this on a regular basis to see, you know, how happy are you this year?" (PJ32)

Again, asking individuals, whatever their circumstances, to reflect back over a time period is difficult. However, this may be an area where soft indicators could assist, especially if they were specifically designed for individual client groups.

The potential for under and over estimation in assessments was raised; one respondent thought that it was not necessarily something that participants could do accurately (Appendix C Paragraph 12.6):

"There is a tendency for people to, you know, rate too highly the courses that they have been on, you know, there's no doubt about that. And human beings being human beings like to please. So, no, if one of the things was to increase their confidence and then they are being asked by folk they have been working with 'has your confidence increased?', yeah, so there is a big tendency, or a risk, that that happens. So that's why I think you do need to supplement it by finding other ways in which they actually gauge what effect that has had." (P10)

The above quote emphasises again the need to triangulate opinion based information. Previous sections have noted that individuals do not always know, can't articulate or say what researchers want to hear, therefore the research is more reliable if there is other evidence to back this up.

Some respondents thought that participants tended to underestimate their own abilities (Appendix C Paragraph 12.18). However, other respondents thought that participants tended to underestimate the help they got from a particular project (Appendix C Paragraph 12.19 and 12.20):

"I mean, there is a tendency for people to under-estimate the help they have got from a project or a programme, and I suppose I wouldn't place much emphasis on people's perception of the benefit they have gained, I'd place much more perception upon the extent to which they feel they have

changed, the extent to which they have become more confident, or more
skilled, or more knowledgeable." (E2)

This is part of the wider issue of perceived, as opposed to real, change. There remains the problem with the changes identified in linking them back to a specific social inclusion project, and showing causality. Soft indicator frameworks can prove useful in this respect as they help individuals reflect back on their progress.

It was noted that the methods used to solicit opinions affected the quality of the information that would be gained. One respondent said that people were capable of expressing their views if they were asked in the right way, and another remarked that if the project was designed properly then measuring the participant's ability would be built into it (Appendix C Paragraph 12.29). One respondent noted that participants were not used to frameworks and that the language of evaluation was sometimes unfamiliar to them (Appendix C Paragraph 12.30):

> *"If you think the most crude example being if you like the kind of male*
> *culture of the West of Scotland, particularly working class male culture*
> *which is, you know there's a barrier there, you know, you don't get to talk to*
> *ha ha ha - ex miners or ex shipyard workers about how they feel. They*
> *don't relate to that at all and it's a different they don't relate to a situation*
> *where somebody sits down across them at a desk and puts a tape recorder*
> *in front of them. [LAUGHTER] Or is writing things down in a questionnaire*
> *and they think what's all this about?. Do you know what I mean? And they*
> *can't often identify things that are maybe glaringly obvious to, for example,*
> *a development worker or anyone coming in looking at it. (E3)*

The above quote illustrates that not everyone who experiences difficulties participating in research is suffering exclusion - they may just be unused to social science research methods. It could be argued that evaluators have a duty to provide methods that are appropriate for the individuals and communities whose views they are seeking.

The importance of listening and acting on participants' views was stressed (Appendix C Paragraph 12.33) and it was noted that there was a need for a trusting relationship between the interviewer and the interviewee (Appendix C Paragraph 12.35):

"if you as I say you know, you went to somebody and said, how would you assess you know, that's using the sort of language that we work with without giving people or provide people with the opportunity to understand what that that language means which is, you know, totally it's not fair. So, as I say, I think if you want people to answer that question in the way you phrased it, then you've got to spend a lot of time working with people to ensure that they can." (PJ24)

One respondent working with black and minority ethnic communities stressed the need for more creativity in monitoring and evaluation in order to meet the needs of the BME community, and observed also that literacy and numeracy were issues common to all disadvantaged communities (Appendix C Paragraph 16.29 to 16.31). It could be argues that good practice to ensure that one particular client group can participate effectively in evaluation is likely to improve the participation for everyone.

The above section identified a range of barriers to individuals participating effectively in research, identifying that individuals may be disadvantaged through having additional needs, or through a lack of familiarity with social science research methods. The next section looks at research methods in more detail, identifying the roles that both qualitative and quantitative methods have to play in assessing the impact of social inclusion projects.

Qualitative and Quantitative Methods

The conceptual model identified as its final point the need for monitoring and evaluation systems to provide useful information for evaluation and future targeting of resources. The methodology chapter identified that information could be sought through either quantitative or qualitative methods (Foddy, 1993; Easterby-Smith, 1991; Walker, 1993), and this section attempts to identify how each of these methods are used to assess the impact of social inclusion projects.

Respondents identified a complex relationship between quantitative and qualitative information. Many respondents thought that the number of users gave an

indication of the quality of the service provided, albeit a crude one: (Appendix C Paragraph 11.4-11.6, 11.8):

> *"People don't come back if they don't have a good experience, do they? Yes, I think there are some crude indicators that can tell you was the service needed in the first place, was it trusted? That's about quality, it's about how people perceive. Did people get what they thought they were going to get, in the way that they thought they were going to get it? Those affect quality. Oh yeah. It's like business, if you open a shop and no-body comes to it then you close it down again, so yeah, definitely." (PG17)*

> *"If a service is being used, and used heavily in comparison with other similar services, then people are choosing to choosing to you know, they're voting with their feet, they're voting with their time, they're showing confidence in the quality of the product that they might be being offered, whether it's a health product like a Well Woman Clinic or and the participation the attendance level of 14, 15 and 16 year olds in secondary education, you know." (P8)*

However, participants may use the service for other reasons, such as being compelled to do so, or a lack of alternatives. It may also be that they use a service that is not the most appropriate for their needs. In addition, in this example there may well be 14-16 year olds who are not happy with the quality of their education but have continued to attend. As the respondents noted, this is a crude measure of effectiveness.

The number of individuals returning to participate in a project was also raised as an indication of the quality of the experience (Appendix C Paragraph 11.11). Another respondent remarked he had been surprised by the number of people using the service, which he took to reflect need (Appendix C Paragraph 11.13). Numbers were also identified as having the potential to be misleading, with one respondent giving the example of an increase in the number of unemployed being a reflection that the New Deal was working as people now felt it worth registering (Appendix C Paragraph 11.18). Another respondent said that there was more to quality than just a lot of people accessing the service, as some people were difficult to work with, and work could not be undertaken in a big group (Appendix C Paragraph 11.12).

Cuba and Lincoln (1994) identified a number of concerns regarding a potential lack of context for quantitative research, and these concerns were echoed by the respondents. It was observed that quantitative information gave general details and not specifics (Appendix C Paragraph 11.48) and that quantitative indicators gave measures of output, but did not reflect impact (Appendix C Paragraph 11.46).

> *"If it's a quantitative indicator that measures output, em, it doesn't necessarily give you a measure of impact, it measures output. Em, it would take a leap, but not such a massive leap, to relate that output to the type of, or quality of, service that the project is providing. Em, although in saying that, quality is about whether or not that person has got something that's worth, so I think yes and no."*

Implicit in this quote is the idea that it is possible to measure impact without looking at project outputs; in reality this would be very difficult to achieve, and the ambivalent ending of the quote reflects the need to look at outputs, but also beyond the outputs to establish the quality of the intervention.

The issue was raised that quantitative methods did not reflect the quality of the experience for the user (Appendix C Paragraph 11.29 to 11.33):

> *"We've a 500% increase in the report of racial incidents in [local authority area] but that's not reflective of how the issues being dealt with or how those families deal with it or how the police dealt with it. It is the qualitative you know, being the victim of racial abuse is essentially a qualitative experience. It's not a quantitative experience. You can say one person got abused by another one person and this or that amount of damage was done but, essentially, that's meaningless to that person. It's about the lack of self confidence that stems from that, the fear of crime and further recrimination, repeat victimisation." (PG21)*

Each individual experience is, or course, unique but the respondent does not address how this could feed into the policy process. It is not clear from the quote who the audience would be for this qualitative information, whether it would be for a funding agency, or for the community themselves, or the wider public. It is an interesting point that qualitative information can be used to demonstrate the nature of an experience, which makes it a powerful illustrative tool.

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A concern was raised that an over-reliance on numbers could lead to the service provision being 'bent' to meet targets (Appendix C Paragraph 11.25 to 11.27) although it should be noted that bending of mainstream budgets was an outcome that the Scottish Executive expected from Social Inclusion Partnerships.

Reflecting the views of Walker (1993) regarding the experiential nature of qualitative research, one respondent said that qualitative research was closer to evaluation than monitoring, and research has the benefits of pulling a range of projects together and deriving a lesson from those projects (Appendix C Paragraph 16.17). The qualitative information that was collected was identified as more inspirational that the numbers for staff (Appendix C Paragraph 16.11) and for the community (Appendix C Paragraph 16.13):

> *"it's the qualitative research that's given you that has given us, you know, the sorts of reasons why we do this work, you know. It's that research which gives you the motivation to do this work, you know, and the justification in the feeling that this is worthwhile, you know those things have come from qualitative research. Nobody's really very much inspired by numbers I suppose." (PJ22)*

> *"I think because it's only recently that we have got involved in that, and focus groups there has been a real sense from the community that they are learning from qualitative research more that they would have from a quality profile on an annual report every year. We've always said from the beginning that we would prefer that the monitoring and evaluation framework was a learning experience for everyone, and I think that the qualitative work probably does that for the community more than finding out about a change in the community in relation to unemployment or mortality rates." (E1)*

Again, the emphasis in this quote is on how the community, a key audience for the research, can benefit from the process. It is also likely that the community will be more willing to participate, and the quality of information will be better if the process is an enjoyable as possible.

A number of areas where qualitative information contributed to the evaluation of a project over and above the quantitative evaluation undertaken were identified. One respondent noted that qualitative information was more useful than quantitative in terms of the SIP themes and measures (Appendix C Paragraph

14.5), however, it could be argued that in terms of aggregating outputs and outcomes to programme level, qualitative research is actually more problematic.

Reflecting the views of Marshall and Rossman (1995) regarding the use of qualitative research in the understanding of participant's experience, another respondent said that in trying to target resources the opinions of those seeking to benefit are crucial (Appendix C Paragraph 14.6):

> *"at the end of the day, if you're targeting resources to achieve ends, then the opinions of those who are seeking to benefit about whether their circumstances are better or worse as a result of that targeting are absolutely crucial, you know. You can you can measure whether the number of people who are unemployed or the number of people who are accessing childcare or the number of people who are the number of children participating in the attendance rates for the local school. You can measure all those things but you also and they will provide very good indicators but they're often only indicators which you then have to match up with the perceptions of the people who you're actually trying to serve as to whether things are any better or not." (P8)*

Again, this quote implies that an improvement in individual's quality of life is not implicit in regeneration initiatives. The quote raises the issue again of subjectivity, but does not address the boundaries of the responsibility of policy makers.

Majchrzak (1984) identified the role that qualitative research could play in public policy, and many respondents were of the opinion that the use of qualitative research gave a more accurate picture of the impact of projects, providing additional information on issues such as quality, long-term outcomes and the impact on participants' lives (Appendix C paragraphs 14.9 to 14.15). Another respondent thought that qualitative information gave a better picture of how projects were performing than quantitative information, because it measured things like people's satisfaction and well-being (Appendix C Paragraph 13.39), as discussed in the previous chapter, although it should be noted that this information could also be gather through quantitative methods. The importance of qualitative research was stressed, with one of these respondents noting that there was a lot of misunderstanding about how effective it can be (Appendix C Paragraph 16.14).

The difficulties of undertaking qualitative research (Appendix C Paragraph 14.23) were raised, including the confidentiality issues involved (Appendix C Paragraph 14.24) as highlighted by the Market Research Society (1998). One respondent highlighted a difficulty:

> "it's difficult to provide qualitative information because a lot of that is subjective but it shouldn't be ruled out on that basis. And the kind of work we do, people don't necessarily then want to talk about it publicly, you know. If you've been feeling under a lot of stress because of something that's happened to you and someone comes and helps you with it, you might be grateful that you got some help for that but you don't necessarily want to go away and tell anybody else because maybe people didn't know in the first place. So there's a kind of issue of – an ethical issue and that kind of issue of confidentiality which makes it difficult to gather quantitative – qualitative information." (PJ29)

This raises an interesting point in regard to what this respondent meant by qualitative information. The information being sought may be of a subjective and personal nature, but this information could be accessed by either qualitative or quantitative methods. The difficulties experienced by organisations whose role was to support other organisations in assessing the impact they made (Appendix C Paragraph 14.25) was raised.

Respondents identified a range of methodological issues, namely the need for frameworks and evidence, external evaluation and the need to involve communities (Appendix C paragraphs 14.32 to 14.35):

> "It's back to my previous point about, you talk about quantitative and qualitative information, it's really, it's what you are measuring. What the agency wants to measure may not be what the community want to measure, and what may be qualitative to an agency does not match with what the community say. And when you are trying to evaluate projects of that nature, then you really need to consider, and sit down with communities about what exactly is going to be delivered, what the community's expectations are of you delivering them, and whether or not the community can engage in that."(P11)

This quote reiterates that evaluation can be an empowering process for the community if it is done on their terms. However, if the community is truly to be

involved they need also to be involved in choosing the indicators against which performance will be measured.

A further respondent observed that his organisation had not put a lot of effort into qualitative research because the politicians they worked with usually wanted figures (Appendix C Paragraph 16.19):

> "it's a difficult area. The qualitative research – we haven't put an awful lot of work into this, partly because the political systems that we all end up working for want figures. A politician wants to stand up and say – not all of them, I mean, some of them like to paint figures as well but they usually want figures and to be able to stand up and say, project X has created 53 jobs and has a 62% success rate in getting people that come on to the project into jobs. Sometimes they like examples, but it's usually anecdotal and it's off the painting pictures side. It's much more difficult to find ways of getting across qualitative information in that way."(F6)

It should be noted that information gathered using qualitative methods can then have a quantitative method of analysis applied to it, which would provide figures, but it is not clear from the quote whether it is the actual indicators used that is the problem, or the fact that it is numbers rather than quotes. Perhaps when targeting scarce resources for monitoring and evaluation, not surprisingly, project managers choose the methods that meet the needs of funders rather than communities.

In contrast to the previous discussion on the importance of qualitative research, and addressing some of the concerns raised by Foddy (1993), a minority of opinion thought that the main emphasis of monitoring and evaluation should be on quantitative approaches; one respondent thought that qualitative information should not be seen as important as quantitative information because quantitative information was less easy to manipulate (Appendix C paragraphs 14.18 and 14.19).

> "It's relatively easy to get a bunch of people to say nice things about you . You could just give them a good time. You could run lots of personal and career development sessions around aromatherapy and stress relief and hillwalking, which tend to be the bits that people like in the personal development that we run, and cut out all the bits about kind of self-exploration or looking at your own skill base or doing a CV. We would probably get the same positive feedback in terms of qualitative feedback

from participants but it wouldn't it wouldn't demonstrate that they'd moved where they wanted to get to." (PJ34)

The ease of use and understanding of quantitative information was commented upon; this is a valid point, especially when information requires to be aggregated to programme level. Another said that anything can be converted from quantitative to qualitative by scoring it (Appendix Paragraph 11.44):

> *"I mean, I think anything can be converted from qualitative to quantitative by scoring it. By bringing mechanisms that allow you to do that. As long as we put the checks in place, that are need to be not to be sort of abused. But yeah, psychometric testing any of the personal development tools that are used by employers or whatever these are all qualitative survey techniques that become quantifiable. So yeah, I think it's possible. The Rikter Scale is an example." (P9)*

While it is possible that anything could be measured in this way, the key issue is the inferences you can make based on the information, and the strength of the assumptions and qualifications that underpin these inferences.

A further respondent said that quality was more than what the person felt about the service, and needed to be measured objectively (Appendix C Paragraph 11.47):

> *"quality shouldn't just be what the person feels about the service. It should also be whether the service meets certain criteria which can be objectively measured. Em, so, yes, I think, em, it ought to be possible to measure quality using quantitative measurements, yes." (P14)*

This quote emphasises again the need for triangulation. The quote makes an interesting separation between individual experience of a service, and 'objective' quality standards. The quote does not make clear who would set the objective criteria, but it should be possible to involve the community, or project users, in doing so. It would also address the issue of expectations; an individual accessing a project may have a more limited frame of reference in assessing how good a project is than practioners, and may be happy just to be receiving assistance of any kind. More objective analyses allow for a comparison with other projects and approaches.

Bringing the two sets of arguments together, the idea that qualitative and quantitative research could complement each other was raised. It was suggested that qualitative research could be used alongside quantitative research to ensure that projects were not 'hiding' behind, perhaps a limited number of, good qualitative responses. The example was given that the number of jobs indicator does not tell you anything about the quality of jobs (Appendix C Paragraph 11.40). This may be an area that would also benefit from measurement. It was identified that quantitative indicators could provide a starting point for evaluation (Appendix C Paragraph 11.42):

> *"I think the two dimensions can inform the other. The danger is to use one too influentially without considering the other dimension and that can work both ways, you know. Sometimes you hide in the qualitative ones because, you know, you can't handle the numbers game. Sometimes you use numbers to suit, you know. Three out of four people succeeded in this particular exercise but only 4 out of 20 turned up. So you can say 75% of those who completed were very good. It sounds quite good, you know. It's only something like 12% of the people actually turned up. It's only 9% of the whole lot have actually got through it or whatever." (P13)*

One respondent thought that qualitative research should be used because it provides insights and the weaknesses of an evaluation framework can sometimes be shown up through qualitative perspectives (Appendix C Paragraph 16.15):

> *"I think my sort of standard comments about the use of research would be (a) it should be used because what you do get insights (b) the weaknesses of an evaluation framework can sometimes be shown up, if you like, through qualitative perspectives; (c) it would have given you an insight into issues so yeah. I would have thought I mean, certainly methodologically there can't be any case for not bothering with it, practically it's a wee bit more resource intensive." (E3)*

Another noted that qualitative information should be given equal footing with quantitative information, but that projects need support in doing this (Appendix C Paragraph 16.16), with another respondent echoing this view (Appendix C Paragraph 16.17).

Potential improvements to using qualitative information were identified. A respondent noted that more work could be done on finding out the right questions to ask and another hoped that qualitative research would not become overly prescriptive, but said that she felt there was a need to develop a framework for qualitative research (Appendix C Paragraph 16.14).

In summary there was a general feeling amongst respondents that qualitative research did provide something additional to numerical analyses, providing a better picture of the benefits of social inclusion projects to clients. The intensive nature of the work undertaken by some of the respondents' projects meant that numbers alone would not give an accurate impression of the value of the work undertaken. However, there was also a need for a degree of objectivity in the process. Respondents identified that quantitative and qualitative research could complement each other in a range of ways.

Chapter Summary

This chapter has identified a number of issues relating to the methods used to solicit the opinions of residents and project users, their ability to participate in these processes and the role of qualitative and quantitative research in assessing the impact that projects are making. The next chapter moves on to look at some of the key issues involved in producing information that provides a basis for targeting resources.

CHAPTER SEVEN: TARGETING RESOURCES FOR SOCIAL INCLUSION

7.1 Introduction

Smith (1995) identified that outcome measurement provided both a prospective and a retrospective analysis. In its retrospective role, it provided a guide to good practice. The last two chapters have examined the underpinning principles of monitoring and evaluating social inclusion projects, and examined the methods used to undertake evaluation in an attempt to establish what does, and does not, work well. This chapter moves on to look at the prospective role of how measurement can guide resource allocation decisions. It focuses first on the usefulness of the information gathered for funders, then examines the possibility and usefulness of making comparisons between projects, before concluding with an examination of the confounding and facilitating factors in social inclusion evaluation.

7.2 Funders

This section examines the role of funders, and the perception of funder's attitudes to qualitative research. The section looks first at general comments made regarding funding organisations before moving on to look at specific funders including the Scottish Executive, local authorities, the Community Fund and Social Inclusion Partnerships.

Funders are, of course, not all the same, and have different pressures upon them. It is easier to use qualitative research in the process when it is a small funder, but in the case of funders such as European agencies, comparisons must be able to be made with not only other UK projects, but also those in the rest of the European Union, which makes it difficult to use anything other than easily quantifiable analyses; one European funder said that a recognised framework for evaluating soft indicators would make it easier to argue to the case for including issues such as personal development in evaluation.

The perception was also raised that funders expected to have quantitative information (Appendix C Paragraph 11.35 and 11.36). One respondent commented on quantitative measures:

> "I don't think they are a good they are a good measurement but unfortunately, today, at the present moment in time, it seems to be one of the main ways of measuring people's or project's performance in relation to them getting funding or not getting funding. Whether it's through the local social inclusion partnerships or through European funding, there's always seems to be more of an emphasis on numbers and quantity rather than quality." (PJ25)

Respondents also commented about the specific monitoring and evaluation expectations of a number of funding agencies. One respondent said that qualitative information should be taken more seriously by funders, and another noted that there was a presumption that funders would understand the qualitative information (Appendix C Paragraph 16.28); this contrasts with the earlier comments indicating that it was thought that funders did not understand qualitative research.

Other issues identified by these respondents were that meeting the needs of different funders was time-consuming and that organisations only had a limited amount of money to spend on evaluations (Appendix C Paragraph 15.19);

> "It's very time consuming. It does demonstrate why sometimes the students feel that they've filled this piece of paper in before or in a different format or whatever. But it just has to be on this form now because Employment Services require, for example, that you fill out a childcare allowance form on their form which enables childcarers to be paid retrospectively monthly, two months in arrears and the childminders round here don't really like to wait that long for their money so we have forms that enable students to have their childminder paid weekly in a way most of them manage. And then they have to fill in the forms for the Employment Service to enable us then to claim the monthly arrears amounts but it's the same numbers that they're entering, the same amounts, same childminder, same details of same children." (PJ34)

The above quote emphasises that the collection of data is time consuming for project users as well as staff, reflecting the concerns in the last chapter regarding monitoring and evaluation 'fatigue'. It may be that this form of information collection presents another barrier to participation. Another respondent noted that the real resource issue was around time rather than money (Appendix C Paragraph 15.20) and another expressed a desire to speed up the length of time it took to turn information around (Appendix C Paragraph 15.21).

One respondent opined that the Community Fund was good at prompting applicants to include evaluation as part of a funding bid, but that other funders were not as good at valuing evaluation (Appendix C Paragraph 15.25). One respondent thought an improvement would be reassuring organisations that the information they were collecting would actually be useful to them, and a final respondent raised the issue of whether funders ever actually used the information they requested (Appendix C Paragraph 15.26):

> *"I feel that sometimes our figures we're asked for figures in the annual reporting process and never receive feedback very seldom say, are these figures being used? Cos I would suspect they're not unless they're put as a top figure some place. I think our project and I'm sure a lot of others do put a lot of time and effort and energy into ensuring that they're abiding the sort of monitoring and evaluation but for us it's of the SIP, it's also for the health sector, it's through the City Council, it potentially will be through the Lottery. I think we monitor ourselves up to the hilt and I ... but I don't I think the annual reporting process is useful." (PJ33)*

The respondent identifies a need for the reporting process to be two-way, with feedback regarding the uses of the information. One respondent opined that performance indicators determine behaviour, and gave an example of a funder who had tied 60% of their funding to qualitative feedback from two client groups, which had had an impact on performance, noting that staff behaviour is bound to change if they know they are to be measured in relation to dealing with phone calls and individuals coming through the door (Appendix C Paragraph 14.55):

> *"I gave you the Hong Kong example. They actually tie 60% of their funding to qualitative feedback from the two client groups, from unemployed people and from employers. And it's transformed their performance. The whole*

thing about these performance indicators is to determine behaviour. You start with the kind of behaviour you want, you know is it client focused, about individuals, understand their needs, em, getting them a job which fits them, and helps them go into a sustainable route to work, what kind of behaviours do you need that encourage that, and what kind of performance indicators encourage that kind of behaviour. So you don't want performance indicators that are just about getting people into any old job. Because what do you do? - you get those people, you choose to work with those clients, those clients who are closest to work and [clicks his fingers] Bob's your uncle, you get high placement rates, but you leave the problem completely untouched. You probably end up dealing with people who would have got work anyway, probably would have got that job anyway, probably would have succeeded in that job anyway, so you almost literally make no difference, but you met all the performance criteria, you probably exceeded them. Everybody appears to be happy. You've got happy clients, you've got a happy organisation, you've got happy funders, but it has completely failed to do any job at all that is worth doing." (E2)

This is, perhaps, a cynical view, but one that reflects earlier comments regarding the ease of manipulating information by providing participants with pleasant, rather than challenging activities. It highlights again a difference between the outputs of a project, and the impact that they are making on social exclusion.

One respondent thought that funders were becoming more alert to qualitative issues (Appendix C Paragraph 14.56) and another expressed the opinion that qualitative information was the way forward but observed that it did not allow easy comparison and would lead to decisions being a 'gut reaction' for funders (Appendix C Paragraph 14.57). This could be problematic for funders as it would leave them open to challenge by organisations who did not receive funding; rigorous, quantitative systems, rightly or wrongly, do provide funders with a more transparent decision making process.

There was a call for more standardisation in the information requested by funding agencies, with one respondent noting that most projects had multiple funders (Appendix C Paragraph 15.48):

"I think it could be standardised so that the different funders could agree... at the start of a project and I actually think probably that it would be good if projects were allowed to define, to some extent, their own monitoring and evaluation framework. OK, within parameters if you've got an over-arching policy that you're trying to measure. Then there's no point in having 25

different ways to measure because you'll get no comparison or it would be very difficult to get a comparison. But I don't see any problem with a policy having a framework which projects can then be invited to design their own monitoring and evaluation which becomes part of that project's funding application which all funders then buy into. Cos there aren't generally projects that are funded by one source of money nowadays unfortunately."
(PJ34)

Another respondent noted that a standardised framework for thematic SIPs would be useful (Appendix C Paragraph 15.49) and a third respondent from a European funding agency noting that they were working on developing consistency between different European programmes (Appendix C Paragraph 15.50).

7.2.1 Scottish Executive

The Scottish Executive provides the Social Inclusion Partnerships with their funding, and several respondents passed comment on their approach to monitoring and evaluation. The attitude of the Scottish Executive was noted with one respondent noting that some of the information requested by the Executive was meaningless because it did not reflect the quality of the intervention (Appendix C Paragraph 14.49):

"If the funding agency is the Executive, I would have to say that it's sadly lacking in what they understand of people's lives in communities, or communities of interest for example. I would like to think that at some point in the next few years that that kind of information would be used in terms of gauging people's needs, the nature of the problem, the process of exclusion. That is what the programmes are geared towards, em, they are not going to understand... We are not going to be able to understand what these processes are, it's not possible to understand exclusion, in relation to inclusion, if we rely on database indicators which are interested in health, housing, physical fabric of the area. I think inclusion is about relationships and process, and these things happen over time." (E1)

This is, perhaps, a little unfair as the Scottish Executive does produce a range of research on social inclusion itself. However, the perception seems to be that this understanding does not exist in the arm of the Scottish Executive that funded social inclusion. Another noted that the Scottish Executive had to look at relationships and processes, and the other remarked that the Scottish Executive should take the lead in encouraging organisations to develop qualitative outcomes (Appendix C Paragraph 14.50):

"I think the funders they need to and it may have been led by the Scottish Executive in some ways they need to get away from the bums on seats attitude and probably to work with the organisations that they're funding to look at developing ways of measuring the quality the qualitative outcomes. I think a degree of that work has been done through the Anti Poverty Forum in Dundee and that would be useful, you know. It's all very well saying projects can develop their own indicators but if they aren't recognised at a funding level, then you're missing the boat sometimes." (PJ33)

The above quotes illustrate how closely the monitoring and evaluation undertaken is tied to funders' requirements. Just as funders in effect set policy by providing guidelines on what they will, and will not fund, funders shape monitoring and evaluation systems by their requirements. This may be due to a lack of time and resources for social inclusion projects to lobby for more effective indicators.

One felt that the Scottish Executive should give more credence to qualitative research and another felt that the Executive did not have a good understanding of people's lives in communities, and that qualitative information could be of use in gauging people's needs, the nature of the problem and the process of exclusion (Appendix C Paragraph 16.27):

"I think that the Scottish Executive needs to take more credence about it. The reality is at the end of the day they are still interested in the hard quantitative information. And that's the reality. And in some way we have got to impact on those major funders view of qualitative research. It's still seen as the tail-end Charlie, and at the end of the day what people are interested in is how many people are now going to college. They might still think that they live in a bad area, and all these things that are about qualitative measures. We still need I think to push that whole issue, and I think particularly for what are still fairly short term funded programmes. Because people might only be so far down the line." (PG17)

The above quote highlights again that respondents perceived a lack of credibility of qualitative research with funders.

7.2.2 Local Authorities

Local authorities also provide a range of core and project funding to social inclusion projects, and a number of issues arose relating to local authorities, with a

respondent noting that the local authority was now looking seriously at qualitative measures (Appendix C Paragraph 14.39), and another that the forms that they were required to complete were realistic (Appendix C Paragraph 14.40):

> "It's quite a realistic form that you fill in, and, em, I think they are quite sensible about the questions that they ask, and I think also because they are the City they know this area that we are in anyway, so it's not so difficult to prove things. The Partnership form, it's quite simple as well. But we are in competition, you see, with other folk in the area, and when it comes down to who can present the best case. We're squabbling over crumbs" (PJ28)

The respondent highlights that the monitoring and evaluation process can lead to a fixation of the day-to-day situation, without addressing the bigger picture, for example competing for existing funds rather than campaigning for additional funding for the sector. A respondent observed that in discussions with her local authority a lot of the agreement came down to hard figures (Appendix C Paragraph 14.44). One respondent in a funding role at a local authority noted the importance of linking information requested to the objectives of the project, and said that his own organisation had a tendency to be quantitative based. He further stated that looking at qualitative information was harder work for funding organisations, and that projects should be encouraged to write up anecdotal information, for example, in their annual report (Appendix C paragraphs 14.41 to 14.43):

> "The other thing about qualitative information is it's harder to dig through. If you've got a lot of funding applications or you're looking at a lot of organisations, it takes time to look at that or it can take time. Whereas we get a say in we had X number of people in January, X number in July is easy to read, takes less thought. But we need to be looking at it a lot more seriously and I think that we are doing that and I think the organisations are welcoming it." (P12)

The above quote highlights a need for balance in the amount of monitoring and evaluation information requested, in order to ensure that funders are not overloaded with information.

7.2.3 Community Fund

As noted in the literature review, the Community Fund is the arm of the National Lottery which provides funding for charities and community groups, and it is a major funder is Scotland of organisations tackling disadvantage. Comments were made about the Community Fund, one respondent noting that he thought the Community Fund had got better at accepting qualitative information (Appendix C paragraph14.46), and the other noting that the quantitative questions asked by the Community Fund inevitably focussed your mind on boosting numbers, whereas 'in what way' questions would inspire thought about the quality of service provision (Appendix C Paragraph 14.47):

> *"To give it a concrete example, we're asked a lot of quantitative questions by the Community Fund, about our Lottery, Community Fund, we use the Community Fund grant how many people did we see, how many people did we assess, how many people, how many, how many. And they will say, it really doesn't matter how many you tell us, it is actually about what effect you have had. But if you always ask the how many question, I think it is placed in the mind of those that are answering that question that we have to boost the numbers, whereas if you were asking 'in what way' then it's much more about having to think then about the quality of the service provision that you have got." (P7)*

The quote illustrates how responsive the process is to the funders actions, rather than being developed by the projects themselves.

7.2.4 Social Inclusion Partnerships

One respondent commented specifically about Social Inclusion Partnerships, and noted that his Partnership Board asked projects seeking funding to give a presentation, which allowed for quality aspects to be discussed (Appendix C paragraphs 14.52 and 14.53):

> *"one of the things that the partnership used to do excuse me as part of the 3 year period was, to ask projects to come in and speak to the partnership board and give a, you know, I think it used to be something like a half hour presentation and answer questions, you know. So there was more kind of information and quality aspects came out from some of that discussion than*

there is from just submitting a 20 page document with your kind of stats and hopeful outcomes and I think the funding bodies could look for that kind of information, where they can get down to discussing with people face to face what it is they are hoping to offer and what the what does it really mean to say they're going to run 20 events in the year? What does an event mean?" (PJ25)

It is an important point to make that not all monitoring and evaluation is written; this echoes the comments made by the Lloyds TSB representative in Chapter Three, where she noted the strong verbal element of assessment. Similarly, the Community Fund interviews all applicants for larger grants. It may be that the verbal elements of assessment are not recognised as such by the projects, or it may be that while the targeting of resources incorporates a verbal element, the actual monitoring of resource allocation does not.

7.3   Comparisons between Projects

As noted in the introduction, Smith (1995) identified a prospective element to evaluation. One method of achieving this is to compare the outputs from different projects. However, this question provokes some of the strongest responses in the research. This section looks at the degree to which respondents thought that comparisons were possible, how useful they felt them to be, and the difficulties they had identified in making comparisons.

Respondents were asked to what extent comparisons could be made between the qualitative information gleaned from participants in similar projects (Appendix C Paragraph 13.4). A degree of comparability was identified, with a respondent from a funding agency noted that application forms asked the same questions to each project which allowed comparability, and another said that social inclusion partnerships were all providing the same information to the Scottish Executive, so comparison should be possible. One comment relating to possibility:

"The application forms that we have submitted to us ask every project the same questions. So we have 10 projects providing computer training to people with disabilities. We would expect to see a degree of comparable. Sure, they have to take account of individual needs but in terms of quality,

you would expect there to be, you know, a minimum level that they all complied with. So I think there should there should be able to make comparisons across those, definitely. Comparing a project helping people with disabilities with a project that's helping ex offenders is of less value and we don't, through our appraisal process tend to do that." (F4)

A further respondent thought that information gained from 'qualitative' frameworks like the Rikter Scale could be compared (Appendix C Paragraph 13.5). However, it should be noted that the soft indicator scales such as the Rikter Scale were not designed to be compared, they are meant as personal development tools for individuals.

With regard to the usefulness of comparisons, many respondents noted that comparisons allowed projects to learn from each other (Appendix C paragraphs 13.7 to 13.17):

> *"Is it useful? Em, well it is very interesting if you find that people have very different answers, because that then leads you on to another level, and you then say why is that different? You know, they've had the same experience with fear of crime of something, but why are they coming up with different feelings and answers. Is it their age? No, they're the same age. They've the same sort of profile. What is it that is causing this disparity in results? Em, so yes I do think it is useful, even if you do come up with completely unexpected responses. [they laugh]" (PG16)*

This quote reflects a view expressed by several respondents that networking and information exchange was very important in establishing good practice.

However, a number of difficulties were identified when making comparisons. Respondents raised the issues of comparisons between projects based on quantitative measures, and raised the difficulties of different methods of calculation (Appendix C Paragraph 11.21), different staff ratios (Appendix C Paragraph 11.22) and different levels of support needs of clients (Appendix C Paragraph 11.22):

> *"going back to job readiness and things like that. It doesn't sound as impressive, to say after a year, em, 65% of our participants had done this, that, but they weren't in jobs. Whereas in other projects we can say after a year 20% of ours were in employment, 30% were in employment, but in another it was only 10%. They may have been operating in different areas, they may have had different client groups, and therefore the outcomes*

aren't really comparable. It may be much more different for somebody working with 18 ...well the New Deal in play it wouldn't be that difficult to have your 18 to 25 year olds into some sort of occupation after a year, but, it might be that the particular client group that you have worked with, ex-homeless people, are much, much harder to place. So those soft measures are actually a much better indication of the long term progress back into society, rather than that hard measure that has been the one that has tended to be used all the time, regardless of the client group that you are actually working with." (P7)

This quote emphasises the need to compare like with like. Many limitations to the comparisons that could be made were noted, with differences in geography, management structure, job descriptions, client group, user needs, differences in users' expectations, and differences in funding all identified. Further respondents noted that projects, overall, were rarely the same (Appendix C Paragraph 13.22).

A key concern of respondents regarding comparisons was the issue of competition between projects (Appendix C paragraphs 13.24 to 13.30):

"I think if it got into kind of comparing schemes in order to make schemes competitive that can be quite destructive, and I don't like that and it wouldn't be useful to me at all." (PJ23)

However, as most funding for social inclusion initiatives is provided on a competitive basis, it is difficult to avoid these comparisons. One respondent expressed the view that qualitative information should be used to assess the success of the project against the project's goals, not against other projects (Appendix C Paragraph 13.38).

One respondent took a contrasting view to those outlined above (Appendix C Paragraph 13.19):

"I suppose the sort of anecdotal feedback, is that we're unique, there's nobody like us and how can we compare ourselves. And there's I think the answer that rather mischievously said back to I think one person who was making this point was, well, if you're unique then we need to look at what are the unique circumstances that would make us want to fund you? Now, that sounds like fairly cruel and horrible but it was throwing it back a wee bit saying, well if there's only one of you in the country, why is that? What happens in other areas that it's different?" (P12)

This is a key point, that comparisons are much better received if they are looking for points of similarity rather than difference, and benchmarking may prove useful in this context.

One respondent said that an individual's experience was not necessarily the same as the impact it had on their life (Appendix C Paragraph 13.36):

> "So, you know, you might get somebody saying that I've got a really great experience of using the capacity building project and somebody saying I've got a really bad experience of using the house and development project or something but it might be for different reasons, you know. It might be that housing's a real kind of issue at the moment and they're having real difficulties with the issues around housing and they might kind of be discussing these issues and engaging with these issues with that particular project. Whereas they might be engaging in something completely different with us." (PJ25)

This quote illustrates an inherent challenge for project's monitoring and evaluation systems. As they are often working with vulnerable individual's who are experiencing difficulties, it would not be unreasonable that the individual's may not respond well to projects that are attempting to help them to change. Building this potential negativity into a monitoring and evaluation framework in a way that does not effect project's funding may prove problematic.

Improvements needed to the methods of measurement were identified, noting the importance of the correct questions, and the usefulness of standardised frameworks and questions (Appendix C Paragraph 13.33 and 13.43 to 13.46):

> "if you could get something that is standard then it makes things an whole lot easier. Because ultimately, we've got to report back to draw down money from Brussels, and we have quite a rigid framework to operate within. Yeah, so if there was something standard then we could incorporate that within our formal reporting. What happens at the moment is what I had described to you there about the myriad of different approaches, it's not as extensive, I mean we're not talking hundreds, but they are all reporting on something that we probably don't have to formally report back to Brussels on." (F5)

I think there's more and more there are more and more surveys but there's also more recognition about trying to make survey work more integrated and having standard questions that can be used as part of national surveys but they can also be repeated as at a local level to so you end up then with maybe a much more subtle and detailed analysis on a particular issue at a local level but you can also benchmark it against what the national position is. So that you can compare it with the national survey. So, yes, undoubtedly. It can be done but it does need careful design and there are tools around to help that you know, things like the question banks are a good way of doing that." (P8)

This quote illustrates measures that can be taken to ensure the quality of the research, in this example making use of pre-tested questions.

In summary, respondents were very positive about learning from other projects' experiences, but provided a range of limitations to any comparison on the basis of figures. However, a minority of respondents did question the extent of these limitations. In addition, several respondents were of the opinion that comparing projects led to competition between projects, which could be very destructive.

7.4   Facilitators and Impediments to Monitoring and Evaluation

During the research respondents highlighted a number of factors that impeded or facilitated the development of monitoring and evaluation information that was useful. With regard to potential facilitators, respondents identified issues of improvements that are, or could be made, and identified training needs. With regard to potential impediments, issues of culture, targeting and resources were noted. These are noted in turn below.

7.4.1 Improvements

It was observed by respondents that monitoring and evaluation systems can always be improved (Appendix C Paragraph 15.4), and a number of respondents remarked that they had already taken steps to improve their monitoring and evaluation systems, or were in the process of doing so. Improvements noted

included undertaking research on assessing their client groups (Appendix C Paragraph 15.8), use of new monitoring and evaluation tools (Appendix C Paragraph 15.9), accessing training (Appendix C Paragraph 15.10), organisational review (Appendix C Paragraph 15.11), changes in the timescale of monitoring (Appendix C Paragraph 15.12) and new methods being used (Appendix C Paragraph 15.13):

> "Well that's you know, that's back to the qualitative stuff. At the moment, you know, the sort of the only formality for collecting things is the the ESF outputs and targets that we have to reach for the funding there and the Scottish Enterprise Forth Valley which were the targets there. And they're you know, I'm just measuring what I absolutely have to at the moment but we are in the process of writing a monitoring and evaluation framework that, as I said to you before, that will attempt to deal with all of those things as well as the, em, the qualitative. So, you know, at the moment, I'm just collecting it in the bare minimum to get by for the funding, em, but I don't want to and I want to I'm hoping that we will become an example of good practice." (PJ24)

This quote reflects the previously identified emphasis by projects on networking and exchanging information.

7.4.2 Training

The issue of training was highlighted as an areas that could assist in improving all the criteria identified in the conceptual model. One respondent noted that they had had excellent training from the SIP on monitoring and evaluation but that there was a need for more of it (Appendix C Paragraph 16.7), and further respondents said that more sharing of information would be useful (Appendix C Paragraph 16.8), in contrast to the earlier concerns regarding comparisons. Another respondent noted that research was a key training need for local groups, and a final respondent mentioned that the training she had received from the SIP had increased her confidence in undertaking monitoring (Appendix C Paragraph 16.9):

> "I think people should be better equipped to do it. I think there should be more training. Qualitative research is one of the key things that came out in

our training needs assessment for local groups to do and that's one of the things also we'll be looking at training more." (PG20)

Another respondent said that more training would be useful (Appendix C Paragraph 15.5).

7.4.3 Targeting

A number of comments were made regarding targeting. Respondents commented on the issue of mainstream services, that is services not targeted on areas of deprivation. One respondent noted that social inclusion projects needed to dovetail with services such as transport and leisure (Appendix C Paragraph 16.22) and another thought it unfair that social inclusion type projects were subject to monitoring and evaluation to a greater extent than local authorities (Appendix C Paragraph 16.21):

> *"at times it it feels a bit I suppose a bit unfair that social inclusion type projects are asked to jump through all these hurdles and continuously prove themselves of the benefits of their work. When we work in an environment where local authorities now treat social inclusion partnership money like another part of their budget, where it was never intended for that for those purposes. They just see it as another way of kind of backing up and resourcing some of the services that they should be providing themselves but at the same time, they ask us to continuously justify what it is we're doing and why we're doing it. The same doesn't seem to happen from the other side." (PJ25)*

This comment echoes the earlier comment regarding the additional stress placed on social inclusion projects to evaluate; however, it could be argued that many mainstream services are subject to monitoring and evaluation through Best Value.

Another respondent thought that the social inclusion partnership money had been allocated on a competitive basis, which meant that some areas of need had not received funding (Appendix C Paragraph 16.32):

> *"I was on the team that looked at the bids. When we looked the social inclusion partnership money was given to people, em, on a basis that*

balanced need and confidence about ability to deliver something. Now, whilst that at one level, that's a reasonable thing to do when you're spending public money because arguably, there's no point in giving whole a whole load of money to an area that has huge need if it doesn't look like they've got any ideas or any infrastructure or any mechanism for actually making that mean something to socially excluded people at a local level. On the other hand, my experience of that was that some areas that had less need, em, got money because they were good at making bids, because they had that level of expertise" (P15)

This raises an interesting point regarding how funding for social inclusion projects should be targeted. SIP funding is entirely based on the quality of the bids for funding.

7.4.4 Resources

It was noted that constraints of time and/or resources for monitoring and evaluation can restrict the quality of research. Respondents noted issues of SIP projects not all being at the same stage of development (Appendix C Paragraph 15.15), staff on short term contracts not having enough time to compile evaluation information (Appendix C Paragraph 15.16), the labour intensive nature of qualitative research (Appendix C Paragraph 15.17), the expense of external consultants and the need for more time to gather feedback from users (Appendix C Paragraph 15.18). It was also noted that time spent on monitoring and evaluation had an opportunity cost (Appendix C Paragraph 12.47):

> *"I know it's important to monitor and evaluate, em, but it's also important to deliver services and and get things going and get wheels turned and get people thinking about this issue and, em, SIPs need more time built in and more resources in for evaluation. I think there's a lot of role for external evaluators to come in and I know that in the last year, that is built in and hopefully they will be interviewing a lot of our community reps and saying well, what have you got out of this? Cos we sure haven't got the time. No way have we got the time to do that." (PG21)*

This quote reflects that all attempts to develop monitoring and evaluation have an opportunity cost that needs to be considered by projects. One respondent noting that social inclusion projects received less funding that the NHS for research

(Appendix C Paragraph 16.24), another noted that monitoring and evaluation was an integral part of the project whether or not you are resourced to do it , and final respondent identified the additional constraints on rural areas such as costs relating to geographical spread of projects(Appendix C Paragraph 16.25).

7.4.5 Culture and attitude

It was noted that a negative attitude toward monitoring and evaluation affected the quality of the work undertaken. Several respondents highlighted the existence of a culture where monitoring and evaluation is seen as a burden. Another respondent said that monitoring was seen as an unpleasant task which people would rather not have to do (Appendix C Paragraph 15.24).

> *"If we'd more time to spend with customers and clients or colleagues or partners. If we had ongoing monitoring methods. If we had effective planning systems. If we had more time to plan. If we didn't have the mentality that, you know, evaluation is a pain in the arse, I'd rather move on to the next project." (P13)*

Respondents also outlined a vision of what an ideal culture would be:

> *"we should be looking at a culture where getting opinion back again is a way of doing things. It's not something that's additional or separate. We should be looking at systems where feedback and acting on that feedback happens almost like naturally, like second nature." (P12)*

The issues of attitudes to monitoring and evaluation was not confined just to those collecting the information, but also those who would use it. One respondent noted that this would require a political consensus that monitoring and evaluation was important work (Appendix C Paragraph 15.23):

> *"Qualitatively, I would have to say that time and resources are a major stumbling block for that type of work, because they are labour intensive and they cost money, em, if we had support of various partnership bodies, if there was a recognition that it was a priority, if there was a consensus, a political consensus that it was important to do, and I suppose that's a cultural shift about the way people think about monitoring work, then I think we would find it easier to either engage people, or to have them participate on a level which we think gives us the benefit, or the greatest benefit. Projects are still hugely difficult. There are too many projects to deal with.*

They have their own priorities. We don't have the time and resources that takes the time that you need to change the culture of projects, to give them ownership which can take years to engage with them on their level, to have them set the agenda for monitoring" (E1)

The resistance to monitoring and evaluation is understandable, as individuals working in the project have taken these jobs in order to provide services, and it is reasonable to assume that this is where there interests, and skills, lie. Another respondent noted that a lot of research that was undertaken did not find its way into the decision making process (Appendix C Paragraph 16.18); perhaps if this was more obvious then cultural attitudes to monitoring would improve.

Inherent in the discussion was the conflict between the needs of funding agencies and the needs of project and programme staff. With any piece of public sector research there will be a number of different audiences; with social inclusion projects the audiences include both the project users, or local residents, and the funding agencies. It was observed that qualitative research was more 'user-friendly' for project users and residents, but that funders were reluctant to use it as a basis for targeting resources.

7.5   Additionality

Rossi and Freeman (1993) and HM Treasury (2003) identified the importance of establishing additionality, and a key issue for the research questions was whether existing methods allowed the impact of project's activities to be isolated from other activities. Respondents raised a number of issues including the difficulties of isolated impact from the initiatives of other projects or national programmes, establishing the counterfactual situation, the role that qualitative research had to play in establishing additionality, and the timescales over which additionality can be established. These are dealt with in turn below.

Respondents noted the difficulty of isolating the impact of their project from other projects:

"I think it is very easy to purely look at the hard stuff, the quantitative stuff and actually not know if you are making an impact. At the end of the day people want, the recipient's of the service actually want the service, that they think it makes a benefit. Because you can do all sorts of stats of numbers through training programmes, but are on a wee merry-go-round where actually people are going on a training project and having to come back, whereas if you actually use qualitative information about people's perception of what they have actually gained, or whether it has made a difference you can see whether it's a long term solution, but to do that I think we have to help people to collect qualitative information that is credible" (PG17)

This quote illustrates an important role that qualitative information can provide in assessing the additionality provided by social inclusion projects, and notes again the importance of credibility.

Another respondent highlighted the difficulty of separating the impact of social inclusion projects from the impacts made by local and national programmes (Appendix C Paragraph 3.12):

"So I think there are many, many different aspects of life, I suppose, and change in an experience that it would be difficult to quantify, but even more difficult is to relate that to the social inclusion programme, because it might be that people's lives are changing for some other reason. New Deal could change the lives of x number of people in a targeted community..." (E1)

"Quantitative data in the project so far has described the communities in relation to change from the baseline but not, not, the indicators don't describe every aspect of life, and they certainly don't describe the impact of the SIP programme. If we think, or we assume, the other programmes at a macro level or a meso level in [local authority area] are impacting on these communities, if not as much, more than say the SIP programme has impacted on these communities." E2

The role of qualitative research in establishing the additionality provided by projects was raised (Appendix C paragraphs 12.41 to 12.47):

"you really need to do a number of things to make sure you have captured all the benefits of carrying out a piece of work, and, em, there is nothing like a number of interviews or focus groups to add these in-sights, particularly if you are asking open questions, to the qualitative framework we are talking about. And, it's an interesting question this one. Because one of the key issues is always about additionality, in other words, would this person have

made this progress without their engagement with this project, em, and obviously when we are reviewing projects this is one of the things we do"
(E2)

Individuals can identify the impact that an intervention played, although the above sections have identified some limitations to opinion based information.

One respondent highlighted the issue of the same individuals making use of a number of different projects and thought that using case studies with the local community could address this (Appendix C Paragraph 11.14).

Attempting to establish what would have happened without the intervention of a particular project was identified as difficult. A respondent noted that it would by useful to be able to ask users where they would have found the information they required if not through the organisation (Appendix C Paragraph 15.36):

> *"Well, I said that I think it would be beneficial for us to have been able to do direct, public questionnaires, although I've no idea what exactly would we would ask the public. We could ask them about the visibility of certain poverty issues, but then we couldn't be sure that it was our influence or someone else's influence that determined it. But I know that I would have liked to have done more along the lines of asking what the effect of a response to a particular enquiry was. In other words, you know, if you hadn't been able to get that particular piece of information from us do you know where else you would have got it from? How much time might that have involved. So there are quantifiable things that we have not actually been able to ask people, because we have not had the resources to do that." (P7)*

However, the degree to which individuals could answer these questions is debatable.

Respondents identified the value of assessing preventative work (Appendix C Paragraph 11.45 and 12.42):

> *"Somebody somewhere needs to sit down and actually start quantifying what the costs are to social work, housing, etc of a family becoming homeless, so that there can be some sort of quantifiable measure. That's how much we saved the Council from incurring the cost, on average, you know, we would have been six weeks in emergency accommodation, there*

would have been re-housing allocation. So all of that should be quantified, so that you can actually put a figure on it, because I think quite often external people aren't as impressed, because it doesn't sound, we helped, 60, 70 clients out of six or seven thousand, you know? What does that mean? So I think quantitative measures are important, I think we need to work on them to make sure that, at least to funders and to others in the community, you can actually begin to demonstrate how important they actually are." (P7)

"What's what's more difficult to judge is the benefits in the longer term because part of our project is about building resilience in people, you know, in a preventive sense, you know, and we can't yet answer that question because it's only been going for about 18 months. So a kind of qualified yes to that. There are some immediate benefits evident but in the longer term, we have to wait and see." (PJ29)

This quotes illustrates again the need to assess the counterfactual, and highlights the need to place a value on the cost of the alternative in order to accurately assess the value of an intervention. However, there can be an issue for monitoring and evaluation if the resources to prevent exclusion and to tackle exclusion come from different sources, as the preventative element may not immediately impact on the budgets of those tackling poverty.

The issue was also raised of the timescales over which evaluation took place. One respondent suggested it would be useful to have more information about long term trends, and long term tracking, and also information on short term risk factors (Appendix C Paragraph 15.30):

"We needed to go back another 5 years later and see what the longer term we need that in the long term but we also need much shorter term tracking in terms of seeing looking at those risk factors, if you like, that are actually going to make crucial differences to people, possibly in a short term period, leading up to decision to move to vacate a block because the bulldozers are coming in, to what happened when they moved into their new home, to what actually is making a difference to whether they are capable of staying out of out of debt in that new home, to what and then 6 months down the line, have we also actually dealt with the financial shortfall in that household because the mum is out of work and can't get any child care for her child. Those are the that is the sort of subtle day to day tracking and monitoring information that we need to be accessing to find out whether we're making any difference or indeed whether we're making things worse as a result of regeneration processes." (P8)

Another respondent said that short term posts were subject to monitoring while permanent posts such as social workers were not (Appendix C Paragraph 11.49):

> "Fill a report on the post which I always found funny that, you know, short term funded projects do that. To evaluate our service, we monitor what we're doing, you know. Families have a say, they can change things that are happening, they can read what's happening and for a post that's there full-time like social workers, health nurses, teachers. You don't have any say in their posts but short-term initiatives do. I think, well, maybe we should look at that going out further then if we're wanting to improve, you know, the quality of service that people have." (PJ32)

The quote raises an interesting point, although it could be argued that measures such as Best Value do attempt to evaluate local authority services. It may, however, be true that social inclusion initiatives are more high-profile. Yet, as one of the problems of monitoring and evaluating social inclusion projects is the difficulty of isolating project impact from the impact of other influences it may be of benefit to integrate the evaluation of short term, and permanent service provision. Benchmarking between permanent and short term initiatives may well prove informative.

Integration was also an issue for another respondent who noted that it would be good to have an annual report for the sector as a whole, for example across a local authority (Appendix C Paragraph 15.56):

> "What we'd like to see is almost like some type of annual report type thing for the sector as a whole which is highlighting where organisations are doing really well but in a collective sense, say, across West Lothian, the type of things happening. Because it's public money that's going into these organisations, although they're all doing their annual reports separately, it would be good to maybe say in this area of service provision, here's what happening. In that area, here's what's happening, here's the good news. Or here's the things we'll need to do to make things better in the future." (P12)

The quote highlights a need for greater co-ordination by funders.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter respondents highlighted a range of limitations to attempts to monitor and evaluate social inclusion initiatives including difficulties of isolating the impact of social inclusion projects from the impact of other initiatives and other influences on project users' lives, and concern regarding comparisons made between projects. It was noted that qualitative research could play a part in providing useful information in these areas.

A range of improvements were identified including the need for more time and resources, a culture that is more receptive to monitoring and evaluation, and more use of frameworks in monitoring and evaluation. A more positive approach to monitoring and evaluation, such as more emphasis on points of similarity, may improve the accuracy of the impact assessment.

This chapter concluded the analysis of the respondent's views. The next, concluding, chapter looks at the implications of these findings, and sets them in the context of the Literature Review and the Policy Context.

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CHAPTER EIGHT: CONCLUSIONS

After examining the context of social inclusion monitoring and evaluation in the literature review, and eliciting the opinions of key players in the field, this chapter will now set out the conclusions and the implications of the research findings for policy and practice. The starting point for this will be to re-examine the research objective. The last three chapters outlined the views of key players in the field of social inclusion monitoring and evaluation. This final chapter places these views in a conceptual framework that looks at the theoretical and practical barriers identified and sets them in the wider context. The chapter then identifies the implications of this information. The chapter critically analyses the limitations of the research, before identifying a range of topics for further research.

8.1   Revisiting the research objective

The research question asked:

"To what extent do the existing systems of monitoring and evaluation in Scottish social inclusion initiatives recognise the particular nature of social inclusion?"

As discussed at the beginning of Chapter Five, the literature review identified that there are a number of issues that are specific to social inclusion, namely, the idea of inclusion as a process, the subjectivity of inclusion, the holistic nature of inclusion and the wide range of potential clients for social inclusion projects that follow from this. While all the elements are present to some degree in other related terms such as poverty or quality of life, it is in social inclusion that all these elements combine.

Chapter Five also noted that there are a number of reasons why Scottish social inclusion projects may not adequately recognise the specific nature of social inclusion. The literature review identified a number of potential barriers:

- There were a number of definitions of social inclusion, and that the term was open to mis-interpretation; if key players do not share a vision of what social inclusion is, or if there is a lack of clarity regarding the terms this may result in the specific elements of social inclusion not being addressed.

- There are a range of targets that social inclusion projects and programmes were working toward; the targets that are being used to measure the impact of social inclusion projects may not be an appropriate or complete reflection of social inclusion.

- A range of methods for monitoring and evaluation were identified; the methods that projects are using to assess if they are meeting these targets may not be appropriate for social inclusion, or the resources available may be overly constraining.

- It was identified that social inclusion is a broad concept involving individuals with a wide range of needs; the different client groups may not all be participating in the process equally.

If the above difficulties arise, the information that is provided by the monitoring process may accurately reflect the issues inherent in social inclusion.

Dealing with the above constraints helped form the basis of the conceptual model developed in this thesis for an ideal monitoring and evaluation system for social inclusion projects and programmes. The conceptual model has the following key elements:

- A paradigm that accurately reflects the nature of social inclusion;
- Research methods that follow logically from this paradigm;
- Methods of resource allocation that build on this research.

The model was applied to the themes emerging from the interviews to identify how well the existing systems fit with the ideal model, and these headings are dealt with in turn below.

8.2   A Paradigm of Social Inclusion

The research identified several elements to social inclusion, and respondents differed in the emphasis they placed on the different elements. Social inclusion was identified as different from poverty or exclusion, and the elements that made it so were its combination of being a process and its subjective nature. This section addresses these issues in more detail.

8.2.1 The nature of social inclusion

The literature review identified that there were a number of different terms in current use to describe deprivation (Townsend, 1979; Scottish Office, 1998; Spicker, 1998; Scottish Executive, 1999; Scottish Executive, 2002). At the beginning of the research (in 1998), social inclusion was the term most widely used by policy makers and practitioners. The research identified that this term was well received by practitioners, and was in line with the aims of the social inclusion partnerships. During the course of the research the term favoured by the Scottish Executive became social justice. However, the indicators against which the Scottish Executive is assessing their success in addressing social justice remain the same as those they used to address social inclusion. Yet there are several key differences in the two approaches. Social 'justice' moves the debate into the language of rights, yet it is not clear what individuals are entitled to, and how they would enforce these rights. If the Scottish Executive is suggesting that individuals have a right to be included, what happens if an individual feels that they are not included? Direct discrimination, and to a lesser extent indirect discrimination, can be addressed through the courts, but the research identified that social inclusion is a highly subjective issue. It is not clear from the research where the responsibility of the Scottish Executive and the individual programmes and projects toward excluded individuals end.

The research identified that social inclusion was a well regarding term by the respondents, and that this is the paradigm they use when undertaking their work, in line with the Scottish Executive's model for Social Inclusion Partnerships.

However, the use of social justice as a description of what social inclusion projects are trying to achieve does not accurately reflect the element of rights and responsibilities that 'justice' implies; to genuinely embrace social justice as an aim would require a paradigm shift.

8.2.2 Measurability

A number of different methods for establishing disadvantage and deprivation were identified (Social Exclusion Unit PAT 18; Mack and Landsey, 1984; Scottish Household Survey; McDermott, 1998; Scottish Poverty Information Unit, 1995). The research added to this by teasing out some of the operational difficulties experienced by respondents in trying to measure social inclusion and poverty. Respondents to the research identified little difference between inclusion and exclusion, seeing them as 'two sides of the same coin'. Yet there is a marked difference in the approach a researcher would take to prove a positive or a negative theory. Indicators that rely on proving an improvement in a negative state, for example, a fall in unemployment being regarded as an improvement in social exclusion, do not really identify social inclusion, because more information on the quality of the job, the impact it had on individual's life would be required before it could be established that they were genuinely more 'included' in society.

The literature review identified a developing body of work on quality of life measurement (Tolley and Rowland, 1995; Scottish Community Development Centre, 2000; Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, 2003). Respondents were asked their views on quality of life, and whether it can be linked back to the work of social inclusion projects, and were positive about both issues. Quality of life measurements draw on many of the same variables as social inclusion, and could form a potential alternative to social inclusion measures. As a paradigm for measurement, quality of life has two main advantages over social inclusion. First, it is a term that is more likely to be understood by communities, and it is likely that an individual could describe the criteria that they would need to have a good quality of life more easily than the criteria they would require to feel 'socially

included'. Second, quality of life offers a greater flexibility to be used across all communities, rather than just those regarded as at risk of exclusion.

There are some advantages to a paradigm such as social inclusion that focus purely on areas of exclusion, and there was a school of thought amongst the respondents that it was important to focus on those who were excluded, rather than those who were included and not in need of assistance. The disadvantage, however, is that policy makers end up comparing poor areas against other poor areas, rather than comparing them to the norms in more affluent areas. Many of the questions outlined by the Scottish Community Foundation on quality of life can be answered by individuals regardless of their affluence, and the quality of life approach assists in dealing with the potentially lower expectations of less affluent communities.

A range of proxy indicators have been developed by the Scottish Executive in partnership with other agencies to identify progress toward social inclusion (Scottish Executive, 2000; Scottish Executive, 1999). The research identified a range of difficulties in implementing these indicators, and also identified that there are a range of assumptions underpinning these indicators. The existence of norms or benchmarks is a key issue in the monitoring and evaluation of social inclusion projects. Without a conscious awareness of the societal norms it is impossible to establish when exclusion is occurring, yet by its nature social inclusion monitoring and evaluation focuses on the norms within excluded communities. With measures such as relative poverty, deprivation was closely, although bluntly, tied to a societal norms of wages and purchasing power, however the research identified that with social inclusion it is much less clear what the norms are.

8.2.3   Subjectivity

The terms social inclusion (and poverty) have a strong subjective element. Although the subjectivity of social inclusion was debated in the literature relating to definitions, there was less emphasis on the issue of subjectivity in the literature on measuring social inclusion. In contrast to the proxy indicators, there is a school of

thought amongst the respondents that believes that social inclusion and quality of life can only be established by asking the individuals concerned. If this view is taken in its purest sense it has many implications for monitoring and evaluation. Opinion based measures would have to be the basis of any evaluation system, yet as each opinion was entirely related to the individual it would be impossible to aggregate their opinions in a manner where the validity of the research could be established. On the other hand, to take a purist view of using proxy indicators, measurement becomes entirely reliant on the strength or the weakness of the assumptions linking the indicator to social inclusion.

In reality it would never be possible to get the opinions of all the users and potential users of social inclusion initiatives due to cost. The hybrid system of opinion-based indicators triangulated by other data provides a starting point. The indicators in use, and the gaps in indicators are discussed in more detail below.

With regard to the research question, it would appear that the subjectivity aspect of social inclusion limits how closely social inclusion initiatives address the paradigm, but then this may be because an accurate establishment of social inclusion is actually impossible to achieve.

8.2.4   Opinion-Based Information

If subjectivity is seen as a key element of social inclusion, it then follows that there is a need to solicit individual's views, and respondents commented on range of key areas of opinion-based research. Resident satisfaction is a compulsory indicator for the geographical Social Inclusion Partnerships in Scotland, yet it is not clear what use is made of this information. It was not clear from the research, for example, if it was anticipated that resident satisfaction would increase consistently over the period of a regeneration project. There are many reasons why this would not happen, for instance, individuals may be unhappy at the level of disruption to their residential environment. Resident satisfaction may show a less than anticipated rise at the end of a regeneration project as individuals' expectations of the improvements also rise. Expectations also play a part when comparing

between projects; more robust and affluent communities may have higher expectations than more socially excluded ones, and therefore rate themselves as equally excluded.

Therefore, resident satisfaction provides a number of challenges in placing it effectively in a monitoring and evaluation system, and there is a gap in the literature in identifying the implications that can be drawn from the information that is gathered on resident satisfaction. However, the actual process of gathering resident satisfaction information, and using this information to feed into the process of development was very positively regarded by respondents, and it may be that this is where its strengths as a measure lie, that is, in its ability to involve residents in the regeneration of their area.

Fear of crime has a unique place in social justice as it is the only opinion-based indicator in the Social Justice Annual Report (Scottish Executive 2000). However, there is a large body of research on the limitations of fear of crime measurement which identifies that individual's fear of crime and the likelihood of them being a victim of crime are not closely correlated (Farrall *et al*, 1997). It is also a difficult issue to triangulate; for example the installation of CCT in an area might be expected to decrease individual's fear of crime, but the act of raising awareness of the crime levels might actually increase levels of anxiety. However, these issues aside there remains a willingness to use fear of crime as an indicator. A respondent to the research speculated that this may be due to the fact that this is an area of which policy makers feel they have some influence, and this may well be the case.

With regard to confidence and job readiness, there is a less direct link to issues over which policy makers have control. However, individual and community confidence are surely the cornerstone of quality of life, and are often the first step toward an individual's gaining employment. Many respondents noted that they were already measuring confidence through 'soft' indicator schemes (LEAP, 2000; Bridges Project 2001). In addition, it was noted by funding agencies that a recognised framework for measuring confidence would be of use in their measurement systems.

However, the soft indicator systems currently in use are personal development plans and not measurement systems. They are designed to be specific to the individual, and to enable them to reflect back on their progress. They were not designed to be aggregated to reflect the impact of a particular project, and it would require development work to see if this were, in fact, an option.

Relationships were identified by respondents as another key determinant of quality of life, and an area where they felt they had an impact, and this was an area where there was a key absence of indicators. However, none of the projects interviewed were actually measuring this, perhaps as organisations are not actively requested to report on this information, they may not feel that it is an appropriate use of time and resources. Alternatively it may be perceived as too difficult to establish, and there are certainly a number of difficulties. One difficulty is in identifying triangulation indicators, as relationships may break up for both negative reasons, for example the pressures of living on a low income, or for 'positive' reasons, for example a person leaving an abusive spouse.

The research identified that the lack of measurement of the impact of projects on relationships, despite this being an area where they felt they did have an input, would seem to indicate that indicators are being developed from the top down. It may be that there are other areas where projects feel they are making an impact that are not being recognised.

The above issues identified that some areas of concern feed more readily into monitoring and evaluation systems than others, and that this may be due in part to a greater willingness on the part of policy makers to monitor certain issues. While it is obvious that policymakers may feel they have a degree of influence over addressing issues such as crime, there is a less clear line that issues such as individual well being can be addressed by policymakers. This issue raised the question of what the limits of government responsibility are, and whether the government is actually able to deliver quality of life, if the key determinants of quality of life relate to issues in an individual's 'private' life. The Scottish Executive

may also be unwilling to monitor and evaluate certain issues as it could be taken to imply that they have responsibility for them.

So while social inclusion projects do take steps to address the nature of social inclusion by soliciting the opinions of individuals who may benefit from their services, the holistic nature of social inclusion is not reflected due to the top-down nature of the indicators, which reflect more the concerns of policy-makers than the reality of life for individuals experiencing exclusion.

8.3   Research Methods

8.3.1   Methods and the needs of beneficiaries

A wide range of individuals that are at risk of exclusion, and the research covered a range of organisations serving a variety of client groups (SPIU, 1997). It was recognised that many of the client groups are very vulnerable, and have difficulties in communicating, particularly with individuals they do not know. On the other hand, there was a perception that research undertaken by an external organisation had more credibility with funders. It may be that there is an unavoidable trade-off between trust and objectivity in undertaking social inclusion research; funders and projects need to work together to identify how to maintain the credibility of internal research.

A key concern in the discussion about methods by respondents was the degree of representativeness of their research samples. It was recognised that individuals who were actively involved in monitoring and evaluation were atypical, and that there were high costs attached to undertaking more pro-active measures. In addition, concerns were raised about the constant demands of monitoring and evaluation on residents and project users; there is a need for balance in the level of information sought. Individuals at risk of social exclusion are amongst the hardest to reach, and in order to reflect this organisations need to be resourced to undertake pro-active information seeking.

8.3.2 Qualitative and Quantitative Methods

The difference between qualitative and quantitative methods were identified in the literature, and the difference between opinion-based and non-opinion-based indicators (Foddy, 1993; Easterby-Smith, 1991; Walker, 1993). However, the research identified a lack of clarity and confidence regarding the differences between the concepts. Respondents often took the view that qualitative indicators were those that referred to individual's opinions, and factual and numerical information could only be gained through quantitative research. Qualitative research was perceived as lacking in credibility with funders and politicians who required numbers.

The lack of clarity is not surprising; of the sample only one respondent in a project role had a job title relating to monitoring and evaluation. The literature review identified that qualitative and quantitative techniques could be used both to undertake research, and to analyse it; many respondents expressed concern that their funders were only interested in numbers, but techniques such as content analysis could be used on interview transcripts to provide this information. Respondents also made a connection between subjective information and qualitative research methods; there is, of course, no reason why opinion based information could not be collected and/or analysed using quantitative techniques.

However, it is perhaps expecting too much of project and programme staff to use these techniques. Yet it would be of benefit for staff involved in monitoring and evaluation to be aware of the techniques at their disposal in order for them to engage in a more informed dialogue with project evaluators and funders.

8.4 Allocating Resources

8.4.1 Funders

The research identified that the funders involved had very different pressures on them in terms of accounting for the funding they disbursed. The European funders required robust systems that could be aggregated and monitored on a Europe

wide basis, whereas funders such as the Lloyds TSB Foundation for Scotland are answerable only to their own Board. However, there were concerns raised by respondents regarding the monitoring and evaluation requirements imposed by multiple income streams. There is, therefore, a degree of responsibility on funders, in the public sector at least, to work toward simplifying and co-ordinating their requirements. Although all the funders have their own requirements from monitoring and evaluation, when spending public money they have a duty to consider value for money, and the time spent by project staff dealing with numerous monitoring and evaluation systems should be considered in value for money analyses.

Many of the respondents were keen to see funders take a greater interest in qualitative research, but the funders emphasised the amount of qualitative information that they already sought, both on application forms and verbally, in funding interviews. A concern was raised that a concentration on qualitative research to the exclusion of quantitative research might lead to funders making a decision based on a 'gut reaction'. However, funders also have a responsibility to provide allocation systems with a degree of transparency, and there is a need to reconcile the role of qualitative 'picture-painting' with the need for robust, transparent decision making.

8.4.2   Comparisons

The area of the research that provoked the strongest response was on the issue of making comparisons between projects, with respondents raising concerns that this generated competition between projects. It was identified that comparisons between qualitative project information were difficult to do, and that comparisons of outputs were often misleading as it was difficult to ensure that projects were comparing like with like. It may be that comparisons of project outputs are not appropriate; the research identified that numbers are only a crude measure of a project's worth.

One respondent raised the issue that projects were 'squabbling over crumbs'; systems of competitive allocation of scare resources do encourage organisations to view each other as rivals, and to focus on short term applications, rather than promoting co-ordinated work to lobby for additional resources for the sector as a whole.

It may be of more use to develop indicators relating to the successful management of projects, and look at the processes and systems they have in place. If a project is deemed to be well managed, it would seem reasonable to assume that the outputs that they are producing, for example, the number of clients they see, are appropriate for their client group and local situation. Although this is an assumption, it is a stronger one than the assumption that because a project sees a given number of clients it is being run in an effective manner. Benchmarking provides a useful tool for establishing process outcomes, and for creating a more positive approach to comparisons by encouraging projects to compare themselves to other projects in order to learn, rather than purely to compete for scarce resources. It could be argued that organisations would then compete on the grounds of their 'process' outcomes, which would be regrettable, but perhaps a healthier situation to have organisations competing to demonstrate the effectiveness of their organisational approach rather than on the number of individuals they have assisted.

The Community Fund has recently moved toward outcome measurement. However, one of the issues raised in the research was the difficulty of attributing outputs to a particular project. Outcomes are even more difficult to attribute, being even further removed from specific projects. There are dangers of basing funding decision on issues that cannot really be established, or in some cases, influenced by projects.

It would appear that the degree to which the existing systems of resource allocation reflect the nature of social inclusion projects is limited. Competitive funding regimes based on numerical comparisons do not address the holistic nature of social inclusion by recognising the diversity of client groups with whom projects were working; these client groups have different needs and will require

different amounts of support, which will result in different outputs. However, despite the widely held perception by the respondents that funding agencies made their decisions based on a comparison of outputs, the funding agencies interviewed stressed the emphasis that they placed on the qualitative information that they received from projects both verbally and in their funding applications. Therefore there may be more of a recognition of the quality aspects of social inclusion projects than is perceived by the project and programme staff who participated in the research.

8.5   Facilitators and impediments

The research identified that there was a culture in existence where monitoring and evaluation is seen as a burden, and as something that detracted from the service that organisations were trying to provide. A movement toward a more positive emphasis on areas such as benchmarking may help to address this, by encouraging projects to identify areas of similarity and learn from each other; networking and liaising with other organisations was strongly regarded by organisations.

8.6   Additionality

The literature review identified that to monitor and evaluate effectively it must possible to isolate and identify the difference that a social inclusion project has made (Rossi and Freeman, 1993; HM Treasury, 2003). However, the research identified that this could be difficult to establish due to individuals accessing a range of projects, and an inter-play of local and national programmes with individual projects. The research identified that qualitative information had a key role could play in this, as discussions with individuals allowed them to identify the interventions that had impacted most on their lives.

It was also identified that the timescales over which projects were measured were not conducive to measuring additionality, as some of the project outcomes would

require tracking over long time periods in order to establish change, for example, health benefits may not be established for ten to twenty years. The short term nature of project funding makes this impossible, and in order to tackle this effectively resources would have to be found for large scale longitudinal studies.

8.7 Limitations

A number of limitations with the research could be identified. As with any research in an area that is still developing, there have been changes over the period of the research which have affected it. Since the beginning of the research the terminology favoured by the government changed from 'social inclusion' to 'social justice'. It would have been interesting to discuss this term with the participants in the research, and discuss whether social justice, with its connotations of rights and citizenship, had made any impact on their approach to work. More specifically, it would have been useful to discuss if there is any substantive difference between monitoring and evaluating social inclusion, a process, with monitoring and evaluating social justice, a right.

Chapter One also noted a number of self-imposed limitations; amongst them noting that the sample size was relatively small. The methodology used attempted to compensate for this, and provide a reasonable breadth of opinions. While this was true for the programme, project and policy aspects of the research, it proved much harder to get useable data from organisations involved in the funding of social inclusion projects.

A final issue relates to the research question itself. The research question was very broad, in an attempt to reflect the holistic nature of social inclusion. However, this resulted in answers that were at times quite general. It may be that a more focussed question would have resulted in a deeper analysis.

There were also some notable absences from the list of organisations interviewed. Both the Scottish Executive and the Community Fund declined to be interviewed,

and as two of the largest funders of social inclusion projects this was a significant loss to the research. This has implications for the generalisability of the research.

8.8   Further research

A number of areas were identified where further research would be of use.

The focus of the research was with staff working in social inclusion, and there was no representation from project users, and it may be that the experience of project users, and community activists such as Management Committee members and Board Members, is quite different. This is an area where dedicated research would be of use.

The research identified a great deal of interest in soft indicators, and frameworks for measuring confidence. Additional research on the potential to create frameworks for confidence that permit their findings to be aggregated would be of use to projects and funding agencies.

The research identified that one of the areas where social inclusion projects had a marked impact was on the ability of the project users to deal with personal relationships. However, none of the respondents noted that this was an area where they were currently undertaking monitoring. Therefore it would be of benefit to examine this in more detail.

Respondents raised concerns about the negative impact on projects of comparisons that emphasised competition. Therefore, additional research on more positive attempts to establish quality such as benchmarking would be of use.

Respondents perceived a lack of credibility of qualitative research methods and findings amongst funders, and exhibited a lack of confidence in using and presenting qualitative research. Further research would be of benefit in investigating whether their perceptions are correct.

8.9 Conclusions

Social inclusion is a well-received term, and the respondents' conception of social inclusion was in line with the Scottish Executive's model for Social Inclusion Partnerships. However, in terms of monitoring and evaluation, there are several key elements of social inclusion that are not recognised fully. Social inclusion is a process, yet many of the measurements are based on outputs that do not reflect this. Although social inclusion is a subjective process, there are a limited number of opinion-based indicators used to measure it, with areas such as improvements in confidence and relationships not feeding adequately into monitoring and evaluation processes. Finally, the competitive nature of social inclusion funding makes it difficult to reflect the holistic nature of social inclusion, and encourage projects to work together.

SUMMARY OF DETAILS ABOUT RESPONDENTS

Table A1:   *Job titles given by respondents*

Co-ordination	Research and Monitoring	Management	Field Worker
• Co-ordinator • Co-ordinator • Co-ordinator • Project Co-ordinator • Project Co-ordinator • Project Co-ordinator • Learning Centre Officer • Centre Director	• Research and Information Officer • Policy Officer • Research Fellow • Monitoring and Evaluation Officer Principal Consultant	• Development Strategy Manager • Programme Manager • Fieldwork Manager • Social Equality Team Leader • Assistant Director • SIP Team Leader • Voluntary Organisations Manager • Director • Director of Community Learning • Assistant Secretary	• Youth Support Development Officer • Senior Arts Worker • Senior Psychologist • Local Transition Worker • Community Health Development Officer • Development Officer: Community Issues

Table A2:   *Length of time respondents had worked in social inclusion*

Time scale	Number
Four years or less	7
Five to nine	6
Ten to fifteen	5
Fifteen to twenty	3
Twenty plus	6
Not recorded	1

Table A3:   *Responsibility for monitoring and evaluation*

Level of responsibility	Comments
Collect monitoring and evaluation information myself	• I am responsible for collecting the figures for statutory, the mandatory performance indicators and local indicators for each of our five social inclusion areas. • What we have to try and say that the activities that we provide a project achieve the Social Inclusion Partnership's themes and measures so we have to try and make that connection between showing that something that we provide increases self-confidence and self esteem, or helps educational attainment. • I conduct, prepare and submit the reports to the Community Fund on how the project is, or how the project is meeting its objectives. • We do constant monitoring and evaluation. We produce statistics for the

Level of responsibility	Comments
	annual report and quarterly statistics for SIP around recruiting and training volunteers.
	• I have shared management responsibility for Pathfinders in our area and that includes an element of monitoring in that we have to comple with the Scottish Exec. M and E framework. I have a more general responsibility for the generation of evidence of need and evidence of what is being done to address need in the Council and Partnership.
	• I manage a project in a SIP area and have responsibility for monitoring.
	• I've got a specific area in monitoring and evaluation which is called a Self Monitoring Evaluation Report which has got to be completed at the end of the year...it's my responsibility to make sure that' s kept up to date.
	• We monitor the work we carry out with small projects, ... we operate, or have operated a number of pilot projects.
	• When we were receiving community urban regeneration programme funding there was certain things that we had to measure to meet the funding of the criteria.
	• Every course that we do we evaluate.
	• My responsibility to ensure that an arts project is monitored and evaluated.
	• I report back to the SIP on a 3 monthly basis.
	• I have sole responsibility for monitoring and evaluation.
	• We would describe our work as a series of projects. So, yeah, we do the evaluation.
	• We get monitoring forms out quarterly which have core information about the young people that you were seeing.
	• I obviously count the number of individuals that I work with, how they are getting on and their progress.
	• In conjunction with the monitoring of the SIP, the project as a contribution has a monitoring officer form the Director of Public Health in Tayside Health Board.
	• I have overall responsibility for monitoring and evaluation of the project.
Ensure the monitoring and evaluation information is collected by someone else	• I have the responsibility for the overall monitoring of the social inclusion partnership.
	• Responsibility for monitoring a European funding programme at programme level in terms of our output in the aggregate ... also responsibility for monitoring across a cross section of the projects.
	• I go out as part of a group to do monitoring and evaluation visits, and most of the work on monitoring and evaluation, the admin. Work comes to myself.
	• We have responsibility for monitoring a SIP's social inclusion programmes.
	• Both the partnership as an organisation and its wider objectives at the individual projects we sponsor.
	• ... make sure the services we're purchasing from voluntary organisations are meeting the objectives that they are setting out to meet.
	• I have the responsibility for monitoring and evaluation the [SIP] programme.
Do not collect	• At this point, no we don't. We haven't taken that kind of work in at least ... two and a half years.
Other	• Only through membership of the Social Inclusion Network which has a

Level of responsibility	Comments
	role in evaluation or at least commenting on the evaluation of the SIP... I was on what was called the Evaluation Action Team or taskforce for the SIP... who looked specifically at what the indicators would be for the success or failure of the social inclusion strategy. • We do a lot of contract work for clients in the public sector... designing monitoring systems, using them, reviewing performance.
No response	One.

Table A4:   Key project outputs listed by respondents

Output	Responses
Outputs relating to young people (14)	• Finding young people employment • Finding young people homes • Providing young people with training, skills assessment, re-training • Providing young people with childcare • Providing young people with advice • Work with children and young people • Providing help with children • Young people • Early identification of children who have experienced trauma, loss or abuse, and who, as a result of this, might risk exclusion. • Provide appropriate and timely therapeutic help to children who have been exposed to trauma. • Help young people identify their needs and to creatively work to meet them • To ensure the transition from Children's Services to Adult Services went seamlessly • Improving young people's confidence • Improving young people's self-confidence and self-esteem.
Outputs relating to employment and childcare (15)	• Work in the field of employment • Providing employment and training for local people in SIP and local authority area • Jobs • Employment and training • Individuals going on to employment • Unemployment • Improving employability • Accessing employment • Good quality, reasonably well renumerated work is available to all who want it and require it across the country • Reduce and minimise the impact of redundancy situations • Working with employers and trade unions to try to make sure people in work are adequately trained • Lobbying for minimum wage to be established at an appropriate rate • A high level of successful women who move into employment and training. • Entry into the job market either immediately after leaving the project or within 2 years of leaving the project • Childcare.

Output	Responses
Outputs relating to income (4)	• Increase people's income • Promoting financial inclusion and preventing financial exclusion through our credit union service. • Income measure of poverty • Economic.
Outputs relating to learning (18)	• Education. • Education. • Success of individual learners • Continual learning as a measure of success • Individuals going into further or higher education • Education • Education • National community learning training programme • Project delivering training for Social Inclusion Programme teams across Scotland • Learning Evaluation and Planning programme. • Project looking at the impact on learners of informal community based adult learning. • National Grid for Learning Communities Roll Out Programme • Accessibility to further education. • A high percentage of women successful in gaining a qualification • Training infrastructure • Number of days training organisations to increase knowledge of rights and responsibilities • Political and social education • Opportunities for women to increase their awareness of IT
Outputs relating to health (8)	• Health • Health indicator • Health • Health resource work • Support to local people to help tackle their own identified and expressed health needs • Developing the skills of local workers to enable them to adopt the community development approach to health issues • Working with mainstream services to target health inequalities • Health Information Points
Outputs relating to volunteers (3)	• Number of volunteers, what they are doing and how they are developing • Training programmes we provide to volunteers and professional workers • Developing volunteers.
Outputs relating to community (13)	• Number of groups we've brought to sustainable proivision • Community capacity building • Involving people in decision making about their environment • Building people's confidence that their views will be taken on board • Greater and more effective levels of community representation • More resources and information available to the local community • Improved skills, abilities and expertise of local individuals and groups within the area. • Capacity building. • Capacity building for communities • Community capacity building and empowerment.

A10

Output	Responses
	• Individuals taking their learned skills into the community • Strength of civil society • Improve quality of life of the community and the indivdiual
Outputs relating to the field of community safety (3)	• Work in the field of community safety • Dealing with issues of the environment that impact on people's feelings of safety about the area • Community safety.
Outputs relating to information	• Creation of a comprehensive web-site on poverty issues for use by the community • Production of briefings for community groups and other interested in issues of poverty • Raise the profile of poverty issues and increase public knowledge of, and perception of, poverty. • Service and convene a local authority Social Inclusion Forum • Answer enquiries on poverty-related issues for members, for example, through a newsletter and enquiry service • Poverty awareness • Respond to the partnership's requirement on monitoring and evaluation for the SIP programme • Poverty profiles, area profiles and other area based papers • Qualitative research work in relation to engaging with the partnership's stakeholders and projects • Evaluate the programme that reflect the Scottish Executive guidance on evaluation • Collate information based on a baseline and monitor change along specific indicators provided by the Executive for the annual report • Provide psychosocial education on the effects of trauma to parents, teachers, voluntary groups and others. • Provide training on loss and bereavement, and trauma management for schools and agencies working with children in the SIP area. • Social Research
Outputs relating to isolation and confidence building (7)	• Relieving isolation by providing volunteer support • Dealing with depression • Dealing with low self-esteem levels • Give people confidence and allow them to go on and do something with their lives • Encourage greater self-confidence in people • Release artistic talent that people might have • .Increased levels in self-confidence and personal development of the individuals who come to the Centre.
Outputs relating to housing and environment (5)	• Housing • Environment • Area regeneration • Supported accommodation • Improving quality of life
Outputs relating to equality (6)	• Less inequality by particular communities • Less inequality by disadvantage groups • Race equality audits • Number of groups on database

Output	Responses
	- Number of elected representatives involved - Work on equality issues.
Strategic Outputs (13)	- More informed decision making. - Better targeting of resources on need - Better use of resources brought to the table by different partners e.g. willingness to pool budgets - Sustainable development - Improved communications and understanding between local authority and voluntary organisations they fund. - Giving voluntary organisations a better idea what the Council's interests are. - Organisations working better together, particularly the statutory and voluntary sector. - More involvement in planning structures to do with social inclusion by the relevant organisations. - A more strategic approach to service provision. - Review the future needs of the service. - Look at areas of good practice - Better understanding in respect of the roles and responsibilities - Encourage organisations to think more about their own performance.
No response (1)	One.

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«Title» «FirstName» «LastName»
«JobTitle»
«Company»
«Address1»
«Address2»
«City»
«PostalCode»

07 May 2001

Dear «Title» «LastName»

PhD Research – Assessing the Impact of Social Inclusion Projects

I am a PhD student at Napier University, undertaking research on issues relating to monitoring and evaluation of social inclusion and anti-poverty projects. In order to undertake the research I am hoping to interview a selection of individuals who have been involved in social inclusion work for a number of years, and who have experience of working with social inclusion/ anti-poverty monitoring and evaluation systems. I am hoping that you will be willing to participate.

The research will consist of a 1.5 hour interview, tape recorded if you give your permission. You will receive a copy of the interview transcript to allow for clarifications, and no comments will be attributed to individuals. You will receive a summary of the findings of the research.

I have enclosed some further information, and a copy of the interview schedule.

I appreciate that you receive many requests for interviews and information, and will do my utmost to minimise the intrusion on your time.

I will contact you to discuss this next week. In the meantime if you have any questions please contact me on 0131 455 3408 or by e-mail on L.Kelly@napier.ac.uk

Thank you in anticipation.

Your sincerely

Lesley Kelly
Research Student
School of Accounting and Economics

Enc.

EVALUATING SOCIAL INCLUSION PROJECTS: MORE INFORMATION

What is the aim of the research?

The research aims to examine the limitations of existing systems of monitoring and evaluation being used by social inclusion projects and to identify possible improvements. It will form the basis of a PhD being undertaken by a Napier University student.

Who will be undertaking the research?

The research will be undertaken by Lesley Kelly, a PhD student at Napier University. Before becoming a student she worked for three years for Midlothian Council on a range of social inclusion projects. Prior to that she worked for a voluntary organisation in England for four years, working with tenants' and residents' organisations on council estates. She is currently working with a number of voluntary organisations on a consultancy basis.

What will be involved?

The research will involve participation in a semi-structured interview lasting approximately one and a half hours. With your permission, the interview will be tape recorded. You will receive a copy of the interview transcript to allow you to make any corrections or clarifications you feel necessary.

What about confidentiality?

A list of the organisations participating in the research will be included in the final Thesis. However, no quotes will be attributed to individuals.

Who else is being interviewed?

I am hoping to interview a pool of people who have worked in the area of social inclusion and/or monitoring and evaluation for a number of years, whether this is as a policy maker, a practitioner, a funder or an independent evaluator. To this end I am seeking to interview individuals from SIPs, the voluntary sector, European Partnerships, the National Lottery Charities Board, community activists etc. I will interview approximately 40 individuals in total.

Why should I participate?

As an individual this will give you a structured opportunity to think about monitoring and evaluation in your project, and the wider social inclusion field, and to identify potential improvements that may be of benefit to you. All participating organisations will receive a summary of the findings of the research. It is hoped that the research will contribute to future policy/programme design.

Where can I find out more?

Lesley Kelly can be contacted at Napier University on 0131 455 3408 (direct line) or by e-mail at L.Kelly@napier.ac.uk

SOCIAL INCLUSION INTERVIEW

Introduction

This interview asks some background questions about you and your project, and asks you your opinion on a number of issues.

Definitions

"Quantitative"   Quantitative information is based on quantities and numbers, such as the number of users of a project, and demographic information. Quantitative methods of collecting information include "tick box" questionnaires and surveys.

"Qualitative"   Qualitative information is based on the opinions and views of users and/or evaluators. Qualitative methods of collecting information include interviews (groups or individuals), focus groups, observation, recording by diary, or any other method that is based on the opinions of users or evaluators.

"Outputs"   Outputs are the results of the operation of your project.

"Users"   Individuals who make use of the services provided by social inclusion projects.

"Poverty"   Poverty can be defined as *"individuals, families and groups in the population can be said to be in poverty when they lack the resource to obtain the types of diet, participate in the activities and have the living conditions and amenities which are customary, or are at least widely encouraged or approved, in the societies to which they belong. Their resources are so seriously below those commanded by the average individual or family that they are, in effect, excluded from ordinary living patterns, customs and activities."* (Townsend, 1979, p31)

"Social   Social exclusion can be defined as *"A (British) individual is socially excluded
exclusion"   if (a) he/she is geographically resident in the United Kingdom but (b) for reasons beyond his or her control, he/she cannot participate in the normal activities of United Kingdom citizens and (c) he/she would like to so participate."* (Spicker, 1998, p11)

"Social inclusion   Social inclusion projects aim to give their users the skills, knowledge, advice
projects"   and support they need to participate in their community and in wider society.

Section One

1. What is your name?

2. Which organisation do you work for?

3. What is your job title?

4. How long have you worked in the area of social inclusion and poverty?

5. Do you currently have any responsibility for monitoring and evaluating your project or programme? If so, please say briefly what this is.

6. In your opinion, what would you say are the five key outputs from your project/programme?

7. How relevant is the term social inclusion as a description of what your project/programme does?

8. What are the key outcomes of social inclusion projects in general? Are any of them difficult to quantify? If so, why?

9. What are the differences between measuring poverty, social exclusion and social inclusion?

10. Can an individual's quality of life be measured? Can improvements to people's quality of life be measured in the context of social inclusion projects?

11. Is there monitoring information based on individual's opinions that would be useful to have? "Resident satisfaction" and "fear of crime" are examples of opinion based information that are used to evaluate social inclusion projects. Are these useful measures?

12. What are the best ways to gather the opinions of local residents? How can this be linked back to the work of social inclusion projects?

13. Are users' relationships with family and friends improved by participation in social inclusion projects? Can this be assessed?

14. To what extent can improvements in participants' self confidence be measured?

15. To what extent can partial outcomes such as movement toward job readiness be measured?

16. Can quantitative indicators reflect issues of the quality of service provision?

17. How well can participants in social inclusion projects assess how they have benefited from their participation?

18. To what extent is it possible to compare qualitative information gained from participants in one project with qualitative information gained from participants in a similar project?

19. To what extent should funding agencies consider qualitative information when targeting resources?

20. How could the monitoring and evaluation information that your project/programme currently collects be improved?

21. Do you have any other comments on the issue of qualitative research in evaluating social inclusion projects?

THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING.

QUESTION BY QUESTION ANALYSIS OF RESPONSES

This chapter summarises the answers to the interview schedule, and draws out the key themes from the responses on a question by question basis.

1.0   Relevance of social inclusion as a descriptive term

1.1   *Question: How relevant is the term social inclusion as a description of what your project/programme does?*

1.2   82% of respondents were positive about social inclusion as a description of what their projects and programmes were trying to achieve: Fundamental (E2, F5, PG21, PJ23), very relevant (E1, , F4, P10, P11, P14, P15, PG19 PJ22, PJ26, PJ27, PJ30, PJ33), and relevant (E3, F6, P12, P13, PG16, PG17, PJ24, PJ25, PJ29, PJ32, PJ31, PJ34)

Table A5: Relevance of social inclusion as a descriptive term

Themes	Responses	Eval.	Funders	Policy	Prog.	Project	Total
Positive responses (28)	Fundamental	1	1		1	1	4
	Very relevant	1	2	4	1	5	12
	Relevant	2		2	2	6	12
Neutral responses (2)	Shorthand term				1		1
	Best we've got				1		1
Negative responses (3)	Key issue is poverty/jobs			2			2
	Not relevant					1	1
No answer (1)	No relevant answer			1			1

1.3   The non-positive responses broke down into those that were neutral about social inclusion, and those that were negative. The neutral responses reflected two issues; firstly that social inclusion is a very broad term and that social inclusion provided a shorthand way to indicate this range of issues (PG18). Secondly, one respondent said that no-one had come up with anything better (PG20).

> *"I don't have too much of a problem with the term social inclusion. I don't think it's great by any means but I've not had anybody else come up with anything better"*
> *(PG20)*

1.4   Of the negative responses two respondents felt that the key issue was employment and economic inclusion, which was not adequately reflected in the term social inclusion (P8, P9).

> *"I'm conscious that we're defined and redefined social what fundamentally is about poverty and I think that poverty is a more helpful concept at the end of the day." (P8)*

> *"Although I think it's fair to say that everybody recognises the boundary between*

social and economic is quite blurred increasingly. It's certainly in our interest for organisations with a social remit to do their job well, so an effort at trying to improve – tackle homelessness will be a contribution towards helping people to get back to work." (P9)

One respondent noted it was not relevant to the people he worked with (PJ28).

"I don't think it is relevant necessarily to the people that we are working with. It is relevant to the people that fund us, I suppose, because that is the term they invented, and the term they use, and perhaps they understand. So, in terms of, em, getting funding we have to speak the language which uses these words. But I don't think...it's not words that members of this community use about themselves, or about their friends." (PJ28)

1.5 Most respondents then went on to expand on their viewpoints, expressing a range of comments with several of the respondents expressed both positive and negative views of social inclusion. The nature of the comments are noted below:

Table A6: Nature of further comments on social inclusion

Initial response:	Positive	Negative	Neutral
Further comments – positive	13	2	1
Further comments - negative	14	0	2
Both positive and negative comments	6	0	1
No further relevant comments	3	0	0

1.6 The individual comments expressed are detailed below.

1.7 **Breakdown of positive responses**

1.8 As stated above most respondents were very positive about social inclusion being an accurate description of the work of their project/ programme. The responses were broken down into three areas: social inclusion as a concept, social inclusion as an approach to work, and social inclusion as a term.

Table A7: Positive responses to the relevance of social inclusion as a descriptive term

Themes	Sub-themes	Eval.	Funders	Policy	Prog.	Project	Total
Concept of social inclusion	Social inclusion recognises importance of individuals' ability to participate in society/ Democratic process			2	2	1	5
	Describes client group					4	4
Approach	Partnership - social inclusion approach brings together different agencies, cross community work				1	1	2
	Describes voluntary sector activity			3			3

A14

Themes	Sub-themes	Eval	Funders	Policy	Prog	Project	Total
	Holistic approach, addresses range of issues					2	2
Terminology	Better than previous terms	1	1	1		1	4

1.9   Four respondents (P12, PG17, PG20, PJ24) were of the opinion that social inclusion was a good descriptive term as it reflected the need for individuals to participate, and reflected the work that organisations did in this area. Areas of participation that were noted were:

- Participation in society
- Participation in the labour market
- Participation in the education system
- Participation in volunteering

> *"It's probably fairly relevant, em, in that what we are trying to do is to look at all the issues that affect the lives of people in the community. So, that its not a case of just looking at poverty, it's also about looking at the whole issue of people's ability to take part in society, their ability to compete in the job market, their ability to compete in the education system." (PG17)*

Another respondent thought that it reflected equal opportunities:

> *"Well, it's vital. I mean, I just think social inclusion is another word for equal opportunities, tackling poverty. It's all within that. It's just a redefinition of that through, em, New Labour. I mean, the term has come largely through that political agenda. Em, so, yeah, absolutely vital to us." (PG21)*

1.10   Social inclusion, it was also observed, reflected issues of access to services and inclusion in the democratic process (P15).

> *"... as an organisation, I think they're even more involved in social inclusion activity than I've just described and I think we've been very heavily involved over a number of years and continue to be involved in campaigning, for example, to have the Scottish Parliament established and we see that part that was partly about trying to address democratic deficit as we saw it." (P15)*

1.11   A second positive theme that emerged from four respondents (PJ23, PJ29, PJ32, PJ34) is that social inclusion accurately reflects the situation and experiences of the client groups with whom organisations were working, and the type of work that was being undertaken. Social inclusion was felt to encompass the following types of work:

- Addressing mental health issues: confidence building, tackling isolation, addressing trauma
- Working with people with disabilities
- Working with women with low skills levels

> *"...a lot of people with a disability are excluded from their local communities or find it very difficult to bed down in their community, to feel that they're part of and have valued role within their community." (PJ32)*

1.12   Seven responses were made that reflected the use of social inclusion as a description of

an approach to undertaking work with excluded individuals and communities. Partnership was seen as an important part of social inclusion, with a social inclusion approach bringing together a range of different agencies (PG17, PJ22).

> *"what we are also trying to do in the Partnership is to involve as many of the local agencies as we can do so that it becomes like an inclusive response to the issues that are raised in the area." (PG17)*

On a similar theme, respondents noted that a social inclusion approach meant addressing a wide range of issues, and in some cases across communities (PJ24, PJ33).

> *"I think this project would have been developing and moving along in some form or another without that because there were the issues about the environment and I think the SIP has ... broadened those and made it a fuller and better project." (P24)*

Three respondents (P10, P12, P14) said that the social inclusion approach reflected well the way the voluntary sector operated, with one of these respondents noting that three-quarters of his organisations funding came from the government, and the social justice agenda was a central part of their policy.

> *"I would reckon that an awful lot of the work that happens in the voluntary sector is directly a means of delivering social inclusion. We find that there are services that the voluntary sector operates where they're able to engage with folk that the Council itself could not engage with or could not engage with in the same way." (P12)*

1.13   As regards social inclusion as a term, four respondents said that social inclusion was a better term than those used previously (E1, F6, P13, PJ33). Two of the responses referred back to previous regeneration programmes, with one response noting that social inclusion recognised the social aspects of deprivation (E1), and moved away from previous physical regeneration projects. The second respondent thought that social inclusion was a more descriptive term than, for example, Priority Partnership (PJ33). Another respondent commented that social inclusion was preferable to the previously used social exclusion (P13) and a final respondent noted it was an improvement as it brought both social and economic strategies together (F6).

> *"I think in the past, programmes of urban regeneration tended to be very physical and it was always difficult to tackle the economic and social side of life, because either the money wasn't enough or they didn't have the economies of scale to do it or even the expertise. I think what the social inclusion programmes do now is build these in. ... So I think it's very appropriate, and politically it makes sense, practically it's, it [social inclusion] covers a broader range of issues and client groups within the community, and I suppose intellectually it's an advance on previous terminology or understanding." (E1)*

1.14   Breakdown of negative responses

1.15   The key emerging themes are detailed below:

Table A8: Negative responses to the relevance of social inclusion as a descriptive term

Themes	Sub-themes	Eval	Funders	Policy	Prog	Project	Total
Concept of social inclusion	Real problem is poverty/jobs	1	1	1		2	5
Approach	Geographical targeting					2	2
Terminology	Wide term, non-precise			1	2	1	4
	Jargon, not meaningful to client groups		1	4	2	3	10
	Interpreted differently by different people, subjective			1	1	1	3

1.16   As a concept, concern was raised by four respondents that social inclusion did not tackle the fundamental issues of poverty and unemployment, with one respondent noting that poverty had ceased to be a "fashionable" concept (P8).

> *"... I think that poverty is a more helpful concept at the end of the day. Social exclusion and social inclusion are interesting takes on it but I think at the end of the day, what we're talking about is poverty in its widest sense, and that's people's - the poverty of wealth, influence, material possessions and the poverty of their quality of living and I would use I prefer to use the wider term poverty. It's not fashionable, although it is becoming more fashionable, and I suppose if people find that poverty is too, has a particularly narrow meaning by thinking it's about financial poverty, as the Scottish Exec. would use, then I think the social justice concept is a more useful one and more, and probably better understood, and also related to issues of power and rights, and the reality of the influences that actually affect where people, you know, whether people are experiencing financial poverty or poverty of living conditions or poor health. So, yes, I prefer those two terms." (P8)*

The other respondents all referred to the key role that employment has in tackling, and preventing, exclusion (E2, PJ24, PJ31).

> *"When we're talking about young people not taking part in education, young people taking part in crime, you know, people then tend older adults not take part in education, you know why are those things happening and I think you look to there where it where it comes from and it does it comes from poverty and unemployment." (PJ24)*

> *"work is a way of plugging people into all sorts of distant and close networks, and eh, so it's actually, what you are getting in these communities is you get quite tight knit communities, and people say I'm not socially excluded at all, you know they wouldn't say that, but they are actually excluded from the bigger, wider world, of work, and leisure, and shopping, and activities, and so on in all sorts of ways, unless they are working, and, eh, I think there is quite a danger of forgetting the centrality of work. Not just because the government places a great focus on it and funding is now increasingly being linked to work outcomes, but also because*

the reality for many people living in deprived communities is that it is a way out."
(E2)

One respondent noted that

"I prefer to see economic and social together as a term, so either using the term community economic development or economic and social regeneration cohesion or something. Because I think the key thing that European funds have been able to do is to bring together economic and social strategies. If you go back 10 years or so, there would be people that would argue you'd have separate economic strategies and social strategies and the term social inclusion in a sense takes you back, I think, a stage in people's thinking." (F6)

1.17   The social inclusion approach, with reference to social inclusion partnerships, was criticised by two respondents for its reliance on geographical targeting. They both observed that there were socially excluded individuals living outside the postcode areas designated as SIPS, but that they were not funded to work with these individuals (PJ30, PJ34).

"I don't necessarily think that a geographic determinant is an indication of whether you're socially included or not because you can be quite socially included and living in one of the postcode areas that happens to be within a SIP area. But equally you can be quite socially excluded but living outside the SIP areas." (PJ34)

1.18   The most numerous negative comments regarding social inclusion were terminological. One concern expressed by three respondents was that it is a very broad term, and can be used in an imprecise manner (P12, PG18, PJ29).

"I suppose the limitation for our project is social exclusion is quite a broad term and we're actually working in the area that we're looking at quite specific things in relation to exclusion." (PJ29)

Interpretation was also an issue, with three respondents remarking that social inclusion is a very subjective term and that different individuals, and different agencies can having differing ideas about what social inclusion means, and when it has been achieved (P11, PG16, PJ27).

"I think one of the problems is that it [social inclusion] has different meanings for different people. Certainly some of the other SIPs that we have spoken to, they really are a true regeneration package. They've looked at maybe a run-down inner city area, or a run-down area full stop, and gone, 'well if we invested in that building, brought it up to scratch, people could use it, use it as a community centre'. We haven't got that same sort of focus. And that is very different to the type of work that we are doing. We are concentrating on young unemployed people, so what impact we are having on, say, elderly retired people in SIP areas is minimal." (PG16)

One respondent, from a thematic SIP, noted that people confused the work of the SIP

with wider social inclusion issues and expected the SIP to respond to all social inclusion issues (PG20).

> "Social Inclusion Partnerships can be a bit confusing in places because the assumption is, for example, in [name of local authority area], that anything to do with social inclusion came to the SIP." (PG20)

1.19   The biggest cause of concern regarding social inclusion was that is was jargon, and was not meaningful to the clients with whom projects were working, which was identified by ten respondents. Difficulties highlighted included a range of issues. Individuals do not understand the term (PG19) or do not see themselves as 'socially excluded' and would use other terms, if any, to describe their situation (e.g. "skint", "racial discrimination", "feeling lonely") (PG21, PJ28, PJ31, PJ33).

> "I think a lot of young people do laugh at the name. We never tell them it's a social inclusion project, because it's a big horrible word, but the odd one or two has been interested, so we've discussed it and said, "Well this is what we do blah blah blah." And they'll all say but "we're socially included already in [name of town]". But they're not socially included, they're not involved in the proper activities to actually secure long term employment, to improve their education, to improve their housing knowledge, to improve their life skills." (PJ31)

> "Maybe it's a wee bit of a cop-out, maybe, but I would be wanting to take my lead from the people I am working with. And you know, if folk were using the term poverty, or social inclusion then I would certainly use it. There is no reason why not to then. I wouldn't, the branding of people that live in poverty, I don't know how helpful that is unless they themselves choose that label, in which case I would support, that's a very graphic term. But not using it... I think other people sometimes use other words as well, perhaps less powerful. People may talk about being "skint" or whatever" (PJ28)

> "It's just the nature of largely white, largely middle class, largely well educated, driven, caring professions in the public sector that need to create, em, words like social inclusion to bring their strategies round and actually it has very little meaning to people in the community, in a direct sense. Em, obviously social inclusion is a massive agenda in the Scottish Executive and good on them for doing that. Em, I wouldn't say that social inclusion per se, em, is it central to what we do? Yes, but it's not grasped by the community. It's not grasped." (PG21)

This can lead to individuals not accessing services. Several respondents referred to the 'wooliness' of the term which meant it could be meaningless (P12, P13).

> "We're beginning to understand what we think we mean by it and we can talk about it pretty confidently within 4 walls. It gets a bit kind of woolly when you get outside and people just want plain English so you've got to be careful of that, you know, and you've got to watch that you don't just start using the term thinking it's normal." (P13)

One respondent felt uncomfortable about the 'pigeon-holing' of individuals with reference to their income status (PJ28). However, some of the comments related to difficulties with

'jargon' in general, rather than with the specific social inclusion term, with one respondent observing a client not understanding the term 'deprivation' (PJ32) and another respondent talking about the difficulties of labelling people as 'poor' (P9).

A further respondent said that it might be a 'turn off' to potential clients for a project to label itself as social inclusion (F4). A further respondent described social inclusion as a buzz word:

> *"I think people don't really understand what social inclusion or social exclusion is. It is quite a new buzz word, and I think it is difficult for people to understand the terminology of it, I do. I don't know what else they would call it now, so it seems to be the right buzz word. I think it's, for us I think it's a bit about regeneration and anti-poverty work. " (PG19)*

1.20   Overall, respondents were positive about the use of social inclusion as a description of their work, with a recognition that there are difficulties with the use of the terminology. One respondent noted:

> *"my experience in social inclusion was saying that there is maybe a much more deeper rooted, fundamental question that needs to be asked, and that is 'what is the nature of social exclusion'. And not to summarise it, and simplify it along the lines of the mantra 'oh it's high unemployment, it's poor health, it's poor housing' and that gives rise to 'we better set up a whole heap of employment projects, and health projects, and arts projects' and things like that. All in the name of what you and I might think is doing something useful. I'd much rather, based on now my known experience, cut to the chase much more, and look at the individuals, and the people with families, and the networks of people that are actually suffering from this term 'exclusion', and get much more to grips with what it means." (P10)*

2.0 Outcomes

2.1 Question: What are the key outcomes of social inclusion projects in general? Are any of them difficult to quantify? If so, why?

2.2 Respondents were asked what they thought to be the outcomes of social inclusion projects in general. This question generated a range of responses, with respondents answering the question in slightly different ways. Some responded in very general terms regarding issues that were, or in some cases should be, common to social inclusion projects. Other chose to illustrate their responses with reference to projects that they thought exhibited good practice, or in a few cases, where social inclusion was failing to be delivered. The table summarises the responses, with the key issues being addressed below.

Table A9: Outcomes of social inclusion projects

Theme	Sub-theme	Eval	Funders	Policy	Prog	Project	Total
Providing opportunities	Employment	1	3	1		2	7
	Education and training		2	2	1	2	7
	Young people			2	1	1	4
	Participation		1	3	1	5	10
	Equality of opportunity			1	1	2	4
Empowerment	Confidence/capabilities for individuals		1	1	1	1	4
	Confidence/capabilities for communities			4	2	2	8
Improved services	Accessing services			1	3	1	5
	New ways of working	2	1	1		2	6
	Limitations			2	1		3
Improved circumstances	Tackling poverty and social exclusion		1	2	1		4
No relevant answer				1	2		

2.3 Providing opportunities

2.4 The majority of the responses to this question highlighted the opportunities provided by social inclusion projects, with 29 responses. These included opportunities to find employment, to participate in education, opportunities specifically for children and young people, and opportunities to participate in society. A further theme emerged of ensuring that the opportunities that were available in society were equally open to everyone.

2.5 Seven respondents highlighted the role that opportunities to access employment played (E2, F4,F5, F6, P8, PJ26, PJ30), with an outcome of social inclusion projects being opportunities to access employment, although respondents noted that employment of it self is not necessarily a route out of exclusion.

"Helping people participate in the local economy e.g. employment, improved self confidence and sort of feeling within themselves that they can." (PJ26)

The need for a "quality" job (P8), and for the employment to be sustainable (E2) were remarked on by two respondents.

"we would have two or three focuses. One is about progression into sustainable work. Now that's different from going into a job, unless that job leads to sustainable work, so I think progression into sustainable work, and then progression within that work." (E2)

Education/training was also mentioned by seven respondents as an important outcome of social inclusion projects (F4, F6, P8, P9, PG20, PJ27, PJ33). Four of the seven respondents referred to post-school learning, with one respondent stressing that their project catered for a wide range of age groups wishing to learn (PJ27).

"Certainly for this project, I can say that we're looking to again go back to sort of skill people, give people the option actually to learn, give people the option to make use of their skills and the confidence to either go into further or higher education or onto employment." (PJ27)

Two referred to school and later learning (P8, P9) and one referred just to school learning (PG20).

"We've got alternative curriculum programmes like taking people that are just excluded from school constantly, maybe taking them to different settings and they're even learning difficult things and doing different things" (PG20)

Four respondents highlighted the need to provide opportunities and services for young people such as sports and play facilities (P8, P9, PG17, PJ24).

One respondent noted that projects could not solve unemployment issues:

"the key outputs of social inclusion I suppose because they can't solve the issues about unemployment and things, it's about providing people in the opportunity – in the area with the ability and the skills and the opportunity to – to be able to sort of take part for themselves and if that means that there are – is no work available, it's about that, you know, there are these opportunities for education or there are these opportunities for developing, earning money in the social sector or there are these opportunities for volunteers, you know, to make people feel that they're – they're taking part in that." (PJ24)

2.6   A wide range of responses fell under a broad heading of participation and gathered ten responses (F5, P8, P11, P12, PG16, PJ24, PJ25, PJ28, PJ33, PJ34). Within this heading topics fell into three main areas: supporting involvement, raising aspirations and providing skills.

Table A10: Participation issues

Supporting involvement	Aspirations	Skills
• Helping people who feel excluded back into mainstream society (PG16); • Getting people motivated to get involved (F5); • Self-esteem (F6); • Creating community networks (P11); • Make it easier for people to get involved (P12); • Enable individuals to become connected to society (PJ34); • Addressing isolation and loneliness (P8) • Find a voice (PJ28).	• Encouraging people to see different horizons (P12); • Allow people to explore possibilities (P12); • Breaking down barriers to involvement such as culture and environment (PJ33); • Encouraging aspirations (PJ33);	• Provision of ability and skills (PJ24); • Opportunity to take part in education, earning money or volunteering (PJ24); • High quality cultural and social life and interaction (P8);

2.7 Supporting involvement meant looking at providing a supportive environment, with projects that were welcoming and accessible, and could provide practical support to getting involved. This included opportunities for community activists to meet together and network.

"...to engage people who would not otherwise be engaged with services or with community life or with opportunities. It's about taking steps to make it possible, to make it easier for folk to become involved who have been previously involved and who are at some disadvantage because of the lack of involvement." (P12)

"I would say that the outcomes that people are generally after is to I would think, to build, to feel that individual's are in a stronger position, are more confident and stronger position to get what is rightfully theirs perhaps? You know, to help them to find a voice? We would be wanting people to find a voice and other outputs may be to get into work, or something like that, or to, em, to improve health perhaps." (PJ28)

Four respondents noted that raising aspirations was an outcome of social inclusion projects, encouraging people to look beyond their immediate situation.

"it's around providing breaking down the barriers that exist for people in becoming involved either in their community or moving onwards and upwards, having aspirations, seeing some way out of the culture and environment that they're in that puts up barriers to a certain extent for people." (PJ33)

Finally, providing individuals with the skills that they required to become involved in their local community was noted by three respondents.

"A high quality cultural and social life and interaction. The absence of isolation and loneliness, if you like, and the means to overcome those..." (P8)

2.8   A number of issues were raised that related to individual's ability, and the ability of communities of interest, to benefit equally from opportunities that were available, with four respondents making comments (P9, PG21, PJ25, PJ34).

> *"I suppose the key outcomes is to promote equality, reduce reduce kind of poverty, promote a kind of a fairer society and ensure that everybody has the possibility to fulfil their ambitions in life and if people have got goals, then it should be as easy for them to fulfil these goals and grasp opportunities as what it is for anybody else in society. So I suppose that's what the each and every project is probably about and it doesn't matter if it's an employment generating project or a, you know, a kind of active citizenship type initiative like our own. The principles I think are very much the same. It's about, you know, creating a form of equality throughout the community." (PJ25)*

One respondent saw the key outcome of social inclusion projects being the promotion of equality and the promotion of a fairer society. Freedom from discrimination was seen as an important social inclusion goal, with one respondent noting that access to a job and housing was not sufficient to tackle exclusion amongst communities suffering discrimination (PG21).

> *"...a lot of people I've worked with over the years have said if you get somebody a job and a decent house, a lot of the other stuff will fall into place. Sometimes I do think that I don't think that's relevant to BME [black and minority ethnic] communities because of diversity, cultural difference, racism, racial harassment, racial discrimination whatever they're suffering in terms of their disadvantage." (PG21)*

A final respondent highlighting the barriers to accessing employment faced by disabled people (PJ34).

One respondent refered to equality of outcome (P9):

> *"So I think the social inclusion strategy does articulate the stages of inclusion. I mean, it also requires things like equal opportunities to be built in. Quite interested in that term because quite often organisations stop at equality of access and I think if we're really serious about that subject, equality of outcome is a far more relevant term. Yes, we can provide 30,000 modern apprenticeships which are accessible to the ethnic minority groupings in Scotland. What's far more relevant is that all the 30,000 that are delivered – proportion of them in keeping with the proportion of ethnic minority groups is achieved. So it's equality of outcome rather than the quality of access that's actually quite important." (P9)*

2.9   Empowerment

2.10   Twelve respondents talked in terms of empowerment; building individuals and communities capacity in order that they could effectively exercise their rights.

2.11   Four respondents said that individual's needed the confidence to express their opinions and exercise their rights (F6, PG20, PG18, PJ28). Particular instances of individuals

requiring confidence building were cited around parenting and contacting services for support.

> *"I would say that the outcomes that people are generally after is to I would think, to build, to feel that individual's are in a stronger position, are more confident and stronger position to get what is rightfully theirs perhaps? You know, to help them to find a voice?" (PJ28)*

2.12   Eight respondents observed that communities needed confidence to work with professionals to get what the community actually wants, and to tackle and question their own situation (P8, P11, P14, P15, PG21, PG22, PJ29, PJ33).

> *"...what we can say we are doing at the present moment is raising awareness of some of the issues that are around at the present moment, and hopefully enabling the communities to then go along to other agencies and get funding or support at a local level, that helps them to function and develop their role within their communities..." (P11)*

One respondent referred for the need for communities to participate in building knowledge about the local community (PJ33), and two respondents highlighted the need for communities' capacity and learning to become "self-generating" (PJ29, PJ33).

> *"...the key thing is the is about increasing the capacity of the community would be a key thing and there might be different aspects of that. Because I work within education, the key thing about increasing the community capacity to become involved in learning, to benefit from learning, to create new learning opportunities. So it's about creating the social capacity of a community, which allows them to generate and self generate, rather than people coming in from outside and actually providing that." (PJ29)*

Finally, one respondent mentioned the need for capacity building to allow communities to access funding (P11).

2.13   Improved Services

2.14   Five respondents noted that an outcome of social inclusion projects was to increase ease of access to local services, including engaging with people who would not otherwise engage with local services, and individuals having the confidence to use services (P12, PG16, PG18, PG20, PJ32).

> *"I would say access to services is probably a key one or confidence to use services and more accessible services." (PG20)*

2.15   Referring back to social inclusion as an approach to work, eight respondents identified

new ways of working that social inclusion, particularly social inclusion partnerships had stimulated. Four respondents thought that the geographical base of SIPs allowed a knowledge base of an area over time to be built up and allowed services to concentrate on a community (E3, P9, PJ22,PJ32),

> *"I would have said probably primarily of building up a detailed knowledge of a locality over time along certain kind of key parameters, i.e. health and voluntary groups or whatever and that I mean, I see the main benefit coming off that is it allows you to kind of map it and monitor it over time and allows you to build well, if you like, I mean, it's hard to use, it's as detailed sometimes as you're going to get of an area as people can change over time." (E3)*

One of these respondents highlighted the geographical concentration of poverty (P9).

> *"I do believe totally in the geographical approach to the issue. Simple reason long experience has told me this where we have concentrations of exclusion in community terms in areas, then it is far, far more difficult to unlock the problem. It's more difficult where crime is perhaps the norm, where fiddling the dole is perhaps the norm, where poor housing conditions is the norm, where low expectations is the norm, where high unemployment levels are the norm, where truancy is the norm. In a community, those concentrations are actually part of what used to be called the downward spiral these factors reinforce each other. If that is what you know, that's all you expect. And I think the need to attack a geographical concentration is quite clear in my view, you know, where there are big concentrations of the problem and I think the social inclusion partnerships area based partnerships are good examples in that way the concentration takes place need something other than the norm to unlock that problem." (P9)*

The Partnership approach allowed links to be created between different services, and allowed services to work in partnership with local communities to ensure that work was "done 'with' not 'to'" local communities. (E1) Another respondent noted that the approach allowed her to link with other organisations:

> *"I think – what you do find, you know, is that the Social Inclusion Partnership agenda in terms of themes and measures which they identify are things like building community capacity, increasing self esteem and self confidence – what you do find is that agenda will sit very nicely on almost with overlaps, you know, on every other agenda of organisations within the areas, you know. So it allows us as a project to link with social work, to link with education, to link with NRD, to link with community based groups, you know, because you can always find an overlap in your agenda" (PJ22).*

2.16   One funder observed that part of her work was to ensure that the funding that she distributed had a strategic fit with other government priorities in order to ensure that there was no duplication of funding. In the appraisal process for funding applications, one of the criteria the applications had to meet was strategic integration (F4).

2.17   Some cautionary notes were sounded with one respondent noting that SIPs were dealing with a "myriad" of different issues, and that they had to be realistic about what they could

achieve.

> "I think that people would say that what they are trying to do is to actually respond to that myriad of issues, that either are defined by social inclusion as a very general term, or which … the catch-all of issues which affect the local community, but I think that when you come down to it, in terms of a project or a programme that only lasts for five years, you then have to be clear you can only deal with those to a certain extent, and I think that's one of the issues in terms of outcomes that people are having, that are quite difficult to quantify is how much of this can we actually deal with? And being realistic about agencies' expectations and about local population expectations." (PG17)

One respondent articulated that services had to be able to deal with 'organised chaos', that is encouraging individuals to put demands on the system, and the system had to be able to respond to this (P13). One respondent also said that the expectations on social inclusion partnerships were huge, and the most that social inclusion partnerships could reasonably be expected to do was to know their area, provide evidence of research and contact building, and use partnership working to come up with unique approaches, in order to 'add value' (P10).

> "The idea that social inclusion partnerships can deliver on social inclusion nobody really in their right mind… [they laugh] can say that. So once you put that to one side and say that issues of social inclusion and exclusion are complicated micro and macro, global as well. So all I think you look to the Partnerships to do is to know their area, to give evidence that they have undertaken the kind of research and contact building and dialogue that can convince others that they know their area, and through a partnership approach, which we do value, to actually come up with unique approaches, plans that are relevant to areas that they work with, which to use the parlance 'add value' over and above what everyone else is." (P10)

2.18   Improved circumstances

2.19   A number of other potential outcomes were mentioned by five respondents that referred to improved circumstances such as improved housing and environment, freedom from crime and issues relating to benefits and debt (F5, P7, P8, P10, PG16).

> "I think the key outcomes are to address conditions of marginalisation, conditions of of that result in a quality of life and a standard of living and a command over resources to achieve that standard of living which is below a norm that society would deem to be acceptable. So there should be everything from improved incomes both from either from earned income or from transfer payments or pensions or benefits, freedom from debt or not freedom from debt manageable debt freedom from high interest debt and practices that go with that such as loan sharks and so on." (P8)

> "I think the key object should be to reduce poverty and social exclusion. Em, that should be their over-arching aim and objective" (P7)

One respondent noted the long term nature of poverty:

"I noticed that the areas – the priority areas that I was looking at that were first declared in 1978, I noticed from the regeneration press there are still areas where there are new initiatives going on to try and deal with the problems which have been around ever since. So I don't think – I think the realities of what we – what we've been able to achieve are depressingly – too often, depressingly difficult."
(P8)

One respondent highlighted psychological improvements:

"You know, we came to the conclusion that, em, our therapeutic work was absolutely essential in helping people to actually overcome some of the issues that they have within themselves. It's quite uncomfortable, you know Lesley, some of this notion, because I personally would be coming from a socialist perspective, so I have tended to look at the structures of society, and the iniquity of that, rather than the individual's situation. So you look at external change, and somehow or other that will help the individual. But, eh, my experience there is showing that in the [name of local authority area] situation, what's fascinating there is that the community facilities, transport, shopping, the quality of housing, the access to the town centre, the access to jobs... is very, very good. It's not a community that is suffering peripheral estate, massive, street upon street, ingrained, long-standing problems. And yet despite all of the structural things, and opportunities around, you've still got this hard core." (P10)

3.0 Difficulties of quantifying outcomes

3.1   *Question: Can an individual's quality of life be measured? Can improvements to people's quality of life be measured in the context of social inclusion projects?*

Table A11: Difficulties of quantifying the outcomes of social inclusion projects

Theme	Sub-theme	Eval.	Funders	Policy	Prog.	Project	Total
Difficult issues to quantify	Areas of difficulty	1		4	2	2	9
	Not difficult	1		2		2	5
Methodology	Quantifying and interpreting opinions	2		2	1		5
	Timescales			1	2	1	4
	Complexity				1	2	3

3.2 Difficult issues to quantify

3.3 Not difficult

Most of the respondents noted that there were difficult issues around quantifying the issues they had raised, with only five respondents saying that they had not encountered any notable difficulties that had prevented them being able to quality issues (E2, P10, P14, PJ27, PJ34).

" Everything has got its problem about quantifying it. It's just really a matter of having a will to do it, and having an idea about what it is you are trying to do. It's more basic I think, if you are clear about where you are trying to go with something, and you just go with that, I mean, that's how my approach would be. You might not be right, but just go with that. You build in the quantitative and qualitative questions, and approach, it's not that difficult. It's more about a commitment to doing it, and then learning from it. So, em, I don't know, maybe culturally we stand off from some of that kind of stuff. We do maybe tend to do

things, rather than thing about things more. But, you know, the methods are tried and tested, we know they are there, so just adapt them." (P10)

One respondent noted that many issues were possible to quantify:

"Well, most of the ones I've mentioned, it's possible – you know, income, unemployment, educational attainment – most of health but not all of health – an element of, you know, psychological health which is more difficult to get at. I mean, we looked at, em, indicators like, em, mental, em, mental illness in particular populations and suicide rates of particular groups. Em, you know, indicators of that sort might indeed have indicated something but, em, either the figures weren't reliable enough or there weren't regular series on an annual basis or even bi-annual, so, em, you know, inevitably we shied away from using those indicators. Em, so measurability, regularity and reliability were all factors which you have to take into account if you're attempting to assess policy over a period of years." (P14)

Respondents identified a number of areas where measurement is relatively straightforward, and contrasted this with the more intangible issues.

Table A12: Measurable and difficult to measure outputs and outcomes

Measurable outputs/outcomes	Difficult to measure outputs/outcomes
• People accessing jobs/unemployment levels (P14,P15) • People accessing training (PG16) • People accessing services (E1) • Educational attainment (P14) • Income levels (P14)	• Impact of awareness raising (P7) • Equality (PJ25) • Individual experience/ Distance travelled (PJ24, PJ25, PG16) • Wellbeing (E1, P14)) • Poverty of opportunity (E1) • Changes to the social fabric of the community (E1) • Attitude (P9) • Prosperity (P9) • Benefits of corporate social responsibility initiatives (P9)

3.4   Difficulties (P7, P9, P14, P15, PG16, PG21, PJ24, PJ25)

One respondent noted that awareness raising about poverty was an important part of the work of his organisation, but that this work was very difficult to measure, other than by large scale surveys.   As proxies they used the number of media enquiries, stories in the press and letters from the public regarding poverty issues (P7).

"I think it is a very difficult one and the only way that we do have is the kind of qualitative type approach to membership surveys, em, just to an extent measuring how often you do manage to get a story in the media or the media contacts us for a response. Because you only get asked if people know us. We're tending to find that, you know, one, if we are successful on one issue we get a number of media follow ups on other issues, so suddenly your profile is raised, people notice you are there and you get a string of phone calls. But the only way we can do it is by measuring the number of enquiries we get from the media on poverty related subjects and then measuring obviously how often that results in an actual outcome in terms of a story or inclusion in a radio or TV broadcast. So we keep a

cuttings file, we keep a record of the number of enquiries we get from the media."
(P7)

3.5   One responded questioned whether you could actually measure equality, other than ensuring that projects on the ground were offering opportunities and resources (PJ25).

> *"Can you measure equality? Everybody will have different views and opinions whether they've got an equal kind of opportunity or right or whatever within society. And I don't know how you would kind of measure that. I think a lot of it's to do with ensuring that the projects that are on the ground are kind of offering the opportunities, the facilities, resources are there for folk and hope that people are able to come forward and take up some of these chances. But that's not always the case. Some people find it a bit more difficult to get involved in things within their area than others. I'm not really sure if you can measure equality. If you can, I'd like to know how." (PJ25)*

3.6   The issue of quantifying individual experiences of social inclusion projects garnered a number of responses. One respondent said made the distinction between measuring outputs and outcomes: (PG16).

> *"That's incredibly difficult to quantify. Em, measuring outputs in terms of 'has this person gone on a training course on using computers?' or 'have they now got access to childcare where they didn't before?', measuring that is easy. Measuring outcomes is a very difficult thing, and often quite difficult to get at."*
> *(PG16)*

Another mentioned anecdotal comments from residents about feeling more safe as a result of environmental improvements (PJ24).

3.7   Attitude was identified as difficult to quantify, and it was thought that the census could not cover all the issues that were important to people . Prosperity was also noted as difficult to measure. GDP was used as a proxy for prosperity, but it was observed that GDP is a mixture of personal income and productivity, so GDP could grow while personal incomes were remaining static, therefore it was really necessary to actually measure personal incomes. This respondent also noted the increasing interest of businesses in measuring the impact of corporate social responsibility initiatives (P9).

3.8   Limitations were also idenitfied to the numerical indicators noted in the table. For example, one respondent said that within the issue of employment there were deeper issues of aspirations, relationship of work to the domestic situation, quality of the job and the health and safety implications of the job (P15).

> *"you can you can also look at income from employment relatively easily but what's what's less easy to quantify is whether it, the aspirational bits of the, the qualitative bits of it it's - it's less easy to take account of, you know I mean, you can say what someone that someone's working and what they earn but it's harder to, to relate that to what their domestic circumstances are and what they*

require to earn to have a living wage and the like" (P15)

One respondent noted the difficulties of engaging communities in order to ensure that projects are working toward the outcomes that are important to the community:

> *"So I think what are the key outcomes? We've missed the boat on Social Inclusion Partnerships and we need to re-think if there's another funding programme coming on board around this issues, it needs to be about – please, please, please give SIPs time, even if it's 3 or 4 months, to sort of prime – prime of funding just to discuss with communities what they see the outcomes would be before you submit the bid. Don't second guess, cos that's disempowering to second guess what you think as a white, able-bodied male professional, you're going to get from a social inclusion partnership. I think a lot of them have been awry. That's the sense when I go to a lot of SIP networking events. That a lot of the – the outputs are off – they're askew. I mean, it's good the Executive regeneration department definitely does offer you an opportunity for you to renegotiate your output and they seem willing to do that and that's unusual, I think, in regeneration schemes." (PG21)*

One funder remarked that social inclusion had become a buzz word:

> *"Oh yeah, I'd say most of them were difficult. Em, even if we go back to the beginning, and what you were saying about some of your definitions and you source some of them and reference the sources and most of them are absolutely difficult to quantify. The other difficulty is that people seem to say it's about social inclusion now, so if someone said that has now become the buzz word and so I see it on applications coming in. Just rammed into the text. Sustainable development, social inclusion, sustainable development. And if you asked them, actually asked someone the questions that you are asking me yeah, everyone struggles with it. I certainly do." (F5)*

3.9   In summary, respondents highlighted a number of outputs that could readily be translated into numbers, but found it more difficult to find measures for the quality of the experience that participants had and the impacts that participation had on individual and community life.

3.10   Methodological difficulties

3.11   A number of methodological difficulties were highlighted.

3.12   Six respondents highlighted the difficulties of measuring any kind of information that is based on individual's opinions, namely how you phrase these questions and what you use as proxies (E1, E3, P13, P14, PG18, PJ24). One respondent remarked that there were other programmes that also impacted on the life of residents of social inclusion partnerships, for example, New Deal (E1).

> *"So I think there are many, many different aspects of life, I suppose, and change in an experience that it would be difficult to quantify, but even more difficult is to relate that to the social inclusion programme, because it might be that people's lives are changing for some other reason. New Deal could change the lives of x*

> *number of people in a targeted community, now that's maybe not something that the SIP could achieve, but you are still measuring change in people's life. So I think you have got to look at it in that sense too." (E1)*

One respondent opined that there are always a number of assumptions underpinning social science research which are not always made explicit (E3). He also expressed the opinion that the real issue is interpretation; any topic can be quantified, it is the assumptions underpinning it and the interpretation of it that is important.

> *"there's always difficulties in quantification because any measure you take, certainly in the social sciences, whether it be in kind of poverty or housing, there's always it always rolls on the back of a number of assumptions which are very rarely kind of stated and the prime example would be crime." (E3)*

He noted difficulties of interpreting results:

> *"Because how do you kind of interpret, for example, 50% saying I feel, I don't know, more confidence and then maybe doing that a year later and being 55%. What exactly – I mean, in the context of a SIP framework – I mean, I'm actually unsure what that would tell you. Although there are reasonable kind of levels confidence – ha ha ha – confidence in an area but, I mean, it would be difficult to know what that would tell you and what you would link, what kind of factors you would link that to and the absence of, for example, large scale redundancies or anything or kind of large – or identifiable constructural change." (E3)*

One respondent noted the difficulty of turning anecdotes into evidence (PJ24).

3.13   Timescales were highlighted by four respondents as presenting a problem in measuring the impact of social inclusion projects (P8, PG17, PG20, PJ33). One issue raised was the long term nature of the impact, which would not be felt until long after the end of the SIP process (PG17). One respondent noted that the impact on certain health issues would not be felt until 20 or 30 years time (PJ33).

> *"we'll set short, medium and long term indicators so where we're aiming to cooking skills again aiming to increase knowledge of healthy eating on a budget, your objective would be to provide participatory classes at a local level and the outcome would be increased knowledge and improved diet. But you almost have to set proxy indicators because ultimately if parents are improving their diet and the diet of their children, heart disease, cancer some cancers, 20, 30 years down the line should reduce." (PJ33)*

One respondent who was working with young people articulated that timescales were an issue as the young people were changing as they grew up (PG20). Finally, one respondent noted that the areas of deprivation he had been working with in 1978 were all still areas of deprivation today (P8).

> *"I noticed that the areas the priority areas that I was looking at that were first declared Investor in 1978, I noticed from the regeneration press there are still areas where there are new initiatives going on to try and deal with the problems*

which have been around ever since." (P8)

3.14 Complexity

3.15 Three respondents noted issues to do with the complexity of measurement (PG21, PJ?, PJ25) One respondent highlighted the complexity of the issues:

> *"If you take, say, the issue of racial harassment, we have new laws which created that as a separate criminal offence now and there's been a lot of emphasis put as a key outcome, there's been an increased reporting of racial harassment. Now, when we're talking about, that's great. More people are reporting it but actually what we should be looking at is whether they feel the law is working to their advantage and whether people have been sent to prison for this or have been fined for this or whether people are receiving follow-up and support once they've reported that and generally that isn't taking place. But because we define this whole issue round reporting of racial incidents, we want to see increases in that. The outcome becomes rather meaningless because actually the community isn't – you know, once they've reported it, that's fine but it's about what's happened once they've reported it." (PG21)*

One respondent noted the difficulties of multiple funding streams:

> *"I'm in the process of trying to develop a monitoring and evaluation framework. So it's a shame you weren't a bit further on. [LAUGHTER] Which is very, very hard because the project gets funded from the SIP, from the housing revenue account, from ESF, from ERDF, from Scottish Enterprise Forth Valley, and from New Deal. So all of these places have different monitoring and evaluation requirements so I'm trying to develop something that will satisfy everybody but, you know, we just have to collect things in one way."*

One respondent noted that you can only work with samples:

> *"You can only work with the samples of people rather than the whole community and getting a kind of general view of how positive some of these outcomes have been. That's a difficult one. I suppose you can see things happening in the community broadly and say, yeah, things are improving, things are getting better but it's difficult to judge how that is being experienced by individuals within their home or whatever" (PJ25)*

4.0 **Differences between measuring poverty, social exclusion and social inclusion**

4.1 *Question: What are the differences between measuring poverty, social exclusion and social inclusion?*

4.2 **Definitions**

Table A13: Differences between measuring poverty, social exclusion and social inclusion

Theme	Sub-theme	Eval	Funders	Policy	Prog	Project	Total
Quantifying poverty	Easier to measure than exclusion	2	1	3	3	3	12
	Relationship of poverty to income/resources	3	1	1	2	6	13
Relationship between poverty, social inclusion and social exclusion	Relationship of poverty to inclusion and exclusion	2	1	7	5	8	23
	Relationship of inclusion to exclusion	2	1	1	2	6	12
Other issues	Subjectivity of poverty and inclusion	1		1	2	5	9
	Other issues			5		1	6

4.3 **Quantifying poverty**

4.4 Twelve respondents said that poverty was easier to measure than inclusion/exclusion (E1, E2, F5, P7, P14, P15, PG16, PG18, PG20, PJ22, PJ28, PJ29). It was noted that poverty is more quantifiable than inclusion/exclusion (E1, F5, P7), and it is easier to provide objective standards or benchmarks for poverty (PJ22).

> *"I think a lot of poverty is seen as something that is much more quantifiable in terms of people seem to measure it as a GDP or something like that. You only earn so many per cent of whatever the mean wage is for a male in the country. So poverty I think sometimes always seen as something that much more quantifiable." (F5)*

> *"Right, em, it's back to the outputs and the outcomes again. Poverty, if you have a family with two small children and you can see that the house is not well heated, or there doesn't seem to be enough food in the household, or a baby isn't putting enough weight on, things which are quite concrete things. Poverty, we tend to measure poverty in terms of how much money is available to a household. Social exclusion and inclusion is more about, it's more about cultural things." (PG16)*

One respondent observed that there was more reliable data available for income poverty (PJ30). Another respondent noted that the widespread nature of social inclusion made it harder to measure accurately (PG18). One further respondent said that poverty itself was not straightforward to measure if we looked at relative, rather than absolute poverty (P15).

> *" I'm not sure measuring poverty is all that straightforward either. I mean, I think it's more straightforward because arguably, you know, it's a discreet set of indicators that you're looking at but I think measuring poverty in terms of absolutes is actually quite meaningless. I mean, I think you could have virtual definitions of absolute and relative poverty and I'm not sure that people have come up with a way particularly helpful in measuring relative poverty and I think that's very important. .... So I think poverty's actually is is relatively difficult to measure and I and I think it's the qualitative bits round it that are difficult." (PG20)*

4.5   Twelve respondents commented on the links between poverty and income (E1, E2, E3, F5, P9, PG20, PG21, PJ22, PJ26, PJ31, PJ32, PJ34). Four respondents stated that income was the main aspect of poverty (F5, P9, PJ31, PJ32).

> *"Money is your key issue, em, definitely. Money is the biggest factor, but it can also be depression, health as well, because if you have poor health you can't work. You know, so there will be other factors, but I think the bottom line is money." (PJ31)*

> *"I think poverty ... I think we are more interested in the whole social inclusion stroke social justice arena, because it allows us to look far more at the whole issue of.. I suppose that whole quality of life, and how do we pull everything together to see that there's been an impact made upon the area as a whole, rather than, perhaps, just certain selected individuals. I think for us, if we just look to poverty, which we would merely be looking at people's monetary deficiencies"* (PG17)

The other eight noting that poverty could be interpreted as wider than just income (E1, E2, E3, PG20, PG21, PJ22, PJ26, PJ34).

Other issues that were raised:

- An area where individuals were poor, but where community spirit meant that the social and emotional life of individuals was strong (PJ22);
- Poverty can be viewed not just as income disadvantage but also social, economic or physical disadvantage (E1);
- Increasingly talking about other aspects of poverty such as poverty of experience, or fuel poverty (PG21);
- Poverty is about resources, for example households with telephone, other basic consumables (E3);
- Poverty is about freedom from fear and ability to survive shocks (E2).

One respondent noted that poverty was not always recognised by the individuals experiencing it:

> *"Measuring poverty – when I worked in the urban programme project, that was under the last government, and the link between poverty and health was not recognised or exclusively recognised, so you weren't allowed to use that word. And then when the Green Paper and the White Paper on public health – working towards a healthier Scotland came out – that recognised – I think it does use the word poverty and it was almost like this is – this is great, you know, we can now actually – we can use this word. But I think more and more now, I mean, it's sort*

of – it's a relative poverty and I think that it maybe quite – it can be a term that people will find offensive. Some of the people we're working with will not like to recognise themselves living in poverty so I'd begin to – we probably use social inclusion because we've been told, you know, you don't say social exclusion - social inclusion's fine, you know. That's what we are working towards – social inclusion – to combat social exclusion, if you like." (PJ33)

4.6   Relationship of poverty to inclusion and exclusion

4.7   23 respondents commented on the relationship between poverty and inclusion/exclusion (E1, E3, F6, P7, P8, P9, P10, P12, P13, P14, PG16, PG17, PG19, PG20, PG21, PJ23, PJ24, PJ25, PJ26, PJ27, PJ28, PJ33, PJ34).

4.8   *Areas of similarity*

Ten of the respondents noted that there was a close relationship between poverty and inclusion/exclusion (F6, P7, P8, P9, P10, P12, PG19, PJ24, PJ25, PJ34). One respondent said that the terms were used inter-changeably (P7).

> *"Well, it's not been helped by the inter-changability of the terms being used by the Executive and others. And I'm probably as guilty as anybody else of sometimes using the words social inclusion or social exclusion actually in a poverty related situation. So, because social exclusion does include poverty, it's not, and even some of the other areas of exclusion, like racism, you know, exclusion because you are disabled, or a woman or whatever, all tend to have a poverty relationship, so that people are also more likely to be living in poverty." (P7)*

One respondent opined that he thought poverty was as wide a term as social exclusion (P8):

> *"I would make my definition of poverty is as wide as social exclusion so I wouldn't I wouldn't make a distinction there. The although I am aware that certainly the Scottish Executive have used have used a concept of poverty which is much more to do with financial exclusion." (P8)*

Another thought that poverty and social inclusion the same thing because you can't participate if you are poor (PJ24). Two further respondents thought there was not much difference between the terms because poverty is more than just income (PG19, PJ25), with one further respondent (P12) noting that all three terms were grouped around the same issues:

> *"I think that they're all grouped around the same issue. It's about lack of opportunity, lack of resources, possible limited skills that enable people to then get resources or get opportunities that will make a difference to their day to day life." (p12)*

A further respondent highlighted the similarities between social exclusion and relative

poverty (PJ34). One respondent noted that they were similar but recognised other, non-monetary, forms of exclusion (P9), and another respondent remarked on the use of different terms was not helpful, but thought that poverty and social exclusion were synonymous (P10). A final respondent noted the relationship of poverty to the labour market (F6), noting that there were people in work who would still be experiencing poverty.

> *"I think crudely, one has to suggest that in a capitalist mixed economy that income is actually quite important. Money might not solve all of the exclusion problems. Race excludes people. But money goes an awful long way to help the inclusion process to take place. So we would have to focus on that. We understand there are dimensions to exclusions but I think work equals income equals choice equals consumerism equals the capitalist market." (P9)*

4.9   Areas of overlap

4.10   Two respondents highlighted the circular nature of exclusion and poverty (P13, PJ27), with a lack of money hindering your ability to participate, and not being able to participate, for example in the job market, leading to exclusion.

> *"Well, I know we have this debate all the time and it's like, you know, if I was going to there, I wouldn't start from here. Is poverty a result of social exclusion? Do you eradicate poverty by increasing the inclusion elements in that? Probably not. But poverty can be a barrier to actual participation so it really there's a number of dimensions there" (P13)*

A further respondent raised concern that social inclusion was a "catch-all" term, that encompassed poverty but did not emphasise it (PG21).

4.11   Areas of difference

4.12   Five respondents raised issues which they felt made social inclusion quite different from poverty. One respondent noted that the reasons for exclusion were cultural rather than financial (PG16):

> *"Social exclusion and inclusion is more about, it's more about cultural things. Yes, the amount of money is important, and no doubt about it, if you don't have a job, that's one big exclusion, reason for exclusion. But it's not the only reason. People may be excluded because they are a different colour, or then their language at home is a different language, they don't feel they have the skills. They may feel that they don't have skills in computing, which many, very routine jobs ask for now in the adverts. So social exclusion and inclusion is a lot more difficult to tie down than poverty." (PG16).*

Another respondent felt that social inclusion was more about psychological issues than

resources (E3) and a third respondent felt individuals could be excluded for reasons other than poverty such as lack of access (PJ26). A fourth respondent expressed the opinion that social inclusion/exclusion is about a process, rather than a measurement (E1):

> "I think poverty is one that can be measured on a quantitative level. So I mean a measure which tries to gauge someone's economic position in life, or someone's physical position they may be living in a house, or a flat or maybe in a family where both parents are working, I think that's slightly different from trying to measure exclusion or inclusion, because that is a process, and exclusion or inclusion is not something that you could quantify at one point in time. It's about people's lives and how they change, eh, and whether or not people's households, people, communities either moving into forms of exclusion or moving out of exclusion into inclusion." (E1)

One respondent said that the clients of her project were excluded but not necessarily poor:

> "[Name of organisation] can very often help families who don't have any financial problems, but may very well be socially excluded. Or may be depressed, or suffering from a disability, or running away from a violent relationship, but that person could have absolutely no financial problems. So we would still be able to help that person." (PJ23)

> "I think there are huge differences between looking at people's ability to take part and have that confidence to take part, and have that ability to.. to work with agencies, and I think the social inclusion debate starts you thinking about that very early on. Where I think with the poverty debate it becomes a measurement of moving people from here to there, not necessarily people's perception of whether they've moved." (PG17)

4.13   Several areas of exclusion were highlighted that did not relate to resources:

4.14   Non-financial reasons for exclusion
- Racism (P9, P14, PG16, PG21, PJ34)
- Disability/accessing services for disabled people (F6, P7, P9, P14, PG20)
- Gender/sexism (P7, P9, PG21)
- Language (PG16)
- Lack of skills eg IT (PG16)
- Self-exclusion (PJ28)

4.15   Three respondents referred to the difficulties of devising indicators for some of these issues, namely racism and accessing services (P7, P14, PG21).

> "Social exclusion - although poverty, as I've said is one of the the key indicators of other forms of exclusion or one of the key causes of other problems of exclusion, it obviously doesn't cover every form of involuntary exclusion, em, so you have to devise what you can to devise measurements for those other forms of exclusion, and you know, health and education can be among them but so can racism, em, you know, sort of social attitudes, em, towards people with disability so you start thinking poverty as a main indicator and there are a cluster of

indicators which are around poverty which I think are comparable, em, but then, you know, the further you go, you've got to look at indicators which apply to more special cases and that's where there are more difficulties around these. I mean, there's no indicator, as far as I know, for exclusion, you know, caused by race for example. You'd expect what you do then is sort of come back to the other indicators and say well, are those indicators particularly associated, have a particularly high incidence of people of a particular racial background or ethnic background." (P14)

One respondent noted with reference to disability

"All the training programmes – all the government funded ones – are targeted on Jobseekers Allowance. And the people on disability benefits are excluded and many of them were in a position of creating jobs could be helped into a job if we sort out the benefits issue and what other reasons or barriers there are to them getting into the labour market. And we're not – I think one of the frustrations of a lot of agencies is we're not really able to tackle that issue at the moment because of the benefits system and the way government training schemes just look at people on Jobseekers Allowance. So that's a serious issue and I suppose if there's one issue about social exclusion or inclusion in Glasgow or West of Scotland at the moment, that would be it." (F6)

A final respondent noted that individuals can be excluded due to poverty but still have good social networks which afford them a degree of participation in society (PJ23).

"I think it just goes back to the way that we monitor and evaluate, the fact that we are having, we're making a difference. We are measuring the kind of difference that the volunteer makes to that family. And it is more about looking at individual families. Because, [name of organisation] can very often help families who don't have any financial problems, but may very well be socially excluded. Or may be depressed, or suffering from a disability, or running away from a violent relationship, but that person could have absolutely no financial problems." (PJ23)

4.16   Relationship of inclusion to exclusion

4.17   Of the twelve respondents (E1, E3, F4, P8, PG16, PG17, PG18, PJ25, PJ27, PJ29, PJ30, PJ33, PJ34) who commented on the relationship between social exclusion and social inclusion seven saw them as 'two sides of the same coin' (E3, P8, PG17, PG18, PJ29, PJ30, PJ33).

"I'm not convinced there's a huge difference between your exclusion and inclusion, I think they are just two sides.. for me they're two sides to the same coin." (PG17)

"Well, you can't really measure exclusion unless you have some sort of norm of what it is to be socially included, so if you are to be clear what it is to be excluded it's important to be able to measure inclusion. It should be the obverse of exclusion." (P14)

One respondent noted how this fed into measurement:

"I mean, exclusion to me is not being included – ha ha ha – so it is – you know, it's two sides of the same coin and you would seek to measure – yes, you could measure – you could measure the positive but I actually tend to focus on the negative. Not – not that I'm a negative person – [LAUGHTER] because if that is the problem you're trying to – you're trying to identify, it' people who're not – who are experiencing poverty as opposed to people who are not in poverty. You know, you're trying to measure the problem rather than those who don't experience the problem " (P8)

Two further respondents thought there was little difference between them, seeing it just as a change of term (F4, PJ25). One respondent thought that the relationship between the two was a 'grey area', noting that inclusion was a process (E1). Only three respondents thought there was a difference between the two. One of these respondents opined that there was an intrinsic difference between the two concepts, with inclusion being something that is actively done, where as exclusion is a state of being (PJ27).

"I think they're intrinsically different. Social inclusion, certainly in terms of this project, we're actually here to include members of the society into the project and regenerate the community and hopefully enable people to not feel excluded in various parts of their life. Social exclusion is when people, as a result of other people not giving them opportunities to be included, is something that they actually are." (PJ27)

The second respondent mentioned that they had a framework for measuring exclusion, but that a low score on this grid did not necessarily signify inclusion (PJ34).

The third respondent commented on the differences between measuring inclusion and exclusion:

"it's back to the absence of evidence is not evidence of absence. Em, to say somebody is included in society, it may be that they go to a certain church or a mosque or they shop in a certain supermarket, or they live in a certain area or they have a car, or they have a certain salary. Exclusion, by its very nature, the non-appearance of something is altogether more tricky." (PG16)

4.18 Subjectivity

4.19 Nine respondents highlighted issues of the subjectivity of social inclusion/exclusion and poverty (E3, P14, PG16, PG18, PJ22, PJ27, PJ29, PJ30, PJ31). Six respondents remarked that inclusion was a subjective state, a state of mind (E3, PG16, PG18, PJ22, PJ29, PJ30).

"I think your definition of poverty, from what I understand, is a definition of relative poverty as opposed to absolute poverty and I suppose that's I think relatively easy to define in some objective terms. Whereas I think social exclusion and social inclusion are much more difficult to define because it's probably more important

that the views of those who are regarded to be included or excluded are taken into account. So there's a personal dimension and there's a subjective dimension to definitions about inclusion and exclusion which is probably more difficult to quantify than a definition of poverty." (PJ29)

A further two respondents noted that poverty was also subjective (PJ27, PJ31). One respondent said that many of the young people he worked with would be regarded as living in poverty, but many of them were happy with their lifestyle (PJ31).

"Em, poverty is a ... it definitely is visible, and it definitely exists. But a lot of people are, this is what we have got to remember, a lot of young people are quite happy the way they are being excluded. A lot of young people that I've come across are quite happy the way they are, you know, they're quite happy not having a job, em, playing their playstation, you know, in the house on their own." (PJ31)

Two respondent opined that there was a need for a norm, or a benchmark against which individuals experience could be measured (P14, PG18).

"Yes, but I mean, if you, em, take a particular sort of population em, and you had a concept of, em, what the normal life in that population is, that they eat meat twice a week, and have access to a cinema, and take their kids to the seaside or whatever the norm is in that community, em, (clears throat), you can't measure exclusion from those norms unless you have a conscious hold on what the norms are." (P14)

One respondent thought it could be measured in part (PG16):

"Can social inclusion be measured? In parts yes. You can very sensibly go along the lines of, again we are talking about jobs and money and have you got access to childcare, and is your standard of living appropriate. Some of the other issues, again about what might be described as soft indicators, people have a feel about themselves, how they feel about what they do, or where they live. These are by their very nature, very subjective, and very difficult to measure, if you like, because we, all of us, have different opinions on all sorts of things. So, a tricky one, very tricky." (PG16)

4.20   Issues of Measurement

4.21   Five other responses were given regarding measurement issues (P7, P9, P10, P11, P13, PJ22)

One respondent raised concerns about regeneration projects "ghettoising" areas (PJ22).

"But there's always like the sort of concern that in a way you try and regenerate an area and make provision within an area very strong and community life within an area very strong – you almost always – people might ghetto-ise it, you know, in a way, you know. In that you have this input into an area that you regenerate and the area might regenerate, but it still becomes a sort of locked in little area

that isn't really integrated into the whole." (PJ22)

One respondent questioned the use of civic activity as a measurement of social inclusion, and noted that areas such as a decrease in racism were extremely hard to measure. He also highlighted the difficulties of using head counts as a measure e.g. the number of drug users using a drug centre (P7).

> *"I think the way that the Executive have gone about measuring inclusion is by counting heads, in other words it is the reverse of exclusion, but I'm not sure that it is. [they laugh] I'll pick one example, and it exemplifies the difficulties of trying to quantify something that is difficult to quantify. Right, we know that we've got, we know that we had a great increase in problem with hard drug use in Scotland throughout the Eighties and Nineties. We know that there are many more users now than there were, say at the end of the 1970's. But the current measurement for hard drug use in Scotland is the number of people who are using out-patient clinics and are declared addicts. Now the problem with that one is that if you create a service in an area, you automatically increase the number of hard drug users in that area, according to the statistics, rather than actually ... the hard drug users were there before, there's been actually no change. So you will have an apparent increase in hard drug use, as long as the NHS actually devotes money to the services. On the other hand, if it closes down Out-Patient clinics, then you've got a decline in hard drug use when in fact all that has happened is that the service has been withdrawn. So, in trying to quantify it, I think we have picked the wrong measure, but I'm not sure what the right measure is."* (P7)

Another respondent drew attention to what he saw as the government's targeting of social inclusion policies on unemployment, with less emphasis on involvement in the democratic process (P11).

> *"what I see in the evidence that I have to hand is that most of the programmes, most of the social exclusion/inclusion is about trying to find avenues to get people engaged in employment, rather than engaged in looking at the wider democratic process that currently exists, the democratic deficit that exists"* (P11)

Another respondent said that the experience of unemployed people was not always included in measurement (P13).

4.22   A final respondent highlighted the issue of cohesiveness in society, noting that previous research had identified that a cohesive society was more likely to be successful, and thought it important that attempts were made to measure the non-economic ties linking society such as networks of families, business clubs and social capital. He noted that the number of voluntary organisations per head of population had been used as a proxy for this in Scotland (P9).

Another noted:

> *"It is depressing actually, that when you look at an organisation like the Rowntree Foundation, who, let's face it have the best track record in Britain in measuring*

poverty, who do a brilliant annual assessment of it. They've got their own criteria. Why the hell do they not just pick their criteria and work on that. Instead of that, what you've got is those notions, and then you've got different indexes that are around, and then you've got the census type information coming in, so you've got no real consistency across the board about how people are measuring it. So I certainly would have appreciated something like the Rowntree Foundation, they've a great track record. Just buy that and use it as your basic starting point, starter for ten, and then more locally you look at your more detailed understanding, when you bring in your census and other things, and build your picture up around what's really going on." (P10)

5.0 Quality of Life

5.1 *Question: Can an individual's quality of life be measured? Can improvements to people's quality of life be measured in the context of social inclusion projects?*

5.2 Respondents were generally positive about the idea that individual's quality of life could be measured, with twelve respondents saying that quality of life could be measured (E2, E3, F4, F6, P11, P13, PG19, PG21, PJ22, PJ27, PJ32, PJ33). 22 respondents thought it was possible to measure it to some degree (E1, F5, P7, P8, P9, P10, P12, P14, P15, PG16, PG17, PG18, PG20,PJ23, PJ24, PJ25, PJ26,PJ28, PJ29, PJ30, PJ31, PJ34).

"Yeah, I think through qualitative information, certainly the quality of life can be measured absolutely and this is very important" (PJ27)

Table A14: Responses to 'can an individual's quality of life be measured?'

Answer	Eval.	Funders	Policy	Prog.	Project	Occurrences
Yes	2	2	2	2	4	12
Yes with qualifications	1	1	7	3	9	21
No						0

5.3 Respondents answered this question in two distinct ways. The first was a strong feeling that quality of life is a highly subjective term, and changes in quality of life could only be confirmed by the individual concerned. The second view was to identify a number of proxies, for example good health, or adequate housing, which could reasonably be assumed to impact on individual's, and communities', quality of life. These views are examined in more detail below.

Table A15: Themes emerging relating to measurement of quality of life

Theme	Sub-theme	Eval	Funders	Policy	Prog.	Project	Total
Individual's perception	Need to ask individual/use qualitative methods	1		6	4	7	18
	Methods	2	2	2	2	8	16
Proxies	Types of proxy	2	1	5	2	1	11

Theme	Sub-theme	Eval	Funders	Policy	Prog	Project	Total
Community quality of life	Issues relating to community quality of life	1		3	3		7

5.4   Need to ask individual

5.5   18 of the respondents felt that an individual's quality of life could only be defined by the individual themselves (E1, P7, P8, P9, P10, P12, P15, PG16, PG17, PG19, PG20,PJ23, PJ24, PJ25, PJ28, PJ30, PJ31, PJ33).

> *"Well I think it can be measured by asking them about it but I don't know I mean, the thing is definitions of quality of life change significantly between people. You and I might have very different ideas, for example. We might put very different values on how much recreation we have. We might put, you know, huge differences in terms of, you know, what we think is a reasonable income to live on. You might we might value health differently. I mean, there's a whole range of different things. So I think it's hard to do and I think the only way you can do that is actually by speaking to people about it." (P15)*

> *"I think only by the person who's affected. At the end of the day I think whether the person believes that they have a good.. what's my view of what my quality of life that I want, that I aspire to and that I have at the moment is quite different from somebody else's. Because what I make choices about may be quite different, therefore I think when we are talking in a context of social inclusion, that that has to be the perception that that local person had." (PG17)*

For these respondents, quality of life was seen as a subjective issue, a matter of perception that did not necessarily correlated with an individual's material standards of living. Respondents gave examples of areas where the impact on individuals lives could only be explained by individuals themselves, including access to transport, income, feelings of confidence and feelings of isolation.

5.6   Methods

5.7   16 respondents gave one or more examples of methods they used to get feedback on individual's quality of life (E1, E2, F4, F5, P7, P12, PG17, PG18, PJ22, PJ23, PJ25, PJ27, PJ29, PJ32, PJ33, PJ34). One respondent observed that cataloguing the qualifications that an individual has undertaken does not necessarily indicate that their quality of life has improved (PJ22).

5.8   Solicited verbal feedback (PJ22, PJ33)

5.9   Two respondents identified the use of interviews and case studies. One respondent noted that it was often difficult to get respondents to articulate their feelings, and another respondent said that written feedback was sometimes difficult for particular client groups.

"the ways that we would say that we've evidenced people's we've evidenced that our work has changed people's quality of life is very much through that sort of qualitative research. It would be through sort of interviews like this" (PJ22)

One respondent noted that there were different elements to quality of life:

"we're making an analysis of what a person's quality of life is, so that would be looking at, you know, fairly physical things like access to services, type of house they're in, how much income they have and so on. But at the same time, it's around a person's ability to tackle the circumstances or tackle or cope with because sometimes you can't – you can't change people's circumstances, certainly not overnight." (PJ33)

5.10   *Solicited written feedback (E2, F4, P7, P12, PG18, PJ33,PJ34)*

5.11   One organisation articulated the use of feedback forms (PJ33) and six others suggested the use of soft indicators (E2, F4, P7, P12, PG18, PJ34).

"Using these soft indicators that we talked about. I don't know if it can be quantified. That's what we find. We don't have indicators that allows us to effectively quantify that but our previous programme of funding which completed in 1999 identified that as a gap and we're actually finding that quite a number of the organisations we work with are going away and having indicators developed themselves soft indicators which allow them to measure progress in that respect. So we get that in a textual form through the claims, so it's I suppose it's text highlighting how individuals have increased their quality of life." (F4)

5.12   *Other (PJ22, PJ23, PJ32)*

5.13   One organisation has its volunteers keep diaries about their work with individuals needing support (PJ23). This allows them to reflect on how the individuals they are supporting have become more confident.

"The volunteers have regular supervision, and they keep a diary too. So they're asked to look at what they have done on every visit, and just write a wee bit about that on every visit. So that's a monitoring and evaluation tool." (PJ23)

One respondent suggested that observing video evidence of young people interacting could provide a measure of improvement (PJ32). Another noted that they did a lot of work with photographs and videos (PJ22).

5.14   *Unspecified (E1, P7, PG17, PJ25, PJ27, PJ29)*

5.15   Some respondents said that you need to "ask" individuals about improvements in the quality of life, without specifying a method. Three respondents noted that it had to be undertaken using a qualitative methodology (E1, PG17, PJ25, PJ27).

"I think it can in qualitative ways, in other words by asking them what they think about their quality of life. So you can survey people and ask them whether they feel better about themselves, whether they feel more self-confident. And, I think

you can actually then go on to ask them whether that has meant any actual changes in their lives for themselves, in terms of how they use that increased self-confidence." (P7)

One respondent observed that it had to be undertaken by a self-reported method (PJ29).

"I think we can make an attempt to do that and that I think that could be done in a variety of ways through a combination of actually self report measures where people actually will literally report on different factors, different dimensions about whether their quality of life's increased. (PJ29)"

5.16   *Absence of frameworks (F5, PJ25)*

5.17   Two respondents noted the lack of a system that would allow individuals to reflect on how they had changed.

"The difficulty there is that the person that is best placed to measure it is that individual and we don't really have mechanisms or frameworks to allow that to be expressed, either on an individual basis, or in some sort of framework where you can sort of compare. It is so subjective that it is difficult to compare them, and we've got projects in, almost continually saying I understand you have got a rigid framework to work within, and we will tell you how many jobs you'll get and how many people will get training whatever, we'll tell you all that, but our project is about much more than that and you have to be much more innovative or give something a bit more novel to allow us to demonstrate that." (F5)

5.18   Types of proxy

5.19   Six respondents said that they thought quality of life could be assessed through the use of proxy indicators and gave examples of potential proxies (E2, E3, F6, P8, P9, P11, P13, P14, PG16, PG21,).

"I don't know how easily but probably you can but whether or not you'd actually use something some off the shelf thing that somebody else has used elsewhere and to go through the same process here, em, basically, say, asking a number of questions and then ranking them or adding the whole thing together and coming up with a quality of life measurement. Em, you do have those surveys that are published with quality of life, say, in cities where you can put in certain things there. So you could follow something along those lines, I'm sure." (PG18)

"I think there is a range of measures that can be used. As I said the measure about income levels, the measure about the access to transport, access to facilities, access to a range of things such as education provision, whether it be non-vocational or vocational education provision, evening classes, things like that could be measured. There's also a thing about their house and what they live in. What is available within the house, in terms of the, do they have the normal standard living conditions, that a large percentage of the population take for granted." (P11)

"At a superficial level, yes they can. Your quality of life, my quality of life is going to be affected in terms of whether I have enough food, a job, whether I'm marooned on a farm or a croft in the middle of Argyll with no bus, or no car.

That's fairly straightforward. Quality of life in terms of how satisfied an individual is with their lives." (PG16)

One respondent referred to the census:

"I suppose the census to an extent tries to do that and tries to get a kind of measurement on people's life conditions. So I suppose you can measure them to an extent"

- Access to community groups (PG21)
- Access to education (P11)
- Access to facilities (P11)
- Access to leisure (E2)
- Access to transport (E2, P11, PG21)
- Access to affordable childcare (P11, P9)
- Access to services (PJ26)
- Debt (P13)
- Employment (PJ26)

- Fear of crime (E2, E3)
- Health (E3, F6)
- Housing issues (E2, E3, F6, P11, P13)
- Income Levels (PJ26)
- Levels of bullying in school (PG21)
- Levels of racial harassment (PG21)
- Noise (E2)
- Pollution (E2)
- Social life (E2)

5.20   One respondent felt that quality of life measurements could not be separated from existing inclusion or wellbeing indicators (P14). Another noted that quality of life was about the ability of individual's to make choices (P9).

> *"Quality of life is about having the choice to do things, not having no choice or not having limited choice. My take is that and the way that you achieve choice is by having people with resources in order to exercise that choice." (P9)*

Another respondent noted the limitations of measurement systems:

> *"I'm quite conscious that we had a fairly sophisticated set of quantitative – qualitative indicators but they are by no means what may be important to people experiencing poverty and I don't think we've scratched the surface really in finding out what those measures are and how we can – how we can balance quantitative with qualitative measures of objective poverty if you like with people's perceptions of their conditions and what is important to them and what are the changes that would make a difference to them, that they would value". (P8)*

Another respondent thought that quality of life could be measured but it would be an *'academic'* exercise to do so (P9).

5.21   Community quality of life

5.22   Although the question related to individual's quality of life, it also stimulated some discussion about community quality of life, with seven respondents commenting on community quality of life issues (E1, P11, P12, P14, PG18, PG20, PG21)

One respondent noted the implication for policy:

> *"it may be impossible to associate that sense of discontentment with anything that poverty levels could do anything about. Em, so that it's – you know, it is a highly subjective judgement and I suppose one could say, well, that's psychiatric services and health services or other people's mental health, psychological health as much as their physical health. But I can well imagine social scientists, policy makers, would be saying – hang on, you know, the further we get into this area, then the more difficult, the more problematic it becomes the less evidence based our policy can be" (P14)*

> *"I think there needs to be a lot more work done with communities, em, about what do you see as the definition of these, em, as opposed to drawing stuff from institutions and social services, education, health, that sort of stuff. It's important to have that, I appreciate that, but there's a lot of other stuff within the quality of life context that is more to do with having a car, claiming a benefit, or access to health services. It can be a lot it can be culturally defined and I don't think there's much work being done around culturally defining quality of life outcomes or outputs." (PG21)*

5.23   Linking back to social inclusion project

5.24   Respondents were asked if improvements in individual's quality of life could be linked back to participation in social inclusion projects. 21 respondents expressed an opinion (E2, F4, P10, P11, P13, P14, P15, PG16, PG19, PG20, PG21, PJ25, PJ26, PJ27, PJ28, PJ29, PJ30, RS, PJ31, PJ33, PJ34)

Table A16: Responses to 'Can improvements to people's quality of life be measured in the context of social inclusion projects?'

Theme	Sub-theme	Eval	Funders	Policy	Prog	Project	Total
Methods	Possible to measure	1	1	3	5	9	19
	Assumptions				3	5	8
	Feedback	1	1		1	5	8
Limitations to methods	Not possible to measure	1		2	1		4
	External influences	1		1	1	1	4
	Samples			1		1	2
	Other		1	1	1	2	5

5.25   Methods

5.26   18 respondents thought that it was possible to attribute improvements in individual's quality of life to a particular project to some degree (E2, F4, P10, P11, P13, PG16, PG17, PG19, PG20, PG21, PJ25, PJ26, PJ27, PJ28, PJ29, PJ30, PJ31, PJ33, PJ34);

> *"Yes they can. I mean, I think they can in terms of the concrete outcomes that you get, the things that are easy to measure. They can also be measured in terms of the qualitative feedback that individuals give, saying what they got out of*

the course on a very individual basis. It's hard to make comparisons though because one individual's had a really great time, may be different from another individual that a really great time. But if you can see that the majority of the feedback is positive, then I think that indicates a measure of improvement in the person's quality of life." (PJ34)

one respondent observed that improvements were easier to measure than establishing baselines (E2).

"improvements are much easier to measure than the absolute, than the baselines. But once you've got a baseline, eh, it's very easy to measure changes against it."
(E2)

Another respondent noted that 'measure' was the wrong word (PG17):

"I don't know if measure is the right word. I think you can ask people. And I think you can, what you can measure, if that's the right term, and I'm not sure it is, is the difference in people's perceptions at the beginning and as you go through. The changes. It may be more about changes than anything else. About noting changes. I'm not sure about measure, because I still think measure has hard connotations to it... it's where you are trying to get to..

LK: Can you think of a better word?

No. [They laugh]. Maybe track is better... maybe it is about tracking" (PG16)

5.27   Assumptions (PG16, PG19, PG21, PJ25, PJ30, PJ31,PJ33, PJ34).

Eight respondents thought that it could be assumed that participant's quality of life had improved because of the apparent changes in their lifestyle resulting from participation in the project. This could be in the present, for example, by participating in the project individuals are no longer as isolated as they were previously (PJ31,PJ33).

"Yeah, definitely. Definitely. Especially for the supported accommodation. But there's a client actually moving on the 28th December, that's someone moving somewhere else and they'd actually said it's the emotional support that's what is actually one of the biggest keys for this project, that it provides. And at the start that clients quality of life was not good, destructive relationship, we actually provided them with a home, for them and their kids, so, and they'd actually said like they didn't know actually what they would do if it wasn't for this project, they didn't know where they would be." (PJ31)

Six respondents also noted that the destinations of participants after they left the project gave some indication of improved quality of life, for example, accessing employment or undertaking training (PG16, PG19, PG21, PJ25, PJ30, PJ34).

"Yeah, they probably could. I mean, particularly with [name of organisation] who runs courses, I mean, we can see, em, possibly at the end of the course whether,

em, students have gained a quality of life and we've got proof that a lot of students I mean, some of our students have gone on to college, some of them have gone into jobs, em, and they've gone on to do other things and I think, em, this is where if you're in a socially included area, what is termed as a socially included area, and things are happening that you're getting involved with and it can improve your life." (PJ30)

5.28   Feedback (E2, F4, PG20, PJ27, PJ28, PJ30, PJ31, PJ34)

Seven respondents referred to information given be respondents in feedback that indicated that the participant felt that their quality of life had improved, with other respondents suggesting that this would be a suitable way of doing it, even if they were not currently undertaking such work. This could be through formal feedback or evaluation forms (E2, PG20, PJ27, PJ30, PJ34),

"Certainly in the reports when we produce reports, you can see, you know, the quantities that have come through the door - here are the numbers, here are the statistics, here are the people that have achieved, here are the people that have found employment or went to college. Here are the people, most importantly, that said, this actually benefited me ha ha ha yeah." (PJ27)

or through anecdotal evidence of comments to staff in the project (PJ28, PJ31).

One respondent identified specific links back to projects through use of a leavers survey:

"Yes, I think that applicants have been able to do that directly. Yes. I don't know if we've found a perfect way of doing that yet and I know that various mechanisms are used to do that and often it's very simple forms that the project uses themselves, interviews with the beneficiaries on an ongoing basis throughout the project, exit interviews. And what we do encourage and in fact make a requirement of applying is a substantial period of after care for beneficiaries so they can actually – in addition to providing them with the support measures – track progress beyond the lifetime of the project which tells them a bit more about the impact of our support as well." (F4)

"the problem is that sometimes when you increase an ability – an individual's ability to have confidence in their own skills for example, that can be initially detrimental to their quality of life because it can raise issues like getting them to challenge the relationships they might be living in and things like that. I mean, ordinarily the student groups that we have here – there's usually one or two of them that have relatively abusive relationships with partners and coming here and improving their confidence can be detrimental in the short term to their quality of life because their partners become more aggressive and more challenging and try and restrict their growth. In the long term, their skills enable them to move on in a way that they wouldn't have been able to if they hadn't come here but you can't necessarily say that – I mean, we haven't got a measure that would measure that sort of thing." (PJ34)

5.29   Limitations to methods

5.30   Four respondents questioned whether the issue of quality of life improvements could be attributed with any degree of accuracy to individual projects, and concluded that, in their

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opinion, it was not possible (E3, P14, PG16, P15).

> *"I think there needs to be a lot more work done with communities, em, about what do you see as the definition of these, em, as opposed to drawing stuff from institutions and social services, education, health, that sort of stuff. It's important to have that, I appreciate that, but there's a lot of other stuff within the quality of life context that is more to do with having a car, claiming a benefit, or access to health services. It can be a lot it can be culturally defined and I don't think there's much work being done around culturally defining quality of life outcomes or outputs." (PG16)*

5.31   Four respondents raised the issue of the difficulty of isolating the impact of the project from all the other influences on the individual participant. Influences external to the social inclusion project ranging from the whether to fear of crime were mentioned that could impact on an individual's feelings about their quality of life (E2, P15, PG16, PJ25).

> *"I mean, arguably arguably you can but, you know, how robust that argument is, I suppose, is up to I mean, you could have you could say say one of the things that you were that you were deciding was in your list of things which determined quality of life. Say that was a job. Now, at what level are you able to determine that the job became available to the individual because of their involvement in the project or just because there was a general improvement in the state of economic wellbeing that meant that more jobs were being created. So it it with things with things like that, it's difficult. You you couldn't say with any accuracy, I don't think, that that person got the job because of the social inclusion partnership" (P15)*

5.32   Issues of sample surveys of residents of an area were discussed with relation to using them to assess improvements in individual's quality of life. Limitations were identified of small sample sizes making it difficult to generalise, and the difficulty of comparison when different individuals were surveyed over time (P11, PJ25).

> *"to go back to my Castlemilk days, in the New Life for Urban Scotland partnership, they did a survey, eh, and it was quite a large survey of residents, and what we, what some of us were arguing, was 'are you going to follow the resident's through or are you going to go out every couple of years and survey different people?" And they came out and said it's the latter, they were going to come out and carry out a survey every couple of years, but there was no guarantee that it would be the same people. So therefore, how do you measure the benefits to the individuals through the social inclusion partnerships, unless you have a target audience that you are looking at and following through in terms of when you started the process to the end of the process. So there are arguments there that that type of work, but in terms of social inclusion projects there are methods that can be used I feel, I know, that could gather more accurately the views of residents." (P11)*

5.33   Four other issues were raised; two respondents articulated that it would be very time consuming to undertake this work (PJ25, PJ29). A further respondent raised the issue of the difficulty of evaluating the impact of projects when the funding of the project was only given on a short term basis (P13).

"I think theoretically yes, although I don't think in reality it's been as successful as it should have been in these initiatives, I really don't. I think that we still haven't gone to those that are fully excluded. We still we're not consistent enough. One of the biggest blocks to progress is the funding mechanisms that people employ. You get 2 year projects. I mean, my life revolves around 60 years. Why are you giving me 2 years funding to change, you know. Even a generation is 15 years. You want me to change my whole life because you've got 12 months funding? Give me a break, you know. That's why so many urban aid programmes failed."
(P13)

One funder noted the lack of standardisation:

"Some organisations have developed systems that they're trying to roll out to other organisations, to get a kind of standardisation. And we would love to see standardisation because it would allow us to measure things across the programme, but we appreciate that there may be constraints in standardising something soft like that." (F4)

One respondent noted the limitations of projects on people's quality of life:

"the thing about neighbours and stuff, em, loud music or – or bad neighbours and sound and stuff is – is always one of the, em, key issues and problems and it can make people's life hell but it's something that a partnership, as a – as we are – can't really do an awful lot about and neither can the project – the individual project. But the ones that can do that are obviously environmental health and social housing. The – the housing management structure. So it's – that's existing structures that everybody's got and it's nothing to do with the work of a – of a partnership to improve somebody's quality of life in that respect." (PG18)

6.0   Opinion Based Information

6.1   *Question: Is there monitoring information based on individual's opinions that would be useful to have? "Resident satisfaction" and "fear of crime" are examples of opinion based information that are used to evaluate social inclusion projects. Are these useful measures?*

Table A17: Opinion based information

Theme	Sub-theme	Eval	Funders	Policy	Prog	Project	Total
Opinion based information	Resident Satisfaction	2	1	5	4	1	13
	Project User Satisfaction		2	2	1	10	15
	Fear of Crime	1		5	6	5	17
	Issues of measurement	1		3	5	2	11

6.2   13 respondents discussed resident satisfaction issues (E1, E2, F5, P7, P8, P10, P11, P12, PG17, PG18, PG19, PG21, PJ22), with only one respondent, a funder, noting that they did not request any opinion based information from organisations that they funded (F5).

6.3   Several diverse comments were made on the issue of resident satisfaction. One respondent said that it was important to ask individuals how they feel about themselves and how their lives have changed (PG17), with another noting it was important to establish how people feel about the area (PJ22).

> *"I do think these are quite useful measures, you know, sort of asking people to rate things like, you know, their satisfaction within the area, maybe has that changed in the past 5 years. Because at the end of the day, you know, that it's how people feel when they live within that area that is the important thing, you know. Obviously you do need to have services available within the area, you do need to have a sort of environment which isn't all boarded up shops, you know, those sort of issues. But is all that beyond that fabric isn't it? There's that other element which is really the element that you're working at, you just change the fabric in the hope that it will produce that feeling which is the sense that people do belong in society and are involved in society and feel a part of it, you know."*
> *(PJ22)*

A further respondent stressed it was important to ask individuals how they feel about process not just outcome (P7).

> *"Em, I think resident satisfaction is up to a point, although I'm never sure about the word 'resident'. Resident always seem to imply a choice about where you reside, and a lot of people living in really deprived areas don't have a lot of choice about where they reside. So, I don't know if they think of themselves as residents or just tenants, that's more likely. But I think it does play a part because I think it is about that feeling either of powerlessness or a feeling of inclusion. The way*

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> *that Council's tend to measure the delivery of services is in the number of jobs completed by a certain time. And the way that tenants and residents tend to measure it in the same way but how it affects them individually, and how they were treated in the process." (P7)*

A further respondent felt that it was essential to ask people's opinions if organisations were to be customer focussed (P12). One respondent felt that the methods used to assess resident satisfaction were quite crude because they assumed a homogenous population (P10).

> *"it's a complete and utter mistake to look at the social inclusion.. we're still talking about social inclusion partnership areas here right, to look at them as some kind of homogeneous environment, so that when you ask that kind of question about resident satisfaction and you get 60, 70%, em, and fear of crime, you know, 80% or something like that, you've then got to try and break that down a lot more, and actually look for where the tensions are within the community. 'Cos we had a fascinating insight into [name of local authority], where not a single pensioner lived in any of the real hot spots, and what you had was a situation where although pensioners were up against it, well they are up against it nationally, it's no something peculiar to the SIP areas, what you had is a fairly high degree of satisfaction amongst the pensioners about where they are living, because they've actually moved in to pretty good accommodation over the years." (P10)*

6.4   The importance of asking the right questions was also stressed with the following points being made:

- In order to be meaningful 'resident satisfaction' has to be broken down into a series of questions that are relevant to local people (PG17);

- Resident satisfaction can rise without actually addressing issues of poverty, e.g. after a refurbishment programme (P11);

- There are a range of questions that can be asked but they must be sought in a way that ensures the objectivity of the answers (E2);

- There is a need for a baseline against which to measure increases or decreases in satisfaction (E2);

- It is difficult to assess the impact of awareness raising work (P7).

6.5   Two respondents raised issues relating to the concept of 'residency' with one noting that a measure of dissatisfaction was the if people want to move out of area (PG17),

> *"I think traditionally what has happened in a lot of areas is that people, successful people in inverted commas, move out, don't they? That they see that they have actually grown beyond the area. But in some ways that ... so you don't actually improve the area over time. Em, what we need to do I think is probably to maintain the population, through choice, but if people are saying they are happy in the area to begin with, then what you do is improve the area, people's perception of the area, to ensure that they actually want to stay. Because there will always be some movement, but if you improve an area, or improve people's lives who then move out, have you really improved the area?" (PG17)*

Another querying the use of the term 'resident' as it implies choice over where you live, which may not always be the case for individuals in social housing (P7).

> *"I think resident satisfaction is up to a point, although I'm never sure about the word 'resident'. Resident always seem to imply a choice about where you reside, and a lot of people living in really deprived areas don't have a lot of choice about where they reside. So, I don't know if they think of themselves as residents or just tenants, that's more likely. But I think it does play a part because I think it is about that feeling either of powerlessness or a feeling of inclusion." (P7)*

6.6 Five respondents commented on the role that opinion based information should play in a regeneration project. One respondent suggested that as part of regeneration process organisations should undertake individual risk assessment in order to ensure residents had benefited from the process (P8)

> *"It's those sort of needs which are people's opinions, people's understanding which we need to tap in far more subtle ways if we are to reduce the risks of regeneration activity. That those most marginalized groups may become victims to it and so getting access to that sort of qualitative information – what it is that actually is important to people – to how people survive in very marginalized circumstances – is essential to improving – to ensuring that (a) they're no worse off by the process of regeneration and (b) one would hope – ha ha ha – less – less excluded as a result of the process or less marginalized, less disadvantaged, i.e. less poor." (P8)*

Another commented on the need to link resident satisfaction to other information that is being collected (PG19). One respondent thought that asking for qualitative information was empowering for the community because the community can relate to them (PG21).

> *"I think they are. I think there's a lot of stuff based on quantitative data but the value to the community is what they can relate to is anecdotal information, case studies, stories of their life on a daily basis and I think I sense within the research field, there seems to be a movement back towards appreciation of that qualitative stuff, action research, which can be quite empowering for communities." (PG21)*

One respondent noted that his organisation used the SIP's People's Panel to do solicit residents opinions (PG18). One respondent noted that resident satisfaction linked to income:

> *"You've got to think in terms of resident satisfaction start looking at their income levels. There's also, from our perspective, an issue about whether or not people actually recognise whether or not they are living in poverty, and it's something I should maybe have mentioned earlier. It's very difficult for people to accept they live in poverty, because of the stigma attached to living in poverty." (P11)*

6.7   Project User Satisfaction

6.8 The research sample included a number of organisations working with specific client groups, and issues specific to their needs in assessing satisfaction were mentioned by 15

respondents (F4, F6, P9, P12, PG16, PJ22, PJ23, PJ25, PJ26, PJ27, PJ28, PJ29, PJ31, PJ30, PJ34).

- One respondent working with children and young people noted that it was sometimes difficult for young people to express themselves, and they had tried to address this with specific measure such as getting the children to draw pictures, and respond to pictures (PJ22);

- Another respondent working with children and young people worked both with the young people themselves, and had informal consultation with teachers and parents (PJ29);

- A third respondent working with young people noted that you could measure distance travelled (PG16);

- One respondent working with families said that families continuing to meet with their volunteers was in itself a measure of satisfaction (PJ23);

- Five respondents involved in running a training and/or development courses identified the use of feedback forms (PJ26, PJ27, PJ28, PJ31, PJ34).

- One respondent referred to the need to measure 'customer' satisfaction (P9).

- One respondent working with other voluntary organisations noted that they got this kind of information through use of a social audit (PJ25)

6.9   One organisation who was involved in funding local voluntary organisations outlined the steps that they took in order to ensure that voluntary organisations consulted their customers (P12),

> *"in terms of overall projects, I guess you're looking at, you know, using smart objectives and making sure that that's always happening. But if we're looking at delivering services and making them customer focused which every public body in the country will say that they're customer focused or are striving to be. But what does make a difference is what individuals think, what's the quality of their experience when they intervene or are involved with a public service. So, yeah, I think that there's lots of stuff. It can simply be sometimes about did you like the service that you got? Were you satisfied with that? How satisfied were you? Are there changes that you would make to how the service is delivered?" (P12)*

Another respondent stressed the importance of checking back with the customer (P9). Two European funders (F4, F6) noted that they did not seek information directly on the beneficiaries of the project, although one did use a leaver survey (F4).

> *"Yes and no. Some projects will look at that. We don't specifically request that but we do look for projects to be evaluated and part of that evaluation will look at the outcome from a beneficiaries point of view." (F6)*

6.10   Fear of Crime

6.11   Fear of crime was particularly commented on by 17 respondents (E1, P10, P11, P12,

P13, P14, PG16, PG17, PG18, PG19, PG20, PG21, PJ24, PJ25, PJ31, PJ32, PJ33,).

Eight respondents remarked that individual's perception of crime was often completely at odds with the actual situation (P10, P11, P13, P14, PG16, PG17, PG19, PJ25).

"I think how you feel about crime is something that you measure. Because the chances are of going out and getting mugged are very, very low, yet just that fear in people's minds, they won't go out." (PG19)

"I know it's asked in the, em, community plan and support plan as well and a lot of that fear of crime always comes up, you know. Fear of child being abducted. I don't think there's a record of a child ever being abducted in [name of local authority]." (PG20)

However, one respondent noted that it didn't matter if the perception was grounded in reality or not because people still amended their living habits, for example by not going out at night. The elderly were highlighted as a group particularly afraid of crime by four respondents (P7, P11, P13, PG16).

"The other thing I would say about the fear of crime, again there's imperceptables here, where elderly people may feel it's a threatening situation to them, when in fact the threat is being delivered to someone else. But they, nevertheless feel involved in that atmosphere, so in other words, when you go down to the shops if there are a large group of youths who are harassing other youths, they may never be the subject of an attack by that gang, but nevertheless, just the atmosphere that is generated is something that they are frightened of, and that's something that we need to ask them about." (P7)

One respondent raised concerns about how willing people were to be honest on their feelings about crime (PJ25). Two respondents highlighed the impact that the media has on fear of crime, which affected how closely fear of crime was related to people's local conditions (P11, P14).

"there's also the media pressure. Every channel now has a .. a Crimewatch type programme on which .. and I think that elevates people's perceptions. That's not to deny that there isn't crime within these areas, but whether or not these individuals may be the target of that particular kind of crime is difficult to equate, but it's that general fear, so there is that whole issue about that safety, crime and safety and people feeling threatened." (P11)

6.12   Five respondents commented on the role that regeneration initiatives had on tackling fear of crime. One respondent noted that the building work taking place as part of the regeneration process had attracted vandals, and increased the vandalism rate locally (PJ24).

"I had a joke with the community policeman because first of all when it went on site and we were at a meeting together and the vandalism was just terrible just terrible by young kids and, em, and it was really disheartening and really difficult, you know. Every time anything was done, you'd come back the next day and it had been knocked down and, em, I think the trainees and the company and

> *everybody was really disheartening and, em, we had the community policeman was telling me that burglaries had gone down. [LAUGHTER] While vandalism was right up." (PJ24)*

The same respondent said that the local community police were part of the project and anticipated reported crimes increasing as local residents became more confident in the local policing. One respondent observed that as crime indicators fell there was a danger that partner agencies will put less resources into that aspect of their work (E1).

> *"There are indicators which show change, positive change in a community, em, when you show positive change in a community on fear of crime it's likely that partner agencies will put less resources into that particular aspect of their work, which has a negative aspect on people's lives. So you've got to be aware that by illustrating positive change, it may reflect on the policy considerations of the partnership which will come back on the community. I think fear of crime is one."*
> *(E1)*

A further respondent noted that in a local survey crime was considerably lower as an issue that issues such as vandalism, litter and noisy children, issues which he saw as negative management issues (PG21).

6.13   In terms of methods that were, or could be used, to address fear of crime through regeneration projects. Four respondents mention CCTV (P11, PG19, PG21), and raised concerns about the use of CCTV; one respondent noted that it could just displace crime to areas without cameras (PG19) and another said that the act of installing CCTV raises people's concern about crime (P11).

> *"I know the CCTV doesn't take away the crime, it might move it to another street for a wee while, or it might move it away altogether, but I think eventually it comes back." (PG19)*

Young people 'hanging around' was also identified as an issue that caused alarm to residents, and youth work was cited by three respondents as an approach to addressing fear of crime issues (P10, P12, P13).

> *"I've seen some excellent inclusion programmes a few where, for instance, street youth workers have brought kids and the elderly people together and both parties even the hairy wee kids with the pins through their nose they look frights but they're not. I mean, that old person's their pal's granny or something like that. And they say, I wouldn't hurt you for the world. But I think you scare me." (P13)*

One final respondent noted locally based policing as a method of addressing fear of crime (PJ24).

6.14   There were several issues regarding crime that related to specific client groups.

- A respondent working with ethnic minority communities said that racial harassment was a huge issue, and one which united all the disparate communities he worked with (PG21);

- A respondent working with young people with learning difficulties observed that her clients did not so much fear crime, as nuisance such as name-calling or ignorance about disability (PJ32);

- A respondent working with young people said that rather than fearing being a victim of a crime, the 16-18 year olds feared being caught breaking the law, for example by drinking underage (PJ31).

6.15   Issues of Measurement

Issues of measurement were identified by eleven respondents (E2, P7, P14, P15, PG16, PG17, PG18, PG19, PG20, PJ24, PJ33).

One respondent noted that any limitations to the terms were technical:

> *"I think, the limitations are technical. You have to make sure you have to make sure you have a measuring system that is describing quite accurately and separately from differences of personality what it is they feel, and you know, the kind of methods that we use do that. Strip out the personality issues and, eh, the other thing is you must be measuring changes, the baseline itself is not terribly helpful but it gives you a starting point to measure changes against." (E2)*

6.16   Three respondents raised the issue of coverage. One of these respondents noted that such qualitative information needed to be used in conjunction with quantitative information because you are only ever going to have a relatively small sample (PG17). A second respondent raised the issue of self-selection amongst respondents (P7), and a final respondent said how difficult it was to get people who were excluded to participate in research (P15).

> *"one of the problems that you have in these areas is that a lot of people who are very excluded or who we might define as very excluded, either don't see themselves as very excluded or if they do see themselves as excluded, wouldn't necessarily a function of them being excluded is that they wouldn't necessarily put themselves forward to, you know, to be involved in in some kind of information gathering that related to their own lives so I suppose you've got to come up with ways that people feel comfortable about giving that information and you've also got to come up with ways that means that it's not just the kind of opinion formers within an area that that kind of are listening to, you know, people who've got very, very strong views on a particular issue." (P15)*

6.17   Three respondents raised issues relating to geography. One respondent, from a rural SIP, raised the difficulties of consulting a dispersed population over a large geographic area. This had tremendous implications both in terms of time, for example it would take several days to travel round the SIP projects (PG16).

> *"Rural SIPs like [name of SIP area], because they are so spread out, as I said 120 miles north-south between the SIP, you would not be able to get round all five towns in one day. You are talking two or three days to travel between them, because there's lochs in the way. You need a boat, now and again. Em, and I think we lose out because of that, because the scale of it is so small that it is difficult for us to get together to share information, to do the practicalities of all sorts of things, from how do we put the funding bid in, and what do we do about funding when the SIP ends?" (PG16)*

A second respondent noted the variety in size and area of the SIPs, and stressed the importance of local knowledge (PG17). A final respondent observed that the boundaries of the SIP for whom she was working were not generally recognised by local people (PG19).

6.18   Two respondents highlighted the issue of external influences on individuals opinions that influence answers to questionnaires and surveys, for example the news, the weather and local campaigns taking place (PG16, PG20).

> *"if you ask people's opinion in [name of local authority] about, em, their quality of life and their living environment and their services and their work, transport and all the rest of it what always comes out as a key issue is dog fouling. [LAUGHTER] All the time. And [pause] that's the thing like with asking questions like that. That's fine and, you know, that's what what people are saying. A lot of the time that's influenced there's been a big campaign and there's been pressure group at play parks complaining and all the rest of it. It was kind of influenced on that and I think everybody realised that although that came top of the list as something to do, that, like, you know, if we'd done the same survey just after [local firm] announced it's closure, things would have been different and so on." (PG20)*

6.19   Two respondents noted issues of reliability and credibility of opinion based information. One respondent highlighted that there were two different audiences for the information, namely local people and funders, and that research had to have credibility with both these groups (PG17). The second respondent said that it was difficult to get a reliable measure of what people were feeling, and difficult to relate this to conditions over which policymakers had some control. He speculated that this might be why fear of crime was used as a measure of social inclusion because policymakers feel they can influence it (P14).

> *"It's not an easy thing to do to get direct, reliable measurement of people's, em well, you may be able to, it's difficult enough just to get a reliable measure of what people are feeling. It's pretty difficult but it's even more difficult to relate what people are feeling at any one time to the sort of conditions which policymakers have some chance of influencing so it's pretty ha ha pretty difficult to even attempt to raise I think." (P14)*

6.20   One respondent observed that opinion based research helped individuals to judge the

distance they have travelled (PG16). Another respondent commented that residents are not always aware of the work of the SIP, particularly the more 'nebulous' projects (PJ24).

> "Sometimes those of us that are in these sort of professions, we you know we can get wound up and caught up with the importance of what we think's happening but when you go and speak to people, they don't know what they've not heard of the SIP or they don't know what's going on. In some of the more, you know, nebulous projects, I think, you know, some of it is hard for people living there to see how some things are making changes, you know." (PJ24)

6.22   Two respondents highlighted other opinion based information that they had collected. One respondent stated that they had collected information on access to financial services (PG18), and another respondent noted that they had undertaken a health audit (PJ33).

> "I think monitoring change of opinion is something that can be quite difficult to do because you may not be asking the same people. It's still quite a transient population that we're working with and I think with the health audits, we were we were because we did a door to door sample, we managed to access a lot of people who weren't coming to public meetings and neighbourhood forums and so on and sometimes I think you have to be careful when you're holding up opinions in the sense that you have to you have to check that out you have to check that out with the wider community and sometimes I think some of the consultative structures that we have within the SIP take the opinions of half a dozen people or a dozen people that come along to a neighbourhood forum." (PJ33)

7.0   Methods used to consult and evaluate

7.1   *Question: What are the best ways to gather the opinions of local residents? How can this be linked back to the work of social inclusion projects?*

7.2   Respondents highlighted a number of methods that they were using to consult residents and project users, or that they thought worked well. These included:

- Audits;
- Community Profiling;
- Evaluations;
- Community Representation;
- Focus Groups;
- Informal methods;
- People's Panels and household surveys;
- Surveys and questionnaires;
- Other methods such as adverts, roadshows, seminars etc.

7.3   More detail about these methods, and some of the key issues arising from the discussion are addressed in the table below.

Table A18: Methods of Opinion Gathering

	Method	With whom	How	Issues	Who
AUDITS	Health Audit	1400 local people across 4 communities over 18 months	Used focus groups and surveys – see below.	*"We did the health one and that cost – I'm saying that cost a lot of money to – we consulted with 1400 local people across the 4 communities over a period – it probably took us a year – year and a half."*	PJ33
	Social Audit	Organisations, based on people's opinions.	More detailed and quality aspects of project's work. Personal views from individuals on their experience of the services and if they have benefited from them.	*"it would be a mammoth kind of task to kind of do that and touch on every aspect of people's life, you know, talking about, as I say, health, education, crime or whatever. I think the best way to do it would be for each project to focus on their particular area of work and try and gauge the opinions of their own client group and feed that back into the central kind of system which is the partnership – the social inclusion partnership"*	PJ25

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	Method	With whom	How	Issues	Who
PROFILING	Audit	People who work with excluded young people	Asked advice on the best way to consult the young people they work with. Followed up with conference and training needs analysis.	"these kind of excluded groups who bear in mind are not your mainstream school pupils that will fill in a questionnaire and not your mainstream people that will come to a focus group or phone you back about an advert in the local paper. These are people that – some of them can't read or write for a start and some of them, you know, just absolutely no way would they do that, nor would they ever come into a school hall for a public meeting or anything like that. We're talking about a very kind of excluded group of people who it's taken a lot of workers a long time to build up a relationship with and trust with, like street workers for example."	PG20
	Community profiling	Local community	Activists trained in methods of undertaking community surveys. No involvement from Council or other agencies. Use software package. Community identifies the questions they want to use.	"And we feel that in many respects when it's that type of community questionnaire the responses tend to come more freely, and it's also about that empowerment issue, about communities then having control over what is then produced."	P11
EVALUATION	Self Monitoring Evaluation Report	Organisations	Quarterly basis – number crunching.		PJ25
	Evaluation form	Individual registering for training courses and again at the end of the course.	Asks simple questions e.g. reasons for attending the classes.	"We've always got to say to them, you know, like this really is important and this is what's making a difference, what you're actually saying and we want you to tell the truth and we don't want you to tick a column full of absolutely brilliant 100% all the time if that's not what you felt because there's nothing worse also than seeing an evaluation form and when you're rating something, and it says rate something from 1 to 5, 1 is excellent and 5 is not, and people just write down the one column so it's not very – so very great way to measure things."	PJ27
	Community representation	Local residents on Partnership Board	Provide community input	"then the issue there is regeneration forum – it's only – its membership is largely based on the people who in the areas where there is a significant amount of regeneration. So that's, you know, certain parts of the estate isn't really interested in that arguably."	PG18

	Method	With whom	How	Issues	Who
FOCUS GROUPS	Health audit focus groups	Existing groups e.g. young people, over-50s. 10 to 15 groups in each area.	Developed main issues	*"The issues – the main issues from the focus group developed – it was our monitoring officer that developed an in-depth questionnaire."*	PJ33
	Focus Groups	Drop-in centre users	Using project workers	*"I think that sort of informal exchange of information is very valuable for the running of the SIP project "*	PG16
	Focus Groups	Voluntary sector and community groups	Used existing community representative bodies that exist within the Partnership. Interested in strategic issues such as stability, empowerment, prosperity etc. Once to twice per year.	*"The community have responded to focus groups, I think partly the reason for this is that it is a way of discussing an issue with the community on their terms"*	E1
INFORMAL	Informal feedback	Tenants experiencing environmental and physical work	Portacabin on site where people can drop in. Wandering round and talking to people.	*"I do try to make sure I go on site and wander around and talk cos people know me, so that the trainees and the people on site, as well as the residents who live there, so they know who I am and that I'm accessible and they can come and say things and it will make a difference. Because then, I think, if people start to trust you, then they will start to talk to you honestly about things but they know if somebody just parachutes in and says, what do you think about this, and then parachutes out again."*	PJ24
PEOPLE'S PANELS AND HOUSEHOLD SURVEYS	Citizen's Juries, People's Panels etc	N/A	N/A	*"I would hesitate to say what way is the best but I think clearly citizens juries offer some advantages, in that you're not just taking a snapshot of people's opinions according to the criteria that other people have chosen. You're actually trying to probe and encourage people to deliberate upon their own opinions and test them against other people's."*	P14
	Citizens juries etc	N/A	N/A	*"getting people who represent a wide range of views to come forward and report them but also getting people to have an input into what the questions that are actually being asked is quite important too. I mean, I don't think – if you want people – if you want – if you're genuine about wanting people's opinions about what's – you know, about what you're doing, you actually need to find out from them what's relevant to them as well. And I'm not sure how much of that work goes on."*	P15

A64

	Method	With whom	How	Issues	Who
	Citizen's Panel	Council side c1000 members, reflects make-up of the local authority area	Used to gauge opinion on issues. Last time had questions on credit unions, volunteering.	"we should be looking at a culture where getting opinion back again is a way of doing things. It's not something that's additional or separate. We should be looking at systems where feedback and acting on that feedback happens almost like naturally, like second nature."	P12
	People's Panel		Survey – looking at the impact SIP has had and perceptions of the area, priorities for the next couple of years		PG17
	People's Panel	Used in Alloa South and East.		"Think this is a good idea."	PJ24
	People's Panel	Residents	We had over a 1000 people prepared to receive questionnaires and come to focus groups.	"I think the Scottish Executive did well in helping the SIPs to establish these."	P10
	People's Panel	460? Local residents	45% response rate to the last questionnaire.		PG18
	People's Panel Survey	People's Panel of residents	Paper survey – anonymous replies allowed	"The People's Panel is a survey that was prepared by the Scottish Executive, which you will know about, which has a series of core questions, but had to go out to a representative number of people across the age profile, so from young people right through to retired people."	PG16
	Household survey	1300 residents in random sampling	Undertaken by Market Research Scotland. Not sure yet if it will be going back to the same people each time	"It's really giving out a lot of interesting stuff, it has. It's quite amazing. But we'd like to be able to repeat that every year or eighteen months, just to be sure that we were keeping up-to-date."	PG19
	Household survey	Residents	"Once every 3 years, if we could create a mega base line or a mega survey – a household survey perhaps or something that's built on that which was all about opinions, then that might be a reasonable thing to do."	"A household survey is a good starting point. The question is, the household survey has got deficiencies itself. It doesn't give a representative sample of the Highlands I believe, although I think extensively taken. It's a voluntary survey so you can – you know, does it capture enough information about SIP residents or does it have a representative sample of the life cycle exclusion categories?"	P9

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		Method	With whom	How	Issues	Who
		Social Survey	SIP residents	Sample survey	*"We have brought the partnership in, in terms of designing the social survey, we are interested in involving the voluntary and community sector in looking at the questionnaire, em, so I think I would have liked to think that as a way of gathering information then we are going to be able to design something that reflects people's lives, and their situation in these particular communities."*	E1
		Quantitative data from sample survey	Sample survey of communities	Describes the community in relation to changes from the baseline study.	*"Quantitative data in the project so far has described the communities in relation to change from the baseline but not, not, the indicators don't describe every aspect of life, and they certainly don't describe the impact of the SIP programme. If we think, or we assume, the other programmes at a macro level or a meso level in [local authority area] are impacting on these communities, if not as much, more than say the SIP programme has impacted on these communities."*	E2
SURVEYS AND QUESTIONNAIRES		Combination	Residents	Combination of door-to-door questions, one-to-one interviews and focus groups	*"So not one of those, but all of them, and as many different ways you can approach the task as possible. It means you get a much more solid response."*	E2
		Community questionnaires	200 individual questionnaires	Enables the collection of qualitative data about the range of issues facing different communities. Also refer individuals onto other services as appropriate.	*"we found that by allocating a single worker to go out and see a family or an individual and do a questionnaire with them, so there's some structure to the interview but there's a freedom within that to be anecdotal and story of life stuff. Em, we feel that the outreach bit and the face to face contact is important because it is – it personalises it all, rather than de-personalise the programme."*	PG21
		Customer surveys, customer lunches	Sample of customer groups	Customer invited to lunch and socialise. Through that get an idea of what's good and what's bad.	*"One part of the Council which I used to work in, the Advice Shop, they're pretty effective at that side of things and also have customer lunches where they just put on some sandwiches and teas and coffees and biscuits and cakes, get a sample of their users in and socialise and through that, get an idea of what's good, what's bad"*	P12
		Face-to-face surveys	Individuals	On doorstep or as people use services.	*"Certainly, face to face rather than questionnaires and paper exercises like that because (1) you'll not get the return; (2) they'll come back partially completed; and (3) you know, they're, you know, I think, open to, you know, all sorts of changes and things like that – ha ha ha – along the line."*	PJ25

Method	With whom	How	Issues	Who
Follow up surveys	Further students who have gone on to employment or elsewhere.	Postal survey 60-80% return rate. Ideas feed into future provision.	*"There's a standard for every single – for the full 10 month courses, we do a 6 month and 18 follow up survey and the return is usually quite high. It's kind of between 60 and 80% of the students return their forms. Again, I think in late 2000 we actually did a kind of global contact to all of the former students because the Centre's been running since 1993 I think and the idea was to gather any new ideas that were out there acknowledging that students may have moved on and that they might actually have progressed through the employment trail and now be in kind of relatively high management jobs. A few of them are."*	PJ34
Health audit questionnaire	Local people – random door-to-door	From focus groups developed 1.5 hour questionnaire in depth. Also shorter questionnaire on awareness of services. People were very willing to talk about their health and wellbeing, their community and what could be done to improve things.	*"a fabulous way to access the opinions of people because, as I say, it was people who weren't coming out necessarily and using services and when people consult"*	PJ33
Leaver survey	Beneficiaries of European projects	Until know has been co-ordinated at GB level, but specifically Scottish survey being prepared. Around 45-50% return rate.	*"it goes directly to beneficiaries and asks them – after they've left the project, what they feel the impact of the project has been and it asks them about whether they're in a job, whether they've retained the job that they got at the end of a project. Whether they've gone on to gain further qualifications. But it also asks them softer things about, you know, personal development as a result of that project and these sorts of things.."*	F4
Questionnaires/ survey	Training and development course users	Set up course. Fill in forms. Tutor evaluation mid-way, but not always written. Tutor can give opinion about what is going on.	*"I mean, I think if you're asking, em, for people's opinions, em, in a really in-depth manner, you really maybe need to do a survey, em, which we don't do."*	PJ30
Questionnaire	Children using a service and their parents	Simple questionnaire seeking feedback on the service.	*"our feedback from parents tends to be quite spontaneous. But we have acknowledged that we need to actually seek more formal feedback from parents as well, so we've developed questionnaires which we have yet to send out to get feedback and also from the other partners who either refer or you provide a service to them."*	PJ29

	Method	With whom	How	Issues	Who
	Speaking to clients	Clients	"If you speak to clients you get better information than sending out anything written."	"You don't tend to get completed written questionnaires back."	PJ26
	Street agent system	Residents	Visiting people every few weeks and asking 'what do you want to know' and 'what's the problem in your area'?	"And there's dangers here that people might say you are just pestering folk, but what they were reflecting was the more that they went back, was the more quality of relationships established, and the more quality of information was being shared. So, first thing it was dog fouling, the fifth time it was about Jimmy being bullied at school. So you can start to, you can, I think one of the things I would say to you is that the building up of a relationship with people over a period of time can help you to overcome the tendency to get basic stuff that everybody groans at about what people are looking for."	P10
	Survey	Residents	Door-to-door, on street, face-to-face Haven't undertaken as yet. Issues of finance – will be small scale	"surveys whether or not it's door to door or on the street. Em, we haven't actually undertaken any of those yet. We might be doing some in the future but that's going to have to be the – the way forward cos we've tried other things."	PG18
	Surveys	Individuals who express an interest in the project.	Seek feedback on the courses we are offering.	"as a consequence, we are looking at developing a drop-in facility because there was some interest in flexible learning in the area."	PJ34
	Surveys and face-to-face interviews	Residents	Ideally with independent researchers and a mix of qualitative and quantitative work	"it may be that it's better than an independent evaluator is asked to perform that role for a whole group of services, or a whole range of voluntary organisations, rather than one at a time. It would probably save money!"	P7
	Surveys, in-depth discussions with individuals, focus groups			"I don't think there's a best way, I think it's a combination."	F6
	Surveys, interviews	Residents	One-to-one	"To actually speak to people but then you have got an issue about cross-sectional representation which I'm sure you've had to grapple with before.". "And some of the best projects that we have seen, certainly in the last programme, where they have done their research prior to putting the proposal forward, the justification of the demand is best where they have conducted surveys or one-to-one interview seem to be best."	F5

		Method	With whom	How	Issues	Who
OTHER METHODS		Accessing existing research	Tenants	Tenant satisfaction survey – city wide	*"I'm trying at the moment to get access to the – the Council's surveys cos they've done, em, sort of tenants' satisfaction survey and they've done a housing needs survey and those are major, major exercises, spent lots of money in commissioning research, em, groups to do that. Em, but they're city-wide and the issue is that they break them down in terms of, em, the local management areas which doesn't match up the area with the SIP. Em, but I've been told that it's possible to re-code them into postcodes so then they could work for our SIP,"*	PG18
		Adverts in the local paper, free paper, leaflet drops	Residents	Soliciting opinions e.g. 'what do you think of these plans?'	*"hardly ever get anything back that way so I think it is going to have to be more proactive enough actually in carrying on going out or sending things out, hopefully getting stuff back. But it's – you – you – you tend to get the opinions of people if it's easy for them to do it, as you'll know yourself. A couple of tick boxes and it's fine. If you say – well, what's your views on this – then it's very difficult"*	PG18
		Be with them	Local community	*"Well, it's all a bit purist but be with them. Like consistently. Go and work with them. Live with them. Now, if that's not possible, you know, be with them over a long period of time. Get to know what their value base is, get to know what they believe in, get to know what's precious to them"*	*"If you want to know about kids, why do you call a public meeting. Don't call a public meeting. Hang about the chip shop with them and when they shout at you, you're a pervert, hanging about and chatting them up and all that, you get over all that stuff eventually. You need to be there for weeks and weeks and weeks. If you want to go where adults are, why do you call a public meeting? They don't work. Go to the supermarket."*	P13
		Holistic assessment	Residents	Identifying the key risks for different individuals and marginalized groups.	*"And that comes down to having an assessment system and it might be done by a social worker or health visitor or welfare rights worker but it might – but it would need to cover more than just their immediate respond – responsibilities. Or it could be done by – it could be done by – through research methods, through research surveys of samples and using the – and trying to identify risks for particular groups from a sample of those groups."*	P8

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Method	With whom	How	Issues	Who
Longitudinal work		Tracking what happens to people through the dynamics of exclusion.	*"The Scottish Council Foundation are doing some interesting – have done some interesting work in that whole area and even some of the earlier research that was done for the Executive proved that it can be chance events in people's lives that creates either being included or being excluded, you know."*	P9
Newsletter, Time to Talk booklet, roadshow	All residents	Residents can telephone or write to the project with any issues they want to raise.	*"There's about 17 communities in [name of SIP]. ... So that's been quite difficult for us to try and draw this new boundary. But people have been really good. I think they've realised, the people especially we are working with in the Community Forum, have realised for everybody in the area to benefit they've got to work together. And then with the newsletter going out, and things like we're doing a community calendar on [name of SIP], we're starting to hear the word more often."*	PG19
Seminars, workshops	Residents		*"They are good to a point but often they can be skewed by personalities of some of the residents"*	F5
Through on going work.	Project users	Access to people – needs analysis and opinions as they are using your services.	*"We've looked at more informal ways of getting people [opinions] e.g. social nights"*	PJ33

7.4   In addition to the above comments five respondents observed that their clients were in danger of suffering from survey/form filling 'fatigue'. (E1, P7, P9, P12, PJ27)

> *"People are probably surveyed to death. Could we ever invent or get the public sector organisations to agree that there was a simple – a one off opinion feeder that allowed attitudes to be captured towards a whole range of different types among the sector." (P9)*

The need to evaluate meant that participants in training and development courses had to fill in a number of forms.

> *"The tutors actually hand them out at the end and they are absolutely pig sick of it now. [LAUGHTER] There are classes that have been here for almost like two years now and they just look at like we've got horns on our head when we go through the door with all these forms." (PJ27)*

Consultations with local residents in SIP areas could also resulted in survey fatigue; one respondent opined that as new ways of consulting were tried there is now a danger of communities being 'focus grouped to death'.

> *"But the difficulty of this, and this is by no means a criticism, is people in certain areas feel survey to death. They are constantly being asked about this, that and*

the other, and whether they respond, I mean they must have very low response rates to lots of the questionnaires, I would think, to a lot of the questionnaires that are sent out, em, which then leaves you with the whole question again of, if you only have a 5% return, how do you... again what are you actually measuring? Are you really getting real views, or are you only getting the views of a small minority of people who may be, because they are self-selecting, not representative of the local population at all." (P7)

In light of this fatigue, another respondent stressed the need to make the process meaningful:

"people are surveyed all the time and you can get a bit of survey fatigue. I think that that's true to a certain extent so it's about making consultation and making opinion gathering meaningful." (P12)

A further respondent noted concerns for overload in the future:

"time and resources is always a major factor when you are decided you are having focus groups, you could go on with, another consideration would be although communities are questionnaired to death, we wouldn't want them to be focus grouped to death," (E1)

Interviewer issues (PG16, PG20, PJ32)

It was noted that who undertook the research was also important; two respondents working with young people remarked that there was a need for trust between the interviewer and interviewees:

"But having, we have project workers there, having someone that the young people feel 'he's actually quite a young, well young-ish, person'. A lot younger than me. Someone they can relate to, someone from [name of town], who knows what the problems are, eh, somebody who is not seen as an authority figure, but someone they can speak more equally with, ," (PG16)

"It's maybe taken them a couple of years to build up trust with these young people so that they will come and tell them about their drug use or whatever and ask for help. It's not something that a complete stranger could go in and do with a clipboard." (PG20)

One respondent working with young people with learning difficulties thought that it was difficult for someone new to work with them:

"I think a lot of the time it comes down to you need to gain the confidence of the young people. So for somebody new coming in, I think it's very difficult to come in and just sort of expect young people to feel comfortable with you, to be able to give you the eye contact and for you to be able to maybe understand their verbal skills or their eye pointing or whatever way they communicate." (PJ32)

Non-participants (F5, P10, P15, PJ25, PJ33)

Five respondents commented on issues relating to people that do not participate in social inclusion projects and soliciting their views: (PJ25,

"I suppose it would take – it would take, again, random kind of door tapping kind of exercises to do that. I don't believe that the way to do it is to identify those folk that don't normally participate and then send them a questionnaire through the

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post." (PJ25)

"We've a lot of people, if we are going to categorise people as a group of people living in an area, em, you've heard it a million times no doubt working for the Council, but it's the same faces that turn up at the same things, to say the same things. And that then becomes, if you like, set down as established fact, and you'd love to get beyond the community reps sometimes, sort of penetrate in to the residents and I think the best way to do that is, yeah, probably on a one-to-one. Actually asking them." (F5)

"when workers consult, it will often be the people they're working with, not the people that they're not working with and I think that that's the key for me." (PJ33)

One respondent highlighted that it had taken a concerted effort to get the views of non-participants:

"We knew that we wouldn't reflect the hotspots unless we made that extra effort to get in there. So we went the extra mile and continue to do that, and we knew that in our reporting back to the board, that if we didn't get enough feedback from the hotspots, we knew that we weren't getting the full picture. So we made sure that we did." (P10)

A final respondent noted the difficulty of involving people who were excluded:

"a lot of people who are very excluded or who we might define as very excluded, either don't see themselves as very excluded or if they do see themselves as excluded, wouldn't necessarily – a function of them being excluded is that they wouldn't necessarily put themselves forward to, you know, to be involved in – in some kind of information gathering that related to their own lives so I suppose you've got to come up with ways that people feel comfortable about giving that information" (P15)

8.0 Measuring changes in relationships

8.1 Question: Are users' relationships with family and friends improved by participation in social inclusion projects? Can this be assessed?

Table A19: Users' relationships with family and friends

Theme	Sub-theme	Eval	Funders	Policy	Prog.	Project	Total
Areas where social inclusion projects can help	Examples cited	2	1	2	3	10	18
Measuring the impact on relationships	Asking the participant	2	1	1		7	11
	Asking the participant's family			2		4	6
	Use of related indicators			2	2	2	6
	Other	1				1	2
Limitations	Limitations and difficulties		1	1	4	1	11
	Negative impact			3	1	3	7
Word of mouth	Word of mouth			2		4	6

8.2 Relationships

8.3 The majority of respondents thought that participation in social inclusion projects had an impact on their relationships with family and friends. A distinction was made by several respondents between projects that were establish to deal with family relationships, such as family support schemes, and projects that impacted indirectly on family relationship, for example by tackling isolation. One respondent said that if addressing relationships was not a core aim of a project they were unlikely to want to measure their impact in this area (PG18), and another noted that is was possible but did not expand on this (F5). One respondent articulated the time constraints of researching this (PJ30):

> *"Well, I would hope so, though we certainly haven't done any research or looked into that because we – basically from a time factor, because we're really, really busy." (PJ30)*

> *"The sort of groups, the community person, the community partnership team and things, you know, and then they're learning the skills of negotiation and working together and developing relationships, you know, the same as any of us. I'm not sure that's – you know, that's a bit sort of – I mean, we all improve in those things as we start to participate, don't we?" (PJ24)*

8.4 One respondent highlighted that it was very useful from a value for money point of view to know exactly how many people an intervention had benefited (P12).

"An example might be that somebody comes for money advice from a voluntary provider that we find some way to getting that customer, if they're OK with it, to go back and ask folk in their household to say, what difference has this intervention made? Are they less angry? Do they talk more? Do they open their mail or do they hide it? You know. It's just about I would guess looking at ways in which it's possible to assess in being practical.

LK: Is it a useful thing to know?

Yeah. Because, say a money advice enquiry costs you a fiver that's OK, that's not too expensive. But if that's benefiting four people or five people instead of one person, then I think the impact of your money is much greater." (P12)

"Yes. I think they can be and it's clear – in fact, there's the whole – the whole community development of ethos approach to regeneration assumes that collective action – ha ha – through family and friends would – collective action by people who have a common interest who may be related to each other, who may have existing social networks or may become friends – ha ha – who may become – ha ha ha – rivals as well or even worse – one would expect that successful social inclusion initiatives – regeneration initiatives will build on and will encourage that sort of collective action." (P8)

8.5   Respondents gave a number of examples of areas of strain where social inclusion projects could help, or were already helping:

- Improving parent/child relationships as a result of the parent participating in education or other social inclusion project (E2, P10, PJ24, PJ25, PJ27, PJ33, PJ34);

    "I think it makes a difference to their life in all sorts of kind of funny ways and different ways that they might start behaving differently in the house as a result of taking part in a fairly basic or simple learning programme. That would make a huge difference to how they then behave in the house and how their children then experience, you know, a complete I don't suppose completely, but certainly a different attitude from their mother or father or brother or whatever." (PJ25)

    "I think if you improve a parent's standing situation and confidence, it's almost taken as a giving in my opinion that somebody who has - sees themselves with a sense of worth and confidence, that will automatically improve their relationship with the child and there are practical ways we can back that up – looking at child health, diet, dental health, all these sort of stuff." (PJ33)

- Debt, poverty and homelessness can ultimately lead to families being split up - social inclusion projects can work to avoid this happening (P7, PG16);

    "Em, again I can only speak from evaluations that I have been involved with, em, through benefit take ups and certainly in terms of reported through the evaluation that was the case, that people's em, people's relationships had improved. Again, it's a very, very difficult thing to measure, apart from for that individual, as to whether their relationship has improved. Amongst families, just to give you an obvious example, debt or just poverty itself, can force families apart, and homelessness is the ultimate one in that sense, because once you are homeless and you are going to be re-housed, and somebody can be held at fault for allowing that situation to occur, and that can lead to break up of families as well,

so if the intervention prevents the break up of a family that's surely an improvement on the relationship." (P7)

- Securing better family relationships through family conferencing (P10, PG20);

"Em, from a general point of view, if somebody has achieved some kind of progress in their life then there will be a knock on effect on the relationships that they have. So, there's no doubt about that being the case. Em, some of it will be completely secondary, and it's a good thing to see it, and I think, you know, if part of the question is saying you should try and find ways in which you gather information about that as well then I think so.

LK: That is the second part of the question.

Em, but other things are more primary. Like the example about family conference co-ordinating by definition was aiming to secure better relationships with the families as well. Em, so I think you've got to look, in fact personally speaking, I would give far, far bigger focus to that question that is given. It's a secondary thing just now, but I think it should be primary concern, about an individual, their family, their peer groups being the most important catalyst for change. Much more important that we have given it recognition up until now." (P10)

- Improving parent/child relationships by involving parents in young people's education (E1, PG17);

"Em, it's quite fashionable now, especially for projects that have a younger client group, e.g. young people, people in school, em, to involve themselves with parents, because parents are an important aspect of a person's life, especially children, and certainly what we have learned from the case studies was that there is a network there between projects and parents, and they see that as an important aspect of their work. To what extent they could say that this was an effective way of delivering a service, or to what extent that was helping their clients, it's probably too early to say." (E1)

- Isolation born from living in poverty addressed by projects such as food co-ops (P13) and money advice (P12);

- Improving parent/child relationships by Involving parents in young people's sporting achievements (PJ22);

- Improving parent/child relationships by involving parents in young people's health (PJ33);

- Improving parent/child relationships as the child is getting to meet other children, for example at the project crèche (PJ27).

- Tackling social isolation by providing non-judgmental friendship to parents under stress from volunteers (PJ23);

- Children dealing with trauma which results in a strain on family relationships, for example if they are unable to sleep, - psychological intervention can help address this (PJ29);

- Tensions within the Asian community between first and second generation immigrants

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- community development work can help to build the capacity of the community (PG21);

- Isolation suffered by individuals with learning difficulties addressed through support projects (PJ32);

- Relationship breakdown with partner or parents addressed through the provision of supported accommodation (PJ31);

- Tackling isolation suffered by young carers through providing peer support groups (PG20);

- Provision of information on health to individuals with health difficulties that can improve their, and their families', quality of life (P12);

- Changing the culture of families and relationships (F6).

8.6   Respondents highlighted a number of ways that the impact of social inclusion projects on participant's relationships could be measured:

8.7   **Ask the participant**

- Ask the users (P7, PJ23, PJ28);

"But, so the question is are users relationships improved? Certainly, and it may be to assess that better you may ask the user and you may also try to ask their family as well. You know, there may be some form or a visit to the family might be a useful thing, you know, with a very user-friendly form." (PJ28)

- Asking children about their parents responses to their sporting achievements e.g. 'What did you do with your certificate when you took it home? Where is it now?" (PJ22);

- Take a small sample of people who have used the project undertake an in-depth study looking at the changed they have identified they have made to their life (PJ25);

- Opinion based research within a proper framework (E2);

- Engage with the users (E1);

- Measure changes in child' self-esteem before and after intervention (PJ29);

- Survey of children and parents (PJ29);

- Person centred plans (PJ32);

- Use of evaluation forms (PJ27);

- Information on leaver surveys of project users (F4).

8.8   **Ask the participant's family**

- Ask user's family (PJ28, PG19);

- Evaluating parents response to watching their children participate in sport (PJ22);

- Ask children about their parent's relationship (P7);

- Gather information from partner, family and friends (P12);

- Ask user's family and friends (PJ32);
- With clients permission, go back and talk to them and their family. A follow up to a client who has used a money advice service might be "What difference has this intervention made? Are you less angry? Do you talk more? Do you open your mail or just hide it?" etc. (P12)

8.9   Use of related indicators

- Analyse the number of contacts people have (P8);
- The amount of time they spend participating in voluntary organisations and voluntary activity (P8);
- Used questions in health and lifestyle survey (PJ33);
- Number of children who end up in the looked after system (P8);
- How many children stay on at school (PJ24);
- Take-up of adult education (PJ24);
- Childcare places (PG21);
- Access to play resources (PG21);
- Divorce and family break-up rate (PG20, P15);
- Police call outs to domestic incidents (P15).

8.10   Other

- Ask the volunteers working with them (PJ23);
- Project case studies asking the opinion of project manager (E1).

8.11   Limitations and difficulties

8.12   A number of limitations were highlighted. One respondent noted that it was an issue of how you dealt with any kind of qualitative research (PJ24). One respondent noted it would be interesting to work in depth with a group of participants to see how their lives had changed, but noted it would only be a small sample (PJ25). One respondent noted:

> *"you would either have to engage with the users or you would have to have a sophisticated way of gathering information from partners and family and friends, who are either living in these communities, or accessing particular services. I think it comes back to a question of whether or not it is worth gathering information on the opinions of an individual. We don't do it. I would be very, very surprised to hear if anyone else was doing it." (E1)*

8.13   One respondent highlighted a difficulty of using the incidence of lone parents in an area as an indicator of whether family relationships are improving, as they may have been 'imported' into the area as a result of requiring social housing (P7).

8.14   One respondent thought that it would be difficult and invasive to ask questions about individual's family life (PG20);

> *"I mean, yeah, I suppose it's not outwith the realms of possibility but it would be very difficult and very invasive I would imagine." (PG20)*

Another respondent thought that client confidentiality was an issue but not an insurmountable one (PG21).

8.15   On a practical level, one respondent noted that it was often difficult to get feedback from parents, and said the low response rate they had had when trying to evaluate their project, with children forgetting to give their parents letters, parents forgetting to send evaluation forms back etc. (PJ29). Another respondent observed that the timescales of the improvement can also make measurement difficult; a participant in a training course may then go on to apply for a job, but this process could take several years (PG16).

> *"Say, a mother manages to get childcare for her baby which means she can do training in basic computing, which means she can eventually apply for a job, or has been getting advice. I mean we could be talking two, three, four, five years. That's one of them, timescale. The other, again, is back to, 'well, how can pinpoint it?' How can you say it is definitely due to the SIP project. Life is never that simple, and monitoring and evaluation is all about proving that we are providing good value for money, so some of those longer term ones may be actually quite difficult to pin down to the SIP. That's a little more difficult." (PG16)*

8.16   One respondent called for realism in what social inclusion partnerships could expect to achieve, and remarked that SIPS were not a *'panacea for all ills'* (PG17).

8.17   One respondent from a funding agency noted that it was not something they currently requested because it did not feature in their measurable outcomes (F4).

> *"It's not one of it doesn't it doesn't feature in our list of measurable outcomes. That's not to say it's not of interest to us that sounds a bit heartless. [LAUGHTER] But it's not something we measure. No. Because we are, generally speaking, focusing on re-engaging people with the labour market and sustaining that engagement with the labour market beyond the lifetime of our funding. So it's not something that we would be looking at in any detail. No." (F4)*

Another respondent noted that this was not what the Scottish Executive were looking for:

> *"it would be taking sort of, em, monitoring and evaluation projects further than people in the Executive will feel comfortable with simply because it concerns users – the assumption is that if someone was using and benefiting - an individual who's using benefits from the service, then not only that individual but also their immediate family and acquaintances will get some direct benefit and if that person is fitter, happier, or employed, has more money or whatever – em, then that can only benefit the people within that community. Yeah, in theory, that could be measured". (P14)*

8.18   Negative impact

8.19   Two respondents observed a negative impact on an individuals homelife that can be caused by the pressures of being a community activist (P14, PG19).

> *"I think the people on the partnership board, and on the Community Forum and on some of the sub-groups, I would imagine they are so involved, because there is a bit of a strain put on the family because they have given so much of their time to voluntary work, eh, I think that might be quite difficult for them." (PG19)*

8.20   Three respondents highlighted the negative impact that participation in social inclusion projects can have on relationships, if the partner is not happy about the individual changing. One respondent highlighted the negative impact of people changing when they participated in social inclusion projects, noting that this was particularly a problem for women (P13).

> *"if you if you increase people's confidence, then they become happier folk, their quality of life is better and so on. In theory, that should brush off on others. However, plenty of stories particularly of women achieving who then upset the roles their new partners don't like it." (P13)*

A further respondent noted that raising aspirations do not necessarily make for happy relationships (PG17).

> *"I think we have to be ... realistic about the fact that people may want more, and that can put strains on a relationship. Yeah? Aspirations don't necessarily make for happy, you know, for happy relationships if it's about changing the relationship. So I think the answer to that is yes, it's a lot of what we are trying to do but let's be realistic, and say that there are strains on people's relationships in every community." (PG17)*

Another respondent said that they were only aware of the impact on participant's relationships when the impact was negative (PJ34).

One respondent noted that families can be the negative thing that projects can help with:

> *"a lot of family members can do a lot of damage within families. If you take it to extremes you are talking about abuse. And [name of organisation] volunteers can help where there has been abuse. There may be families, parents who have been abused in the past, and they can talk through that with their volunteers." (PJ23)*

8.21   However, this was dependent in part on the types of activity. The project working with children and sport did not notice any conflict as a result of children being involved in the project, but remarked that sport has a 'street credibility' which means that sporting

achievement is regarded positively by everyone (PJ22).

> *"I think in a way, to be honest, one of the things about sport is that it has so much sort of street credibility where it is the sort of thing that nobody suffers from being good at in terms of how they're perceived by others. Whereas if you're really good at maths, yes, you could have quite a hard time with the SIPs, you know. If you had aspirations towards a university career, you possibly [LAUGHTER] You could have a really hard time in the SIP." (PJ22)*

8.22   One respondent noted that a negative aspect of communities was poverty of ambition, and a peer suppression of aspiration (P9).

> *"one of the most powerful ways to engage the unengaged is through word of mouth. And I think that the network of family and friends does offer an opportunity to get into communities in another way. I think also however, there is another dimension to that which is actually quite a negative one and that is that – and this is down to poverty of aspiration – if wee Willie does well because of an intervention and a bit of support – then he might be getting above his station. You know, who does he think he is doing a sort of information – an ICT course? Who does he think he is getting to college? So there's this kind of peer suppression of aspiration" (P9)*

8.23   Word of mouth

8.24   A response to this question was given by six respondents who chose to answer the question in terms of individual participants recommending the project to family and friends (P9, P11, PJ25, PJ26, PJ30, PJ34,). Positive 'word-of-mouth' regarding the project was seen as an indicator of the quality of the project experience for participants.

> *"I can only talk through my own experience with this project then and, you know, you get people coming along that traditionally don't get involved in community activity like, say, that might come along and be fairly apprehensive about getting involved in whether it's a meeting or a class of some sort or whatever and as a result of that, you can see them becoming more confident, you know, and they'd then start to come along and get involved in all sorts of other things and it's the spin offs from that, that then start to experience in terms of, you know, husbands, wives, mothers, daughters or whatever, starting to come along and engage in some of your activities." (PJ25)*

One of these respondents gave the example of a Microsoft sponsored training project in Dublin that had guaranteed employment at the end of it. He said that the usual methods of marketing had not been necessary as the network in the community self-marketed (P9).

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9.0 Measuring changes in confidence

9.1 Question: To what extent can improvements in participants' self confidence be measured?

9.2 Respondents were in agreement that participants confidence was improved by participation in social inclusion projects, but varied in the extent to which they thought this was measurable.

Table A20: Measuring changes in confidence

Theme	Sub-theme	Eval	Funders	Policy	Prog	Project	Total
Methods	See change over time		1	1	3	6	11
	Part of evaluation process	2		1	2	4	9
	Need to ask participants/residents directly			4	2	3	9
	Soft indicators/frameworks	1	2	2	1	3	9
	Other			2		1	3
Proxies	Indicators	2		3	3	4	12
Issues	Community confidence				2		2
	Collecting data		1		2	1	4
	Limitations			2	3	3	8
	Other				1		1

9.3 Methods

9.4 See change over time

9.5 Ten respondents noted that if you were working with individuals participating in social inclusion projects over a period of time you saw the change in individuals confidence first hand (F5, P11, PG17, PG19, PG20, PJ22, PJ24, PJ26, PJ30, PJ32, PJ33). Of these respondents one referred specifically to children, noting the way they work with their peers, the way they relate to adults, and their body language (PJ22). One respondent thought that some elements were easier to measure than others:

> "Confidence comes from being able to do something that you couldn't do before. So from that point of view you can measure it. It's the feeling good bit that comes along with it, that's difficult to measure" (PJ26)

9.6 Part of Evaluation Process

9.7 Nine respondents observed that questions referring to confidence were part of their evaluation process (E1, E3, P8, PG18, PG19, PJ22, PJ27, PJ28, PJ31). Seven respondents noted that this was, or could be, part of an evaluation form (E1, E3, PG18, PJ27, PJ28, PJ30, PJ31). Of these one respondent said that they asked open-ended questions about what participants had got out of participation, and the responses were always around issues of improved confidence and improved esteem (E3).

> *"we simply asked them open-ended stuff about, you know, what did you get out of this? And invariably it came down to things like improved confidence, improved esteem, improved skills and I mean, that kind of thing has a I think a positive effect because people bounce into jobs or other jobs on the back of that. They're also confident about more confident about maybe, you know, other members of their family can do." (E3)*

Another of these respondents expressed the opinion that this kind of information could not be gained quantitatively or collectively (E1). A final respondent gave examples of the types of questions that could be used in the evaluation namely *"how nervous do you feel?", "do you have difficulty describing and explaining things?", "do you feel embarrassed?", "are you worried about learning new things?"* (PJ27)

9.8   One respondent noted that this information would be included in write ups of group work (PJ22), and another respondent suggested that project workers should be encouraged to write descriptions of participants when they start in order to have a reference point for future gains in confidence. Finally, two respondents noted the need to track respondents confidence over a period of time (P8, PG19).

> *"I think a tracking system is good, and think.. not that you want to be chasing people all over the place but I think it has to be long term tracking as opposed to, you know, how did you get on with that course, what are you going on to do next? I think you would have to get people to agree to kind of go on with them. Like our taster sessions for [name] Campus we've had recently. A lot of students that have finished these taster sessions have now signed up in August there to go on and do longer courses. It's the first steps back and then measuring that, and being able to track them. I know they lose touch with people but, em, it's a big piece of work for somebody! [they laugh]" (PG19)*

9.10   Need to ask participants/residents directly

9.11   Nine respondents identified the need to actually ask participants and residents directly (P7, P8, P14, P15, PG17, PG20, PJ22, PJ23, PJ25). One respondent noted that it can only really be measured by the person that feels more confident (P7), and another said that the best way of doing it is to talk to people (P15). One respondent noted that there were relevant questions on mental and physical health in their Family Review questionnaire(PJ23).

> *"When I do the family review, there are questions but I get into a conversation with the family. 'Cos I've known them, because I'm the first person to meet them from [name of organisation]. Em, and I can ask "is this any better", "is that any better" "are you feeling better about that or better about this". And somebody this month actually said very definitely yes, I feel much more confident now. Somebody else was so, she said I never thought I would get a job, I never had the confidence before. And that was a direct result of having a volunteer. So, yeah, that's how we measure it. By asking people." (PJ23)*

Other suggestions included questionnaires (P8, PG20), focus groups, one-to-one

interviews before and after engaging with activities (PJ25) and getting the information from participants (P14). One respondent working with children highlighted the need for an interviewer that children knew and trusted, and stated that his project also sought opinions for the children's parents, group leaders, head teachers, coaches (PJ22).

> *"I think for us, as a project, we'll sort of say, well, these are the people who are more intimate with the children. We might see them once a week for an hour these people are working with these children every weekday, you know, on that sort of basis. So they're in a better position to judge this but all we sort of really do is take their judgement of it in terms of that aspect." (PJ22)*

A final respondent said that this information would be difficult to get through a People's Panel as the answers would be trite (PG17).

> *"It depends what you mean by participants. If you mean participants in a particular project then I think I think you can start to, by having that relationship with people that you can actually talk to them, about that, because you know them, and because you have been doing work with them, where you talk about what you mean by self-confidence, and what's important to them, how did they feel at the beginning and how do they now feel? So I think at a project level I think you can do that, I don't think necessarily, I think it's more difficult let say at the People's Panel to ask questions about self-confidence. I think you'd get fairly trite answers to it." (PG17)*

One respondent noted that in some cases there needed to be a relationship and a degree of trust between the interviewer and interviewee (PJ22).

9.12 Soft indicators /frameworks

9.13 Nine respondents discussed soft indicators systems (E2, F4, F5, P9, P12, PG20, PJ26, PJ29, PJ34). A project working with children and young people were using "Myself as a Learner" which looks at children's perceptions of themselves as learners (PJ29).

> *"... there's a measure that's called Myself as a Learner which is looking quite specifically at children's perceptions of themselves as a learner. So it's kind of school focused and learning focused so we used that and also then had teachers complete their ratings of children's self esteem the children that they actually teach sort of before and after an intervention." (PJ29)*

Four other respondents said they were using, or know of project who were using, the Rikter scale (P9, P12, PJ26, PJ34).

> *"One of the the New Futures Fund project that I mentioned earlier on has introduced a new measuring tool based around the individual. It's called the Rikter scale. Have you heard of it?*
>
> *LK: Yeah.*
>
> *And it regularly assesses the individuals and how they feel about themselves as the project progresses and one of the aspects that it tries to pick on is how good they feel about their own confidence. And it's a scale of 1 to 10 and they score it*

day 1 of the project, they get scored on their confidence maybe 1 out of 10 pretty low self esteem, low confidence levels. And as the project develops through the months, regularly they get the same question they got asked and they mark how they feel. So there is a mechanism that allows you to measure self confidence that you've got in the New Futures Fund and if confidence dips, you can then start to look at, well, what's going on in that person's life that's caused that? If it's increasing, then you can say, well, what are the things we did with the individual that helped put the confidence levels up. So it's actually a good tool to allow you to see what kind of thing interventions and supports the individual needs or would need less of." (P9)

One funder said that they would expect the projects they fund to be measuring confidence through soft indicators or soft measuring techniques (F4). Another funder articulated that if an individual accessed training or got a job an increase in self-confidence was an inevitable part of that (F6).

One respondent talked about the framework that he used when evaluating:

"It's quite crude in one sense, you know, it's got five or six, em, statements, and therefore it loses a lot of the fine grain stuff, but then it's not reasonable to put up a greater number of statements that are clearly distinguishable from each other. So, em, you can actually get some shifts in confidence that would not be picked up by that kind of crude framework, so yes there would be a margin of error. And, em, people do feel differently about themselves on different days, so it's not that they are wrong one day and right the next, it's just that they do feel differently, and therefore their answer is different. And sometimes people's score goes backwards. For example, you can actually have a question that said I do understand all the ways in which I can find out about possible vacancies, and somewhat could start a work-related programme and score themselves quite highly on that, and on the first day of the course they realise they don't use you know contract announcements in newspapers, they don't use their informal contact with people that are in employment, so by the end of that day 'oh blimey! I thought I was a four I'm actually a two'. You know, that doesn't mean that that experience hasn't been good for them, it means that they are starting from a new baseline of greater realism about where they are. " (E2)

9.14   Other

9.15   Other ways of assessing increases in confidence were suggested by three respondents that involved looking a work that participants had produced (P10, P13, PJ22). Three respondents suggested video diaries (P10, P13, PJ22), one noted written work and photographs (P13), and a project working with children also suggested written work, noting that it was difficult for pre-school children to articulate certain emotions (PJ22).

"What we do there quite often is we'll video maybe like the first session that we have and then maybe the seventh session and then sort of tenth, eleventh session and then we'll sort of look at these three videos and you can actually see evidence of children's increase in self confidence in a variety of ways. In the ways that they work with their peers, in the ways that they relate to other adults within the group, you know, their whole body language can sort of show evidence of their increase in self-confidence." (PJ22)

9.16   Indicators

9.17   Twelve respondents highlighted indicators that could be used as proxies for increasing confidence (E1, E3, P11, P12, P13, PG18, PG19, PG21, PJ22, PJ24, PJ25, PJ28). These were:

Table A21: Proxies for increased confidence

Indicator	Example
Getting job 4 responses (P13, PG18, PG19, PJ22)	*"I think funders if they want to know about the independence of young people, and that's what the projects are prepared to fund, then, you know, show them how you're helping these young people become independent and give them examples, show them the workbooks that people have done, show them the fact that 6 of the 12 kids have now got jobs. These kids were unemployable before." (P13)*
Attending events/ meetings/ training courses 4 responses (P11, P13, PG21,PJ25)	*"I mean, you couldn't speak on people's behalf and say, by the way, you're definitely a lot more confident than you used to be, but you but you could you can see it. You know, people who have maybe signed up and come to maybe two or three events or meetings or training courses or whatever, and have always called off at the last moment, all of a sudden appear for maybe the fourth one and they actually turn up and, you know, you know how they're feeling and you do all you can to make them feel a bit more comfortable and make the session as informal as possible to increase their their confidence." (PJ25)*
Speaking up at meetings, joining in debate 5 responses (P11, P12, P13, PG21, PJ28))	*"I think there are a number of measures that can be applied, eh, because there is the thing about the confidence of actually attending meeting, there's the issue about their participation in meeting, and I mean by participation in the meeting, not just actually turning up to a meeting, I mean the confidence in actually being able to speak out and question or contribute to the debates that are taking place at meetings and events within their area. So there are these things about self-confidence, and it's about also the number of people who want to then get involved or engage in local committees or local discussion groups, and then the number of people who want to get involved in say, the social inclusion partnership process." (P11)*
Becoming activists or volunteers 4 responses (E3, P11, PJ24, PJ25)	*"...one of the issues that we were kind of interested in was the area of personal development skills and what people what the original volunteers themselves thought they'd get out of it I mean, we simply asked them open-ended stuff about, you know, what did you get out of this? And invariably it came down to things like improved confidence, improved esteem, improved skills and I mean, that kind of thing has a I think a positive effect because people bounce into jobs or other jobs on the back of that." (E3)*

Indicator	Example
Using community resources/IT resources 3 responses (P11, PG19, PJ25)	*"when I worked in the [name] Partnership, there were some people that came in, I only worked there for a year and a half, but some people would come in just to do .. it was 'Computers for the Terrified' and it was lap-tops we had. They'd come into a training suite one day a week, and they would come in and they were absolutely terrified to touch the machines in case they broke them, and oh my heavens it was really nightmare. And see within six weeks, the difference in their confidence. They just sat down and got battered away into it. And yet it's quite amazing seeing the change in people." (PG19)*
Making complaints, how constructive the complaints are 2 responses (PG21, PJ24)	*"I think that, you know, that that working with people and seeing them move on and their confidence you know, that's the best bit of of work, if you like, you know, gaining that confidence. And I'm just trying to think how you sometimes I think in housing terms with tenants that you how you measure confidence is by the groups that complain actually. [LAUGHTER] Because they, you know, they have confidence in their own ability to be able to to be able to complain about about different things." (PJ24)*
Negative indicator if community activists give up 1 response (E1)	*"There's no guarantee that that's going to be a positive experience, because I have seen community activists resign posts and fall by the wayside, em, I'm sure that's been a good experience for them in some way, but if they are resigning or leaving because they are finding it difficult, then my view is they have not benefited in some way, eh, in relation to confidence. It's a difficult one. Community activists could be brought into the partnership and I think there's almost a learning curve for that person where they picking up information, they're learning about the partnership, they are learning about what is involved, but then if the partnership don't harness that in terms of what that person's got to offer, then the chances are they'll be sucked into a bureaucracy and eventually they'll say that's enough I've had enough." (E1)*

9.18   **Issues**

9.19   **Limitations**

9.20   Eight respondents expressed reservations about trying to measure increases in confidence (P13, P14, PG17, PG18, PG19, PJ22, PJ28, PJ32). One respondent was not sure if it was possible to measure improvements in participants beyond seeing that it has happened (PG17), and another was not sure the extent to which it could be measured objectively (P14).

> *"Em, but yeah, I would think the working assumption would be of course if community activists access services of course their confidence will be improved but I I wouldn't know how I would go about measuring that in a scientifically respectable way. I suppose I would just tend to go along and ask them. [LAUGHTER] You feel more self confident now than you were before you joined the service, em, but I dare say that would not be a respectably, a scientifically respectably way to do it." (P14)*

One respondent thought that participants don't 'coldly' think about whether their confidence has increased (PJ28), and another respondent noted that measuring it was a subjective process, down to the judgement of staff (PJ32). Another noted that there were very different skill levels amongst individuals being evaluated (PJ22).

> *"I think if you look at it in particular things that are important or that the young person never did previously, then you'll clearly be able to see that. But again, it's all down to judgement isn't it? I judge that you're better at this, this year. I judge that you seem to be more confident and you're happier with your appearance or, you know, happier to be within a group or to talk to people you don't know."*
> *(PJ32)*

A final respondent was unsure that he could 'justify' these kind of evaluations (PG18).

> *"Well, again, some of the projects do do this but it's based on, em, what the person themselves say to have you felt more confident on or during or after the course? Em, and that's obviously one level and it's probably the easiest level. Whether or not there's any sort of like, em, sort of more psychologically sort of found ways [LAUGHTER] - you could actually do it and sort of see people as they come in and then sort of get an independent assess assessment of them afterwards. That could be one way but again, that wouldn't be the sort of thing that I don't think we could justify. It might be something that we could link into if we say that, em, psychologically a psychology department was wanting to do something along the lines of, em, say, art and, em, individuals' confidence, em, an art project that could focus in on ours, see whether or not that actually makes any difference." (PG18)*

One respondent said that issues of benchmarking were sometimes overlooked:

> *"we tend not to be very good at putting some kind of benchmark at the beginning because we're so excited about starting something, you know, a new project or a new course, you know. And I think now, back to this business of outcomes, we're now encouraging people to start writing down descriptions of folk when they start - when we start working with people. We've been out with them and they couldn't look me in the eye, wasn't more than 3 words in a row, monosyllabic answers and so on and that was 23rd February 19 whatever. Three months later, we assume that the programme's planned and so on, Liz is now speaking to everybody and all this kind of stuff and you move on. So you're actually articulating that, you know." (P13)*

One respondent noted the issue of tracking:

> *"I don't suppose it's just all the service users, it's the people that volunteer maybe one day a week and the difference it makes to them, and from that voluntary work what they go on to do as well. It would be good to be tracking how they are going on." (PG19)*

9.21 Community Confidence

9.22   Two respondents raised issues of community confidence. One respondent working with ethnic minority communities observed the need for communities to have a cultural identity (PG21),

"it's a big issues for us cos, em, a lot of the issues our communities face are confidence based, very much so. If you take a kid who's been to school and bullied cos he's Asian all his life, confidence is THE issue. Em, and and belief in cultural identity and self confidence which stems from cultural identity is a massive issue and that's why we're looking to engage a lot of our groups and community leaders in political awareness, you know, earlier I talked about political conceptualisation, raising of political awareness." (PG21)

Another felt that a measure of success would be individuals not feeling embarrassed to say where they live (PG18). This respondent, from an area with a long history of regeneration projects, also noted that there were many individuals in the community who were not lacking in confidence and who had high expectations of services (PG18).

"a lot of the people a lot of the people that seem to use these courses aren't exactly unconfident. They're they're quite forthright and they they've got high expectations of what the service is supposed to be providing for them. Em, and if they don't get it, they'll be the first to actually say which is fine, em, but we probably know that and they'll they might say, oh yes, we're more confident now but they were pretty confident to start with." (PG18)

9.23 Collecting data

Four comments were given regarding collecting soft indicators (F5, PG16, PG20, PJ34). One respondent opined that questionnaires can be a 'bit dodgy' because participant's self confidence can be great one week and they next week it might be much lower because they had a terrible experience an hour before, and thought that a soft indicator framework might help (PG20):

"It can be measured I mean, there's various questionnaires and things like that, that try to look at self confidence. It just can be a bit [pause] dodgy at times, you know. The self confidence one week might be great and the next week it might be rubbish because they were just, you know, had a terrible experience an hour before or whatever. Em, so there are ways of doing it but what we're we're wanting to look at it kind of in a bigger picture and that's why we're looking at the whole soft indicator thing and hopefully it's going to help us get a grip of what we're wanting to look at." (PG20)

A respondent from a training project said that using soft indicators had highlighted a very big difference in confidence levels between groups accessing their services in a different way, for example direct access compared to New Deal (PJ34):

"...there was a difference in the two profiles which seemed to indicate that women who were doing the New Deal Lone Parents Group which was a shorter course had kind of higher levels of confidence to start off with. So their movement was slightly less and they had more supportive family networks than the family networks than the full-time students had." (PJ34)

One funding agency noted that a recognised framework that allowed as assessment of

self confidence would be useful (F5), but stated:

> "I think it would have to be something that came from a respected organisation that had developed it, this is a model for measuring self confidence and it was subject to some sort of scrutiny from agencies who operate in that field if you like." (F5)

One respondent identified a need for training (PG16):

> "This is one I am quite keen to try and do more work on. Because, again it is distance travelled. It's not what you or I or the project worker may think of the impact of the SIP, it's what the end user feels. Have they benefited. Qualitative work is always a little bit tricky and may require an investment in training and time that we don't have at our SIP. But yes I think it is important" (PG16)

9.24   Other

9.25   One final respondent observed a need to learn from the human resources work on personal development in the private sector (PG21).

> "We need to think about the HR models used in private private sector, in industry, and borrow some of them and relate them to the sort of outputs that we're looking for. But, as I say, we've just started that work." (PG21)

10.0 Partial outcomes

10.1 *Question "To what extent can partial outcomes such as movement toward job readiness be measured?"*

10.2 Few of the organisations thought that they were directly involved in the provision of job readiness skills, with only the two IT training projects and the environment intermediate labour market initiative noting that they provided support on issues such as interview skills, CV preparation etc

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Table A22: Job readiness

Theme	Sub-theme	Eval.	Funders	Policy	Prog.	Project	Total
Job readiness	Elements of job readiness	1	2	1	2	3	9
	Barriers to finding employment			1	1	1	3
Measurement	Indicators	3	1	3	3	4	14
	Issues relating to measurement	1	2	3	4	1	11
Issues	Role of employment in social inclusion	1		3		1	5

10.3 Elements of job readiness

One respondent thought that it was easier to measure than self-confidence:

> *"I would have said that movement toward job readiness it is probably easier to measure that than self-confidence, because, if you like, the job readiness, OK you are measuring a progression, and again maybe you are measuring a progression in self-confidence but at no point do you know where the self-confident thing – when are you self-confident? No, I don't think that there is that yardstick, whereas with the job readiness that's something that we, and all people in this kind of field, are quite comfortable with, being able to assess if someone can fit into the world of work is something we are experienced about, we all do it." (F5)*

10.4   Respondents highlighted 15 elements to job readiness where social inclusion projects could offer assistance (further elements arose from a discussion of the measurement of job readiness - see below)

Assertiveness/confidence building	2 (E1, F5, PG16, PG20, PJ27)
CV preparation	2 (PG20, PJ27)
Interview skills	1 (PJ27)
Information on available jobs	1 (PG20)
Assistance with letter writing	1 (PG20)
Training on how workplaces work	1 (PG20)
Supported employment	1 (PG20)
Intermediate Labour Markets	1 (F6)
Work experience	1 (PJ34)
Communication skills	1 (P10)
Qualification skills	1 (P10)
Outlook on own prospects	1 (P10)
Information on training required	1 (PJ26)
Turning up on time	1 (F6)
Social side (ie attitude and behaviour)	1 (F6)

10.5   Barriers to finding employment

Three respondents (P12, PG20, PJ26) identified barriers to individuals finding employment including lack of basic skills (PG20), crime, drink drugs, Sexual health, lack of ambition, chaotic lifestyle and low self esteem (P12), and lack of information about impact of employment on benefits (PJ26).

> "an example of another organisation I've worked with in the voluntary sector were West Lothian Youth Action Project who work in the main with young folk I think between the ages of 12 and 19, who are either in difficulty and are at risk of getting into different types of difficulty and it might be not going to school, it might be getting involved in crime, it might be drink and drugs related, it might be sexual health related, you know, a whole range. What they find with a lot of young folk they're working with is that what they lack is ambition. That sounds awful judgmental. What you mean by that is that they don't see any opportunity." (P12)

10.6   Indicators

10.7   A number of indicators were identified by 14 respondents (E1, E2, E3, F4, P9, P12, P15, PG16, PG19, PG20, PJ24, PJ25, PJ28, J32):

Table A23: Indicators of job readiness

Indicator	Comments
Number of individuals getting qualifications 4 responses (E1, E2, F4, P15)	*"I suppose what traditionally you would measure that by against what qualifications people had but I mean, qualifications is only just a very small part of it." (P15)*
Number of individuals undertaking training/learning activities 3 responses (E1, PG16, PJ24)	*"Quantitatively it can probably be done, in terms of giving you an indication of people's learning activities, their training, looking at qualifications and whether or not they are moving toward a position, for an individual however it might be a question of confidence, it might be a question of opportunity. Some may be difficult to gauge, and I think that's more the qualitative aspect of research work." (E1)*
Tracking of individual's progress 3 responses (E3, P9, PG19)	*"you can measure the outcomes if you track if your system is such that you're able to track and people stick around more, it would do it. So, I mean, you can measure it. I think you can measure job readiness." (E3)*
Number of individuals getting jobs 2 responses (E2, PJ25)	*"I mean, I would hope that that would be that would be one of the kind of easiest ones to to measure and, you know, the easy measurement of that, I suppose, is that if people going into jobs" (PJ25)*
Number of individuals working with job counsellors/ coaching/ guidance 2 responses (PJ28, PJ32)	*"I can do that and then we have another bit of our organisation called Into Work that do specific job coaching. So we work quite closely together to make sure that, you know, I'm checking that they have support on the family side and that they can talk about it." (PJ32)*

Several other indicators were identified once each; the number of individuals remaining in employment (PJ25), seeking work by looking at the newspaper (P12), having interviews (P12), and developing links with individuals in employment (P12) were noted. The number of individuals with improved literacy e.g. ability to write letters (PG16), and the number of young offenders not re-offending (PG20) were also identified. Use of framework of competencies was identified by one respondent (E2) and the views of staff were also observed by one respondent (E1).

10.8   Issues relating to measurement

10.9   Issues relating to measurement were noted by (E2, F4, F6, P7, P8, P12, PG16, PG17, PG18, PG20, PJ30). One respondent highlighted the importance that employers put on job readiness, but opined that it was not a partial outcome. The issue, for him, was that participants got as much as possible from the course (PG18).

> "I suppose the issue is that a lot of the places that are delivering such as a job readiness thing, actually that would be I mean, one course the basic skills course or whatever in, you know, it's not a partial outcome. I suppose it's whether or not, you know, people after 3 weeks of doing that sort of thing is actually, em, sort of giving up, em, giving up and then found that they've still managed to get some benefit from it. Em, I suppose the way it can be measured is to ensure that over the life of it, if it's a 10 week course, every 3 weeks or something, how do you feel you're better prepared to A, B, C, D now than when you started the course?" (PG18)

One respondent noted it was difficult to find an adequate measure for work skills (PG16). Two respondent remarked that job readiness was one of the easier indicators to establish. One of these respondents noted that it was easier to measure than self-confidence, because it was difficult to establish when someone could be deemed 'self-confident', whereas job readiness had the yardstick of getting a job (F5). One respondent thought that this information was not useful at a programme based level because it was difficult to aggregate the outcomes, noting it was much easier to do this with statistics (PG17).

> "I think we've got to be aware of the fact that social ... the SIP is more than the sum of its parts, it's not just a collection of projects, em, and if all we are doing at the end of the day is about ticking off projects, and we don't look at the links between the projects, we don't look at the overall impact, and a lot of what we are talking about before about quality of life is about those overall impact. So I think we have to have a difference between what I might want to know, yes about a project, OK, tell me your quarterly monitoring, who you're dealing with, what particular issues you are dealing with with people at the moment. What I might use from that in terms of the year end evaluation, probably would have been higher level information about numbers through the doors and these sort of things, but there may be some aggregating of some of the stuff we were talking about, about people's perception of impact in terms of self-confidence, but that is going to be, it's not going to be necessarily at a specific individual level, it's just going to maybe talk about the client group, their user group as a whole." (PG17)

One respondent noted the issues of monitoring at programme level:

> "I think we've got to be aware of the fact that social ... the SIP is more than the sum of its parts, it's not just a collection of projects, em, and if all we are doing at the end of the day is about ticking off projects, and we don't look at the links between the projects, we don't look at the overall impact, and a lot of what we are talking about before about quality of life is about those overall impact." (PG17)

One respondent noted that such measurements were useful for funders:

> "It can be used by funders, funders who want to make sure that people, that projects, aren't creaming people who are close to work, to achieve that tangible outcome like a qualification or a job, so it can be used to make sure that they deal with the people who are furthest from job readiness. And that needs to be done in two ways. One, using a framework of this sort and secondly, specifying that they will deal with people who have been unemployed for more than 20 months, 24 months, for example. Em, because whatever framework you use people can still cream, so you have to specify to a project what client group they are for, and then you can specify the framework within which progress will be measured, how it will be measured, and, you know, the usual tangibles are qualifications and job." (E2)

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10.10   One respondent noted that their participants were a long way from actually getting a job and due to childcare responsibilities many of them were not actually looking. This respondent said that sometimes participants came back to work at the project as crèche workers and, occasionally, as tutors (PJ30).

10.11   Two respondents said that participation in community activity was the first step toward job readiness (P7, P8).

> *"I think that going through what a lot of the pathways to job readiness are, em, I think it is participation in a lot of these things, I also think it can be things like a different view of what work is about, and a difference between viewing it just as a source of income to being a source of well-being, 'cos I think you will be much more ready to participate in the workplace, and actually much more of a prospect as an employee, to an employer, if you actually think I am doing this because I want to do this rather than because I feel compelled to do this. And it is something that you will really want to do. I think all these things are outcomes, or partial outcomes we should attempt to measure." (P7)*

10.12   Several respondents observed that there was a qualitative aspect to assessing job readiness. One respondent noted some elements were easier to measure than others:

> *"It's very easy to measure whether a person has been on a training course. Perhaps improved their literacy, or their ability to write letters, or to feel informed. That's very straightforward. Some of the more ephemeral, attitudinal aspects could be quite difficult to measure." (PG16)*

One respondent remarked that it was a matter of judgement on the part of individuals and staff (PG17).

> *"I do think that is the reality, again it is very individually focussed and what you are asking, I think you are asking for judgements. And you might … I think you can ask people who have been involved in a particular project where they think they are, and you might also be asking staff to make judgements as well. And whether you necessarily believe they necessarily want to get into that type of assessment…" (PG17)*

One funding agency mentioned that they would not necessarily expect job readiness information to be in a quantitative form (F6). A further respondent said that in order to be ready for employment, individuals had to value themselves, to have perspective on where they are at, and be able to acknowledge what they can contribute to a work place, and that this can be measured by asking their opinion (P12).

10.13   One respondent noted that as unemployment falls, the participants in social inclusion projects are increasing those most distant from the labour market.

> *"as unemployment falls then we are dealing more and more with people who are more distant from the labour market. In other words, their journey through unemployment is much longer. And unless they can see that they are making progress towards a job and that is measurable, and they can be presented with it then they soon lose heart, so in terms of motivation and commitment and just keeping people engaged." (E2)*

This respondent also said that in using frameworks there must be conditions such as it is only used amongst people who have been unemployed for more than 24 months, for example, to ensure that like is compared with like. A final point made by the respondent was that we were cleverer at assessing the fine gradations that aren't related to tangible outcomes, for example by asking participant's partners about changes in the participant's confidence etc (E2).

10.14   One respondent articulated that, in her opinion, a job readiness course was successful if the participants were nearer to getting a job, even if they were not actually job ready. The same respondent highlighted a difficulty that had arisen when working with young people leaving care, namely that the job vacancies did not occur at the same time as the individual being ready for employment (PG20).

10.15   One respondent from a funding agency said that job readiness was one of their targets and they asked organisations they funded to report on both full and part qualifications gained (F4).

10.16   Role of employment in social inclusion

10.17   Three comments were made about the role of employment in social inclusion (E3, P8, P10, P11, PJ32) . One respondent raised questions about the quality of jobs that social inclusion project led to, and highlighted the issue of benefits penalties begin applied to individuals who did not participate in, for example, literacy projects. He queried how suitable the training would be if participants were only there because they feared benefit sanctions (P11).

> *"I think the difficulty is you can measure it, people's readiness for employment, but that's if you take social inclusion as being about employment. The difficulty is about what kind of jobs you are making people job ready for." (P11)*

10.18   Another respondent also raised concern about the types of job that participants were being prepared for, and also raised the issue of competition between agencies who were trying to place people in jobs for the available jobs (E3). A respondent working with young people with learning difficulties said that their parents often had a 'staid impression' of what a job is, and thought that their children would be unable to work (PJ32).

10.19   One respondent noted that using jobs as the focal point for getting people ready for employment was not helpful, and felt that it was not the SIP's job to get people work, but rather to concentrate on the 'eternal barriers' that stop people from thinking that it is even worth looking for a job (P10).

> "It's not the SIPs' jobs to get people work, and to concentrate on the economic front of things. I don't think so. I think there's enough of that kind of service around, and the new one shop agency is much more recognising that as well. So actually put the responsibility where its due for that, but concentrate much, much more on the eternal barriers that people have got that prevents them believing in the first place that its even worth them looking for a job." (P10)

> "I think you can use – you can use – you could probably use – use that as some evidence of becoming less included if you follow the model of moving out of poverty through work – ha ha ha – if you follow the government mantra – ha ha ha – then it ought to be a measure. But there are many people who – who – for whom paid job readiness may not – may never be an adequate measure and one of the things I'm conscious of is that there are – there are at least twice as many people on long term – people of working age in Fife on incapacity benefit than there are which are employed and in some areas of disadvantage that goes up to as much as 4 times the level of registered unemployed are these hidden unemployed." (P8)

11.0   Measuring quality

11.1   Quality

11.2   Question: Can quantitative indicators reflect issues of quality of service provision?

Table A24: Quantitative indicators

Theme	Sub-theme	Eval.	Funders	Policy	Prog.	Project	Total
Quantitative indicators	Number of users as an indication of quality	1	1	3	2	7	14
	Limitation of number of users as a measure	2		2	2	6	12
	Need to reflect quality of user experience	1			3	1	5
	Need both qualitative and quantitative	1	1	2	1	1	6
	Difficulty in comparing quantitative indicators				1	2	3
	Bending service to meet targets				1	1	2
	Funders expect quantitative information				1	2	3

Theme	Sub-theme	Eval	Funders	Policy	Prog	Project	Total
	Cost of monitoring and evaluation				1	1	2
	Other comments	1	1	4		1	7

11.3 Number of users as an indication of quality

11.4 Many of the respondents to this question discussed it in terms of whether the numbers of individuals using a project was an indication of the quality of the service provided.

11.5 14 respondents (E2, F6, P8, P11, P12, PG17, PG19, PJ22, PJ23, PJ26, PJ28, PJ29, PJ30, PJ31, PJ34) agreed that the number of people using the service was a indication of some degree of quality, with one noting that it can be an indication but declined to comment further (P11). One respondent noted that people do not come back if they have a bad experience (PG17).

> "People don't come back if they don't have a good experience, do they? Yes, I think there are some crude indicators that can tell you was the service needed in the first place, was it trusted? That's about quality, it's about how people perceive. Did people get what they thought they were going to get, in the way that they thought they were going to get it? Those affect quality. Oh yeah. It's like business, if you open a shop and no-body comes to it then you close it down again, so yeah, definitely." (PG17)

> "Well, I suppose in certain aspects – I mean, you know, we – some of the evaluations we do will ask things like how did you find this training day? You know, we rate it and then we'll sort of say in our reports, 80% of people on the training day rated it as excellent, and 20% as very good. So I suppose in the sense that's what that is, isn't it? That's a quantitative indicator that's reflecting the quality. Is that right?" (PJ22)

One of these respondents remarked that if a project was only getting a low number of users it could be because there was no demand for the service, they marketed themselves badly or the service they provided was 'rubbish' (P12). Another said that it was and indication, but it was what people were doing while they were at the project that indicated quality (PG19). One respondent observed that there could be a positive reason for people dropping out of training courses, for example because they had found employment (F6).

> "I mean, if you've got a drop out rate off a course sometimes course you know, training courses can have a positive drop out rate in that you're training what people are getting experience on an issue that means that they're job ready before the end of the course and they could go off and get jobs. But usually the drop out rate tells you there's something wrong with the quality of a course. So, yes, in that sense, yeah." (F6)

This view was echoed by another respondent (PJ26):

> "It gives some indication. Yeah. If we're getting nobody into jobs, then there's

something terribly wrong and if we're getting a lot of people into jobs, then we're doing something right but the actual quality of what those clients receive in between, only goes some way but I don't think it's the whole picture." (PJ26)

11.6   Five respondents said that individuals returning to participate in a project was an indication of the quality of the experience (E2, P12, PG17, PJ23, PJ30). One of these respondents remarked that word spreads about good projects, and the number of users is maintained, while poor projects might have an initial burst of users but then it would tail off (E2).

> *"Things like return visits, things like the market penetration, particularly over time. You know good projects, the word spreads by, is spread by the users, and the growth in the number of users is really quite steep and is maintained. Poor projects might have an initial burst, but then it tails off, so the number of people using it, the scale of penetration of the market and the way that line continues to grow. You know, is it spreading by word of mouth? These aren't necessarily measures of quality, but they are likely to be associated with quality." (E2)*

Another respondent working with volunteers observed that if the volunteers were not getting a quality experience they would not come back (PJ23).

> *"I think that statistics are a necessary evil. I don't know how well they do reflect the quality because you could have volunteers, you could say that your volunteers are, you've got 26 volunteers supporting so many families, but if you don't have the quality there, first of all I don't think you would keep the volunteers, because they wouldn't be satisfied in the work that they are doing, and then you wouldn't be helping families if you weren't doing it properly, if you weren't really helping them." (PJ23)*

11.7   One respondent running a training project thought that quantitative indicators were an indication of quality of service; if they had a high level of people leaving early or failing to get qualifications, that would indicate poor quality of service provision (PJ34). One respondent noted:

> *"Projects that under perform year on year obviously have either big management issues or quality issues and maybe it's a combination of both. So I think the indicators, to some degree, can give you a measure of quality but certainly not exclusively." (F4)*

11.8   Another respondent noted that people can 'vote with their feet';

> *"If a service is being used, and used heavily in comparison with other similar services, then people are choosing to choosing to you know, they're voting with their feet, they're voting with their time, they're showing confidence in the quality of the product that they might be being offered, whether it's a health product like a Well Woman Clinic or and the participation the attendance level of 14, 15 and 16 year olds in secondary education, you know." (P8)*

11.9   One respondent said that she would be disappointed in the service if only a few people were accessing it (PJ27). Another respondent was surprised by the number of people

using their service, which he felt reflected a need for the service. He noted also that individuals had recommended others to the project which was an indication of the quality of the service (PJ29).

11.10   One respondent opined that there was more to quality than just lots of people coming in, noting that some people can be very demanding and difficult to work with, which would make working with a large group impossible. This respondent did, however, feel that numbers gave some indication of quality (PJ28).

> "I think, em, the quality is far more than lots of folk coming in. I think it is good to have a lot of people involved of course, but I think sometimes, some people are quite difficult to work with, and think it would be impossible to work with more than a few folk who are, you know, difficult, prone to be a bit manipulative or demanding in certain ways. So, I think you have got to be able to, I think people are, I don't contradict myself and I think it's OK to use the word poverty with you, but I think people are often very damaged by having lived in poverty, and therefore, eh, you know you are working with that damage, and therefore I don't think that the quantity comes into it, so I think you have got to do what it is necessary to do." (PJ28)

11.11   Limitation of number of users as a measure

11.12   Twelve respondents identified limitations (E1, E3, P7, P15, PG16, PG18, PJ24, PJ25, PJ29, PJ30, PJ32, PJ33). One respondent highlighted the ambiguity inherent in some of the numbers used;

> "I suppose if you got let's say coming into, em, the housing department for advice, you know, if you counted those up, you know. Now that that could mean that you're providing really good, you know, one-stop shop housing information and advice that people felt OK to come, em. Or it could mean that it was such a terrible service that people had to keep coming back and back and back before they could get what they wanted." (PJ24).

Another noted the difference between impact and output:

> "If it's a quantitative indicator that measures output, em, it doesn't necessarily give you a measure of impact, it measures output. Em, it would take a leap, but not such a massive leap to relate that output to the type of, or the quality of, service that the project is providing. Em, although in saying that, quality is about whether or not that person has got something that's worth, so I think yes and no" (E1)

11.13   Another respondent said that huge numbers of people might use a service, but it might be because there was nothing better available, or because they were coming to the project to complain (PJ25). A respondent from a training project noted that you could have a large class but only two or three people actually gaining anything from it, and even if all the students in a particular class complete it, it does not mean that they have all benefited equally (PJ30).

11.14   Another respondent said that numbers on their own could sound quite unimpressive, for example helping sixty or seventy clients out of 6000, but that qualitative measures can help to show the importance to the community (P7).

> *"Somebody somewhere needs to sit down and actually start quantifying what the costs are to social work, housing, etc of a family becoming homeless, so that there can be some sort of quantifiable measure. That's how much we saved the Council from incurring the cost, on average, you know, we would have been six weeks in emergency accommodation, there would have been re-housing allocation. So all of that should be quantified, so that you can actually put a figure on it, because I think quite often external people aren't as impressed, because it doesn't sound, we helped, 60, 70 clients out of six or seven thousand, you know? What does that mean? So I think quantitative measures are important, I think we need to work on them to make sure that, at least to funders and to others in the community, you can actually begin to demonstrate how important they actually are." (P7)*

11.15   One respondent highlighted the issue of the same individuals making use of a number of different projects, noting that the 160 participants of one project could be the 150 participants of the next. He suggested that a way to measure this would be to undertake case studies with the local community to see how they had benefited from not just one service, but a number of services (PG18).

> *"we could actually sort of, em, try and have sort of case study people that you sort of look at and you see how they have actually benefited from not just one service but a number of services cos we have this big issue again of whether or not it's the same faces using all the projects so the 160 sort of participants of one project is by and large the 150 participants" (PG18)*

11.16   One respondent observed that the numbers did not reflect the actual work undertaken with clients; she noted that she could say she saw 100 people but she could just be sitting having coffee with them (PJ32). Another respondent noted that different users had different expectations (PG16):

> *"Em, yes I think they can because it isn't, whereas it is very easy to monitor things quantitatively, a lot of it is still on how your user feels about the service, so it doesn't matter when you know, one person might be satisfied that their dustbins are collected fortnightly, whereas the next person says 'twice a week would be great." (PG16)*

11.17   One respondent stated that figures alone were not enough because low numbers of service users could mean you're spending a lot of time with a person, for example, intensive one-to-one work. In her particular project, which was health related, she remarked that they were lucky in that their advisory and management structures recognised that in order to provide a quality service a lot of time had to be spent with each client (PJ33).

11.18   One respondent who had been involved in the SSIN noted that an increase in the number of unemployed might be a reflection that the New Deal was working, as people now felt it was worth registering as unemployed, which reflected the quality of the New Deal experience. She said that there was a relationship between qualitative and quantitative measures (P15).

One respondent observed that you did not get specifics from numbers (E3):

> "Again, it's being.. are you satisfied with the service provided by the local authority housing department? Which tells you something about the service. Again, it's about looking at how you then go about addressing it. You might want to not just sit on the fence, you know, how many X percent are satisfied by childcare provision as opposed to asking them about what type of provision they wanted. You would certainly not get that from single item measure." (E3)

One respondent working with vulnerable children noted a difficulty:

> "it's difficult to provide qualitative information because a lot of that is subjective but it shouldn't be ruled out on that basis. And the kind of work we do, people don't necessarily then want to talk about it publicly, you know. If you've been feeling under a lot of stress because of something that's happened to you and someone comes and helps you with it, you might be grateful that you got some help for that but you don't necessarily want to go away and tell anybody else because maybe people didn't know in the first place. So there's a kind of issue of – an ethical issue and that kind of issue of confidentiality which makes it difficult to gather quantitative – qualitative information." (PJ29)

11.19   Comparisons

11.20   Three respondents discussed whether comparisons could be made between different projects on the basis of numbers (P7, PJ27, PJ33).

11.21   One respondent said that an advice agency could count the number of people through the door, and the amount of benefit that they gained for clients, but identified a number of difficulties in comparison.

> "going back to job readiness and things like that. It doesn't sound as impressive, to say after a year, em, 65% of our participants had done this, that, but they weren't in jobs. Whereas in other projects we can say after a year 20% of ours were in employment, 30% were in employment, but in another it was only 10%. They may have been operating in different areas, they may have had different client groups, and the refore the outcomes aren't really comparable. It may be much more different for somebody working with 18 ...well the New Deal in play it wouldn't be that difficult to have your 18 to 25 year olds into some sort of occupation after a year, but, it might be that the particular client group that you have worked with, ex-homeless people, are much, much harder to place. So those soft measures are actually a much better indication of the long term progress back into society, rather than that hard measure that has been the one that has tended to be used all the time, regardless of the client group that you are actually working with." (P7)

11.22   A respondent working at a training project noted that training projects had different

student/tutor ratios which meant comparisons were not meaningful (PJ27).

11.23   Another said that individuals using a project had different levels of support needs (PJ33).

> *"if figures are high, it can be an indication that you have a quality service but if figures are low, it can be an indication that ha ha ha you have a quality service because you're spending more time with somebody. It might be around a very it might be an intensive one to one work with somebody for example, and so there's a degree of that with our projects. " (PJ33)*

11.24   Bending

11.25   Two respondents raised concerns regarding the bending of service provision to meet targets (PG18, PJ24).

11.26   One respondent used the example of train drivers not stopping at stations so they could be on time at their destination, thus achieving their target of being on time, but not providing a quality of service (PJ24).

11.27   Another respondent observed that there was still a hard core of population who were not benefiting from the improvements made by the SIP, and that if they focussed too much on targets projects would worry about how long they were spending with these individuals, and might pass them on to other projects. He said that projects might wish to consider assessing the amount of time they spend per client (PG18).

> *"I suppose that's that's the issue at the minute because if we look as though we're doing lots and lots of numbers and we're all improving the situation cos we've built, you know, these new houses and we've created these number of new jobs and whatever it's not focusing down on the fact that there's still a hard core area, or a hard core population that aren't really getting affected and if we focus too much on the numbers, the projects will as well and they'll sort of like be thinking how long am I going to have to spend with this person?" (PG18)*

11.28   Experience

11.29   The main disadvantage of using quantitative methods highlighted by five respondents was that they did not reflect the experience of the project user (E2, PG16, PG17, PG21, PJ22).

11.30   One respondent remarked that pure numbers did not say anything about the quality of experience for participants. (PJ22).

> *"But pure numbers don't tell you anything, you know, about the quality of experience and its you know, looking at sort of our work. Say, for example, we ran a big event which might have 500 children at it. In terms of sort of increasing*

the self confidence and self esteem of those children, you've no evidence that the fact that there are 500 of them there, you know, did anything and the fact that they'd maybe all received a certificate at the end, that doesn't really sort of show you anything. So we would try and sort of back that up. I mean, for example, one of our targets in terms of a sort of quantitative target is the number of children that take skill-based awards with us as a project and we would provide evidence in terms of the actual numbers that did that. But then we would also try and sort of do an evaluation with maybe one or two groups about how the children responded to receiving these awards, you know, what they did with the certificates, how their parents responded to them, moving up, you know, how they felt when they achieved a certain grade, you know, and their feelings about cos these are sort of skill based, you know, they're like you get to this level and then you're working towards this next sort of badge or this next badge." (PJ22)

Another respondent highlighted the importance of establishing how the end user feels about the service in order to ensure that the work was inclusive (PG16).

11.31   One respondent noted that quality was about measuring whether or not a participants has got something worthwhile from it (PG17).

11.32   One respondent used the example of racial harassment, noting that being a victim of racial harassment was a qualitative experience. (PG21).

"We've a 500% increase in the report of racial incidents in [name of local authority] but that's not reflective of how the issues being dealt with or how those families deal with it or how the police dealt with it. It is the quantitative you know, being the victim of racial abuse is essentially a quantitative experience. It's not a qualitative experience. You can say one person got abused by another one person and this or that amount of damage was done but, essentially, that's meaningless to that person. It's about the lack of self confidence that stems from that, the fear of crime and further recrimination, repeat victimisation." (PG21)

11.33   One respondent suggested that the best measure of the quality of the experience for users was to ask them questions such as *"Is it accessible? Does it treat you as an individual? Did it agree with your own needs and the order in which they should be tackled? Have they helped you through those processes? Have they referred you to a project as soon as it is clear that another project would be better for you at that stage? Have they followed you up once you left to make sure?"* (E2)

11.34   Funders

11.35   Three respondents commented on funding agencies attitudes to qualitative research (PG18, PJ23, PJ25). One respondent said that although he did not think quantitative measures were a good measure, funders expected this information. He noted that funders place more of an emphasis on quantity than quality (PJ25).

"I don't think they are a good they are a good measurement but unfortunately, today, at the present moment in time, it seems to be one of the main ways of

measuring people's or project's performance in relation to them getting funding or not getting funding. Whether it's through the local social inclusion partnerships or through European funding, there always seems to be more of an emphasis on numbers and quantity rather than quality." (PJ25)

11.36   Another respondent did not like using statistics, but noted the importance of meeting targets (PJ23), with another respondent observing that quantitative information was the major data source they used (PG18).

> *"I don't like doing statistics, I don't like producing statistics but I know they are very important. And I know we do have targets that we have to meet, em, and I think if we weren't meeting those then we wouldn't properly be doing our job." (PJ23)*

11.37   Cost

11.38   Two respondents noted issues of cost (PG18, PJ25). One respondent highlighted the cost of money spent on using consultants to monitor and evaluate (PJ25). Another respondent said that to do research brilliantly was expensive, and that some rigour had to be sacrificed for it to be affordable (PG18).

> *"Em, but again, you know, you think you could really do it, spend a fortune on it, and get a 100% brilliant piece of research, everything's well sorted out, the interviews have been done totally professionally, em, the actual randomisation of the individuals has been chosen this way, you've actually got a third party to come in and do the interviews. All of this which might cost a heck of a lot of money. Or you could do it somewhere between 50 and 75% of that rigorousness for maybe half the money and I think it would probably be somewhere, you know, between that 50/75%, em, and it's it's something. It's better than what we've got at the minute." (PG18)*

One respondent summed up the situation as follows:

> *"The problem with having – I think quality is – you need to have some indication of the quality of the project's services and what it's got to offers but it's so difficult to get at, you know. It's time consuming, it takes a lot of effort and the danger is that you spend too much time kind of analysing and monitoring and evaluating the quality of work that you forget to get on with the work. And there is a real danger of that and there's a real danger that a lot of money that's coming into social inclusion partnership areas (clears throat) has been lost because the money that was originally intended to serve the needs in that area, more and more it's the experience – not just in [name of SIP area] but in other areas – that there's more and more consultants being paid huge amounts of money to measure and evaluate and monitor how beneficial these services are and that money comes out of the pot of money that's supposed to be benefiting local folk." (PJ25)*

11.39   Need both

11.40   Six respondents identified a need for both qualitative and quantitative (E1, F4, P12, P13, PG20, PJ23). One gave the example of the number of jobs created, noting that the number does not tell you anything about the quality of the jobs that are provided (F4).

"They probably can. It depends probably on what is being asked. In the main, that's not the purpose, that's why you have the differing approaches. I suppose you go back to the thing, it's like well it's five jobs, yeah, but it's five crap jobs, really crummy jobs, but we got jobs and that is what we were supposed to do on our project. And OK, there's that quite qualitative aspect, nah probably not, I've changed my mind. [they laugh] I'm not convinced that they're, that they are sensitive enough to do that. Because, unless, unless there was something built into the quantitative aspect sort of we will provide five jobs and we provided five jobs, tick, we've got five jobs. We will provide five jobs of a high standard defined as so many pounds per week or whatever, then yeah and we will ensure that we do that within a certain period of time, then you might start building in some quality of service aspects to that, but I think you still need some, a twin-track approach to really be able to pick that out." (F4)

Another respondent gave the example of a careers service – the numbers did not reflect the accessibility of the service (PG20). Another noted (P13)

"I think the two dimensions can inform the other. The danger is to use one too influentially without considering the other dimension and that can work both ways, you know. Sometimes you hide in the qualitative ones because, you know, you can't handle the numbers game. Sometimes you use numbers to suit, you know. Three out of four people succeeded in this particular exercise but only 4 out of 20 turned up. So you can say 75% of those who completed were very good. It sounds quite good, you know. It's only something like 12% of the people actually turned up. It's only 9% of the whole lot have actually got through it or whatever."

11.41   Two respondents identified the need for a balance between qualitative and quantitative, one noting that a project could be doing fantastic work with just a few families, but lose its funding because it was not meeting its targets (PJ23) and the other stressing the need to see a decent number of people but also provide a quality service (P12).

"So you can probably get some decent information from quantitative indicators, although you could also have an organisation that hardly sees anybody, does fantastically well and you might ask the customer, you know, what do you think of this service? Oh, they were the bees knees, best ever. But they hardly see anybody. So it's maybe a balance between saying, OK, how do we work out numbers and quality? Where can we get a balance where you're seeing a decent number of people, you're providing a wide benefit but you're also maintaining quality in the services that you're delivering." (P12)

11.42   One respondent that quantitative indicators provided a starting point for evaluation (E1).

11.43   Other

11.44   Seven other responses were received (E1, F5, P7, P9, P10, P14, PJ32). One respondent said that people found quantitative indicators easier to understand (F5). One respondent noted that anything can be converted from qualitative to quantitative by scoring it (P9), and a further respondent remarked that a lot depended on the quality of the people who were using the information (P10).

"I mean, I think anything can be converted from qualitative to quantitative by scoring it. By bringing mechanisms that allow you to do that. As long as we put the checks in place, that are needed to be not to be sort of abused. But yeah, psychometric testing any of the personal development tools that are used by employers or whatever these are all qualitative survey techniques that become quantifiable. So, yeah, I think it's possible. The Rikter Scale is an example." (P9)

11.45   Another respondent highlighted the importance of assessing the value of preventative work, both financially and in human terms. He used the example of the prevention of homelessness, noting the cost to Social Work and Housing departments of emergency accommodation and re-housing (P7).

11.46   One respondent opined that quantitative indicators gave measures of output, but did not reflect impact (E1).

"If it's a quantitative indicator that measures output, em, it doesn't necessarily give you a measure of impact, it measures output. Em, it would take a leap, but not such a massive leap to relate that output to the type of, or the quality of, service that the project is providing. Em, although in saying that, quality is about whether or not that person has got something that's worth, so I think yes and no." (E1)

11.47   One respondent said that quality was about more than what the person feels about the service, and should be able to be measured by objective criteria (P14).

"quality shouldn't just be what the person feels about the service. It should also be whether the service meets certain criteria which can be objectively measured. Em, so, yes, I think, em, it ought to be possible to make sure quality using quantitative measurements, yes." (P14)

11.49   One respondent thought it was 'funny' that short term posts were subject to monitoring, while posts such as social workers, health nurses and teachers were not evaluated (PJ32).

"Fill a report on the post which I always found funny that, you know, short term funded projects do that. To evaluate our service, we monitor what we're doing, you know. Families have a say, they can change things that are happening, they can read what's happening and for a post that's there full-time like social workers, health nurses, teachers. You don't have any say in their posts but short-term initiatives do. I think, well, maybe we should look at that going out further then if we're wanting to improve, you know, the quality of service that people have." (PJ32)

12.0 Participants assessments of their own abilities

12.1 *Question: How well can participants in social inclusion projects assess how they have benefited from their participation?*

Table A24: Participant's assessment of how they have benefited

Theme	Sub theme	Eval	Funders	Policy	Prog	Project	Total
Ability of participant to assess how they have benefited from participation	Participants ability	1	1	6	2	5	15
	Practical changes		1	2	2	1	6
	Varies between individuals/projects	1	1		3	2	7
	Client specific issues		1	1		3	5
	Understate ability/impact of project	1		2	1	4	8
	Verbal skills				1	1	2
Views of non-participants	Views of non-participants	1		2			3
Issues for project/prog ramme staff	Need to listen and act on views				1	1	2
	Need for trust					2	2
	Correct methods	2	1	1	1	1	6
	Variation between staff/participant			1		2	3
	Other	1		2	1	2	6
No relevant answer				1			1

12.2 Ability of participant to assess how they have benefited from participation

12.3 Participant's ability

12.4 15 respondents commented on the ability of the participant to assess how they have benefited (E3, F6, P7, P9, P10, P11, P13, P15, PG16, PG19, PJ23, PJ25, PJ28, PJ30, PJ33). One respondent (PJ23) thought that participants were probably quite accurate, and were good at looking back at how they had changed, with another two noting that participants could use assessment forms at beginning of their participant and later as a means of assessing how they had changed (PG16, PJ30).

> *"You can use assessment forms, if you...If you have a long enough timescale where say, somebody is going to a SIP drop-in centre, you can get them to fill in an assessment form about what, you know, how do they feel about writing a letter. Whether you are not very confident. And then, do they feel they need any sort of training or advice. You can then go back and ask them to re-visit that form sometime in the future when they have been on a training course, or joined a group, or gone through some other involvement with the SIP." (PJ30)*

Another respondent thought that people were fairly good at telling you about their

experience of a project (P11), with another saying 'pretty good'. One respondent noted that it was possible if individuals were clear about the aims and objectives of the intervention (P9).

12.5   Five respondent (E3, P7, PG19, PJ25, PJ33) stated that the participants were best placed to comment. Another respondent said that they were better placed than staff to tell how they had benefited from participation (E3).

> *"How well? I'm sure they're in a better position than the professionals to tell you how they benefit from participation? [LAUGHTER] I just thought of how that might not work but I think the point stands. I think people are best placed to tell you how they've benefited from these things and if you didn't believe that, then you certainly don't believe any social science because you would have to think that people are best placed to tell you are themselves." (E3)*

Two respondents observed that people would 'vote with their feet' if they were not happy (F6, PJ33).

> *"So I think it's fundamental that you that as a worker and as a sort of manager of a social inclusion project, you make sure that what you're doing is what people want and then you also have them there to say I mean, people will vote with their feet. So then you can use them to measure what difference they've they feel that your service or programme or activity has actually made." (PJ33)*

12.6   One respondent thought that there was a significant minority that could articulate how they had benefited (P13), and another respondent thought that it was not necessarily something that participants would be able to do accurately. She also noted that the benefit to the individual would have to be looked at over 5 or ten years (P15).

> *"I think one of the key things about whether these projects are any use or not and I made reference to this earlier on it's not what they do for participants, em, you know, for 6 months or the first year. But how how they affect them over their whole lifetime, you know, if they have been, you know, using my earlier example, among the category of folk who go in and out of low paid employment and unemployment, just getting them into a new job right now, doesn't necessarily I mean, that's positive but it's not necessarily what you should be trying to achieve. You need to look at that. You need to ask them again in a years time or 5 years time or 10 years time." (P15)*

One respondent said that individuals could notice how they had changed but they did not sit down and 'coldly assess' what had improved. (PJ28)

One respondent questioned how accurate the responses would be:

> *"There is a tendency for people to, you know, rate too highly the courses that they have been on, you know, there's no doubt about that. And human beings being human beings like to please. So, no, if one of the things was to increase their confidence and then they are being asked by folk they have been working with 'has your confidence increased?', yeah, so there is a big tendency, or a risk, that*

that happens. So that's why I think you do need to supplement it by finding other ways in which they actually gauge what effect that has had." (P10)

12.7   Practical changes

12.8   Six respondents commented on practical changes (F4, P8, P14, PG16, PG18, PJ34). One respondent remarked that people could describe concrete measures such as accessing childcare, housing or training (PG16). Two respondents agreed that individuals could identify what practical changes had occurred for them (P8, PG18), with another two respondents echoing this noting that they could measure the hard outcomes for themselves (F4, P14).

> *"I suppose through the hard outcomes - if they've got qualifications, if they've got jobs, if they've moved into training that they wouldn't have accessed or considered accessing before starting on the project. But, again, I think we're back to the soft indicators if their time keeping's improved, if they're committed, if they work more effectively in a team, if they communicate with people in a way they didn't before. Probably for the individuals, that's a better way of measuring their success in a project and the benefits." (F4)*

Another respondent from a training project said that people can assess that they have benefited when they get their qualification, and by how confident they feel to move on to the next step (PJ34).

12.9   Varies between individuals/projects

12.10   Seven respondents identified variations (E1, F5, PG16, PG17, PG20, PJ22, PJ23). Three respondents noted that they ability to describe how they had benefited depended on the individual (F5, PG16, PJ22, PJ23). One respondent thought that some people were more able than others to describe what they got out of something (PG17).

> *"Depends on the individual to be honest. I think that just people, people in general, some people can do it well, some people can't." (F5)*

> *"Yes, I mean it depends on the person entirely. Some people, like I say, will say something like "my volunteer's brilliant" or "my volunteer is great" and that's it, you won't get very much more than that. Em, but they'll be other ways that she shows that she values that, like I say, by being there every time the volunteer visits." (PJ23)*

12.11   One respondent said that participants in different types of projects would experience very different benefits, noting that users of a rape crisis centre would have very different benefits to someone involved in a welfare rights project, and that questionnaire design had to reflect this (E1).

> *"Because my view is there are different users, and they will all be looking at*

different benefits. Clients involved in, I don't mean this to sound like a horrible example, but clients involved in a rape crisis project will not be looking at the same benefits as someone who is involved in a welfare rights project. So you have got that complication built into the process. It's really about what questions individuals want asked of themselves. And I don't think projects can design these questions, and I don't think an evaluator can do it with any kind of justice without bringing these people into the process." (E1)

Another respondent echoed the view that it varied from project to project (PG20).

12.12 Client specific issues

12.13   Five respondents noted client specific issues (F4, P12, PJ22, PJ29, PJ32). One respondent working with children remarked that the children were not able to make the connections necessary to articulate improvement in their confidence; children think they are just playing games, not developing social and behavioural skills. The project had used a variety of pictures and had interpreted the children's reactions to them in terms of their confidence (PJ22). Another respondent working with children who had experienced trauma noted that children and young people were good at saying if they felt better, but that their parents and information they could contribute, for example, if the child was sleeping better at nights, or concentrating better at school (PJ29).

> *"In our case, clearly we're working with children and young people and also their parents. In some sense, they can do that quite easily because they know when they feel better. So in that sense, but a number of people say the effects of our intervention are immediately apparent to them and to other people and that is quite often their parents or their teachers that they're sleeping at night, whereas they weren't. They're not having nightmares. They're concentrating better at school, they're getting on better in school, they're working better so these things are ways it's possible." (PJ29)*

12.14   One respondent working with volunteers thought they were very good at assessing how well they had benefited from participating, and expressed this in letters and interviews (PJ22).

12.15   One respondent gave the example of dementia sufferers, and highlighted a project that had made an effort to get the views of dementia sufferers themselves, rather than relying on the views of their carers (P12).

> *"It was an organisation called the Rosebery Centre who worked with people who've got dementia and what the guy said was that traditionally what you do with dementia services is that you go and ask their carers and other family, how's Davy or how's Moira doing the day? Are they happy? They go, yeah, they are or, no they're not. Because that's easy or easier and what he is apt to do is to develop systems where you actually interviewed people who've got dementia and said, by coming to the Centre, you know, has it made any difference to you? And, you know, people were saying well, yeah, it's meant that I'm not troubling my wife so much, troubling my husband so much, it's people who understand, you know,*

where we're at, and you're able to talk about things, about feeling stupid. And it's probably quite a hard bit of consultation because the guy was saying he had to frame the questions in a way that he was able to get answers from participants but also answers that were meaningful but it was harder to do." (P12)

12.16   Another respondent working with young people with learning difficulties stated that while some of her clients were very articulate, others would find the non-concrete ideas very difficult. It was also important to use the terms that the young people themselves used (PJ32).

> *"It really just depends because some young people I work with are very articulate, very able to express themselves and other young people would find non-concrete ideas very difficult. But if you put it in terms of, do you know I think again it's quite hard to compare. Are you happier now than you were last year? That's a difficult concept because sometimes time is a different concept but if you did this on a regular basis to see, you know, how happy are you this year?" (PJ32)*

One funder observed that they would expect organisations to take account of their users needs when evaluating (F4).

12.17   Understate ability/impact of project

12.18   Eight respondents commented on participants over or underestimating their abilities (E2, P9, P12, PG20, PJ26, PJ27, PJ30, PJ32). Two respondents (PJ27, PJ30) said that participants tended to underestimate what they were capable of, therefore their confidence grew very quickly as they participated.

> *"People tend to under-estimate what they're capable of. I think this is where confidence grows quite quickly within the Centre, that when people get a boost from other people, they get a boost from the tutors and just the basic environment, they're just excel in it and we're not rigid, we're quite flexible in our approach." (PJ27)*

One respondent working with young people with learning difficulties remarked that they often were unable to see their own abilities (PJ32). This view was echoed by another respondent working with young people (PG20).

12.19   Another respondent thought that there was a tendency for people to under-estimate the help they got from a project or programme, and it was more useful to place the emphasis on how they had changed, rather than how they had benefited (E2).

> *"I mean, there is a tendency for people to under-estimate the help they have got from a project or a programme, and I suppose I wouldn't place much emphasis on people's perception of the benefit they have gained, I'd place much more perception upon the extent to which they feel they have changed, the extent to which they have become more confident, or more skilled, or more knowledgeable." (E2)*

Another respondent noted that it was easy to under-estimate because people didn't notice the changes on a day-to-day basis (P12).

12.20   One respondent working with businesses said that the businesses did not like to admit that they needed help, therefore rated any business development intervention quite lowly (P9).

> *"what I do know from years of business development work if you go back to a business and ask about whether or not our intervention has caused success, businessmen tend to deny that he ever needed support to be successful. A businessman will always think, well, yeah, they did but when you actually go and try evaluate the impact of a business development intervention, the businessman will always the customer will always score lower than what you think because they don't like to admit that they needed help to get there." (P9)*

A respondent from an employment project mentioned that in a recent survey clients had felt that the project had not got them a job, but the respondent thought this a positive sign that individuals felt as if they had done it on their own (PJ26).

12.21   Verbal skills

12.22   Two respondents commented on verbal skills (PG17, PJ23). One respondent noted that staff liked people who were positive about their experience, but who were also able to articulate it, and said that staff rely on people with verbal skills. This made it more difficult for the views of people with poor verbal skills to be represented (PG17).

> *"Some people are just naturally more able to describe well what they got out of something. For other people the fact they came, and yeah they feel good about it, I wouldn't be here otherwise would I? [They laugh] I mean really it doesn't help us in terms of a beautiful evaluation of a specific programme or project. It doesn't help us in the least somebody telling us that. So what we tend to do is we go to the people who can describe how this helped them, with their kids, and they feel better going down the road, and I can now do this and they can describe those things to us, but the reality is, the guy that tells you in four words, yeah it was good, no problem, well he's still feeling good about it what's wrong with it? But I think we do still rely on people with verbal skills, definitely." (PG17)*

12.23   A respondent working with volunteers observed that verbal skills varied from person to person, and some people would give limited responses, but show that they value the service in other ways, for example by being in when the volunteer visits (PJ23).

12.24   Views of non-participants

12.25   One respondent remarked that the views of non-participants were also very important (P8). Another respondent noted that there were a sizeable number of people who did not engage with the social inclusion process, and said that the number of people actively

involved was a very small proportion of the whole area, for example three community representatives on a SIP Board covering 15000 people (P11).

> *"The, that's a real difficult one in terms of how you define participants. Because, as I mentioned earlier, in fact I didn't go into detail earlier, the, how you define participants in the social inclusion projects, as usually the people who know about the project, or participate at some level, or receive funding through the agencies that are involved. For many people who live in communities, there is a, a real lack of understanding and knowledge about what the social inclusion project is all about." (P11)*

12.26   A further respondent observed that some clients were easier to engage with than others, and the 'average' person does not attend interviews or focus groups, or fill in questionnaires (E2).

12.27   Issues for project/programme staff

12.28   Correct methods

12.29   Six respondents commented on the methods used (E1, E3, F5, P13, PG16, PJ24). One respondent said that people were perfectly capable of expressing their views if they were asked in the right way (PJ24). Another respondent noted that if the project was properly designed then measuring participant's ability would be built into it (F5).

12.30   One respondent remarked that participants were not used to frameworks, and that it was important to have user involvement in the design of questions (E1). Another respondent noted that it was sometimes difficult for people to identify how they had changed because they were not 'tuned it' to that kind of language. He used the example of ex-miners and ex-shipyard workers, noting that they would not relate to questions about how they feel, or related to a situation where someone sits opposite them with a tape recorder (E3).

> *"If you think the most crude example being if you like the kind of male culture of the West of Scotland, particularly working class male culture which is, you know there's a barrier there, you know, you don't get to talk to ha ha ha - ex miners or ex shipyard workers about how they feel. They don't relate to that at all and it's a different they don't relate to a situation where somebody sits down across them at a desk and puts a tape recorder in front of them. [LAUGHTER] Or is writing things down in a questionnaire and they think what's all this about?. Do you know what I mean? And they can't often identify things that are maybe glaringly obvious to, for example, a development worker or anyone coming in looking at it. (E3)*

A further respondent echoed this view, noting that questions had be in language people understood (PG16).

12.31   One respondent said that it was a big assumption that you had actually spent time with participants discussing why they were there in the first place (P13).

12.32   Need to listen and act on views

12.33   One respondent thought participants were good at saying how they had benefited, but the issue was whether professional staff chose to listen to it (PG17).

> *"I think they can do it extremely well. Whether they tell us the things we want to hear is an entirely different matter. Because I think professionals have one set of views about what a particular project is necessarily there for, and what impact it is having, and if user's approach it with a completely different view. And that's fair, and I think what we have to do is give credence to their view." (PG17)*

Another respondent echoed this, noting that it was important to use what people were telling you to make things better. She opined that it was fundamental to listen to what people are saying because once people left a course the opportunity to help them was lost (PJ33)

> *"if you lose people, then you've lost the opportunity to help them and improve their situation but you've also lost if you don't ask people why, you know, there is the defensive, you know, there is the defensive, you know. You'll run something and maybe 10 people come the first week and then only 6 come the next and if you've got if you don't follow that up, you won't you can only surmise." (PJ33)*

12.34   Need for trust

12.35   One respondent observed that people were good at giving their views if time was taken to build up a relationship between the interviewer and the interviewee that allowed them to ask if they didn't understand the question (PJ32). Another respondent echoed this view, noting there was a need for trust (PJ24).

> *"if you as I say you know, you went to somebody and said, how would you assess you know, that's using the sort of language that we work with without giving people or provide people with the opportunity to understand what that that language means which is, you know, totally it's not fair.   So, as I say, I think if you want people to answer that question in the way you phrased it, then you've got to spend a lot of time working with people to ensure that they can." (PJ24)*

12.36   Variation between staff and participants

12.37   Three respondents commented on variations (P12, PJ30, PJ34). One respondent noted that participants and staff's views of participants abilities were not always the same, with staff sometimes having a higher expectation than the students about what the student can achieve (PJ34).

12.38   Another respondent said that there was a potential for staff bias as staff are eager to show that they are making a difference (P12).

> "there's staff bias as well, you know, staff are saying, well, we've got to be making a difference. It's like I'm trying to think of doctors as an example that, I mean, I suppose their role or their role to some extent is to make people better and if they don't make people better, then that's a failure or can be perceived as a failure. But, you know, people have got choice whether they change their lifestyle or whatever and so it might be that professionals want to say that the impact has been greater than it has been as well because they don't want to be seen to fail or if you're telling your funders, it will intervene with 100 people but 40 of those, we made little or no difference that's hard for folk to be upfront about." (P12)

12.39   Another respondent noted that participants and staff probably do come to the same conclusions about benefits (PJ30).

12.40   Other

12.41   Other comments were received by seven respondents (E2, P11, P12, PG16, PG21, PJ22, PJ29). One respondent remarked that research could be skewed if staff were tempted to only speak to people they know have had a positive experience of the project (P11).

> "The difficulty is how you select the people. This goes back to the good old method of if you were to come in and say I want to speak to projects about how good a particular project was. If I was not of that persuasion I would not bring in somebody, or a couple of people who have had a bad experience of that process. So once again it's about skewing your research by bringing in, by just speaking to people who are positive, rather than people who didn't get what they wanted out of a project." (P11)

12.42   One respondent highlighted the difficulties of quantifying work that was aimed at preventing future exclusion, such as early intervention work in education (PJ29).

> "What's what's more difficult to judge is the benefits in the longer term because part of our project is about building resilience in people, you know, in a preventive sense, you know, and we can't yet answer that question because it's only been going for about 18 months. So a kind of qualified yes to that. There are some immediate benefits evident but in the longer term, we have to wait and see." (PJ29)

12.43   One respondent observed that he received a lot of anecdotal feedback but this was not something they actively monitored (PG21).

12.44   One respondent noted that staff were very good at making judgements about the benefits to participants of taking part (PJ22).

12.45   Two respondents viewed this kind of evaluation as very time-consuming, both for staff and for the participants themselves (PG21, PG16), and said that an external evaluator will have a role in evaluating the final year of the project (PG21).

> *"I know it's important to monitor and evaluate, em, but it's also important to deliver services and and get things going and get wheels turned and get people thinking about this issue and, em, SIPs need more time built in and more resources in for evaluation. I think there's a lot of role for external evaluators to come in and I know that in the last year, that is built in and hopefully they will be interviewing a lot of our community reps and saying well, what have you got out of this? Cos we sure haven't got the time. No way have we got the time to do that." (PG21)*

12.46   One respondent noted that people might be afraid to criticise a project in case this had a negative impact on the project's funding (P12).

> *"I think the risk would be they don't want to be critical of the organisation. You've had some help so you'd better say the place is good because if not, then the Council will no fund them any more. So, yeah, people could be skewed by that." (P12)*

12.47   One respondent remakred that there was a need for qualitative research such as interviews to establish the additionality projects provide, by asking people about the impact projects had had on their life. This would also help to establish the quality of the outcome, for example the quality of the job they find (E2).

> *"you really need to do a number of things to make sure you have captured all the benefits of carrying out a piece of work, and, em, there is nothing like a number of interviews or focus groups to add these in-sights, particularly if you are asking open questions, to the qualitative framework we are talking about. And, it's an interesting question this one. Because one of the key issues is always about additionality, in other words, would this person have made this progress without their engagement with this project, em, and obviously when we are reviewing projects this is one of the things we do" (E2)*

13.0 Comparisons between social inclusion projects

13.1 Question: To what extent is it possible to compare qualitative information gained from participants in one project with qualitative information gained from participants in a similar project?

Table A25: Comparisons

Theme	Sub-theme	Eval	Funders	Policy	Prog.	Project	Total
Positive aspects	Learn from each other	1	1	2	3	7	14
	Provides benchmarks	1	1	2			4
	Possible		2	3		1	6
Negative aspects	Limitations	1		6	3	7	17
	Competition			2	3	4	9
Methodolog y issues	Improvements needed to methods of measurement	1	1		2	2	6
	Qualitative issues			2		2	4
	Standardisation/ constitution		1	2	1		4

13.2 Positive aspects

13.3 Possible

13.4 One respondent said that it should be possible to compare if projects, but made no further comments (P14). One thought it was definitely possible but did not feel able to advise further (P10). One respondent observed that his project did not make formal comparisons but did exchange information with other relevant agencies (PJ29).

13.5 One funder noted that their application forms asked the same questions to every project which allowed a degree of comparability, but said that comparing projects with different client groups was of limited use (F4).

> "The application forms that we have submitted to us ask every project the same questions. So we have 10 projects providing computer training to people with disabilities. We would expect to see a degree of comparable. Sure, they have to take account of individual needs but in terms of quality, you would expect there to be, you know, a minimum level that they all complied with. So I think there should there should be able to make comparisons across those, definitely. Comparing a project helping people with disabilities with a project that's helping ex offenders is of less value and we don't, through our appraisal process tend to do that." (F4)

One respondent said that as social inclusion partnerships were all providing similar information to the Scottish Executive comparison should be possible (F6). One respondent noted it was possible to compare information gained from qualitative frameworks like the Rikter scale across projects (P9).

13.6 Learn from each other

13.7 14 respondents noted that it was possible to learn from each other (E1, F5, P12, P15, PG16, PG19, PG21, PJ23, PJ26, PJ27, PJ28, PJ31, PJ33, PJ34). One funder observed that there was a 'cross-fertilisation' of ideas between projects (F5).

> *"when people are assessing the projects they say oh that's a good project, then there is a cross-fertilisation of ideas, you know, in the next round all of a sudden that organisation now has a similar project to what previous organisations had in the previous round. Because in, I think in the round, projects are really in just about every area. So I would have thought there would be to a significant extent scope to compare qualitative information from one with something similar." (F5)*

Two other respondents also noted that comparisons aided learning (PJ27, PJ31):

> *"I think we've all got something to learn from each other in the way we're approaching, what kind of service we're delivering within our project. It's absolutely useful. I think it's necessary." (PJ27)*

13.8 One respondent noted it would be useful to know how other projects monitored and evaluated their projects (PG21) and one respondent said it would be interesting to see what other people are doing (PJ26).

13.9 One respondent identified that comparisons were useful because if they came up with very different answers it could lead to some interesting discoveries about why there is a disparity in results (PG16).

> *"Is it useful? Em, well it is very interesting if you find that people have very different answers, because that then leads you on to another level, and you then say why is that different? You know, they've had the same experience with fear of crime of something, but why are they coming up with different feelings and answers. Is it their age? No, they're the same age. They've the same sort of profile. What is it that is causing this disparity in results? Em, so yes I do think it is useful, even if you do come up with completely unexpected responses. [they laugh]" (PG16)*

13.10 One respondent said that when new schemes were being established it was useful to have the experiences of other projects as reassurance (PJ23).

> *"Where it is helpful, is when you are starting up a new scheme, and you can compare, you can talk to more experienced co-ordinators, and more experienced workers, in schemes that have been going for years, and you can be immensely reassured by the difficulties that they had back then, are probably very similar to the difficulties that you encounter when you are setting up a new scheme." (PJ23)*

13.11 One respondent noted that comparisons were useful for the promotion of good ideas, and to allow project to learn from mistakes made by other projects (PJ33).

13.12   One respondent observed that projects could learn from each other, and comparisons were useful and necessary (PG19).

> *"For example, we're a really new partnership and it's been quite good, our community reps have been out to different places to visit, and to see what community structures have been set up, and where things have gone wrong."* *(PG19)*

13.13   One respondent said that residents organisations involved in regeneration had learned a lot from meeting together regarding communities relations in other communities, and as a result could go back and put pressure on their partnership organisations to address gaps (E1).

> *"Where it has happened, I think, is where residents' organisations who are involved in the process of regeneration have come together. And I think they have learned an awful lot about what is happening in communities in relation to what is happening in Glasgow or Edinburgh, and they have put pressure on their own partnership organisations, because they can see where there are gaps." (E1)*

13.14   One respondent observed that it would be useful but difficult to do (PJ28).

13.15   One respondent said that comparisons were useful, *"It's about broadening horizons, being outward looking"* noting the usefulness of visiting other organisations (P12).

13.16   One respondent noted the use of networks to exchange information (PJ34).

13.17   One respondent remarked that comparisons were useful because social inclusion projects were demonstration projects, looking at what works and what could be applied to different areas, but said that comparisons were only useful it there were enough similarities between the areas (P15).

> *"From a public policy maker's point of view, it's probably useful because, you know, you're trying to the social inclusion projects, at least as I understood them, were largely demonstration projects, so you're trying to work out what works and what can be applied in different areas. I suppose if you one of the one of the problems with doing that is different areas can have different sets of, em, you know, you could be working with different problems or problems that manifest themselves slightly differently or whatever." (P15)*

13.18   Provides benchmarks

13.19   Four respondents noted that it would be useful to gather comparator information for benchmarking purposes (E1, F5, P8, P12). One of these respondents had undertaken a benchmarking exercise with the local voluntary sector and had asked them to identify

potential comparator organisations, noting that the organisations had found it difficult to identify organisations that they thought were sufficiently similar to themselves (P12).

> *"I suppose the sort of anecdotal feedback, is that we're unique, there's nobody like us and how can we compare ourselves. And there's I think the answer that rather mischievously said back to I think one person who was making this point was, well, if you're unique then we need to look at what are the unique circumstances that would make us want to fund you? Now, that sounds like fairly cruel and horrible but it was throwing it back a wee bit saying, well if there's only one of you in the country, why is that? What happens in other areas that it's different?" (P12)*

13.20   Negative aspects

13.21   *Limitations*

13.22   17 respondents highlighted a number of differences between projects that made comparisons difficult (E3, P7, P8, P11, P12, P13, P15, PG16, PG20, PG21, PJ23, PJ24, PJ25, PJ30, PJ31, PJ32, PJ33), namely:

Table A26: Differences between projects that make comparisons difficult

Issue	Examples
Geographical differences;	• One respondent said that each area is different, with a different cultural background, political background and geographical background (PJ23); • One respondent noted there was a big difference between areas (PJ30);. • One respondent identified the different geographic and social make-up of communities, and highlighted the difference in areas such as Dumfries and Galloway and Dundee (P12).
Differences in management structure;	• One respondent said that he had talked to another thematic SIP, but there approach was quite different, with his SIP being an integrated project and the other tendering work out, which would impact on their evaluation (PG21).
Differences in job descriptions;	• One respondent remarked that there was no-one else doing exactly the same job as her, but that there might be similar elements in other people's jobs that would permit comparisons to be made (PJ32).
Differences in client group;	• Another respondent working for a health project said that a comparison with a local youth health project would not be very useful as they would approach work in a very different way (PJ33). • One respondent noted that projects could be working with different clients and completely different kinds of people (PJ25). •
Differences in users' needs;	• One respondent observed that it was difficult to compare because users of projects had different needs (P7). • One respondent noted people had different needs (PJ31)
Differences in	• One respondent noted that it was difficult to compare because

Issue	Examples
users' expectations;	people had different expectations and experiences (PG16); • Another respondent echoed this view, noting that users of a health project in a deprived and in an affluent area might have very different expectations of the projects (P11); • Another respondent noted that low expectations were a sign of real social exclusion (PJ24).
Differences in funding	• One respondent gave the example of two young carers projects, said that comparison was difficult because one had substantially more funding than the other (PG20); • One respondent observed that projects had different resources and different approaches (P8).
Overall differences	• One respondent said that it was possible to compare, but you had to be cautious about your comparisons, and absolutely clear and explicit that two entirely different situations were being assessed (E3); • Another respondent noted that social inclusion projects were rarely exactly the same (P15); • One respondent remarked that there was rarely two identical situations using the example of school league tables to highlight that there are a number of issues underlying the numbers, such as parents, employment levels (P13); • One respondent noted that projects had different facilities (PJ31).

13.23 Competition

13.24 Nine respondents identified issues of competition between projects (P8, P12, PG16, PG17, PG18, PJ23, PJ24, PJ27, PJ28). One respondent noted that staff working in projects were concerned about comparisons, noting that people didn't like it because they saw it as competitive (PG17). Another respondent thought that if comparisons were used to make schemes competitive it could be quite destructive (PJ23).

"I think if it got into kind of comparing schemes in order to make schemes competitive that can be quite destructive, and I don't like that and it wouldn't be useful to me at all." (PJ23)

Another raised concern and likened the issue to the use of league tables for schools, and felt it to be a bit 'academic' rather than useful (PJ28). Another noted it was a contentious issue (PG16)

"That is always a very contentious issue because we all have different experiences, we all have different environments, we have different expectations. So qualitative data, by its very nature is not going to be something which is bound by hard and fast rules. I would admit that I don't know enough about social science to say what's the likelihood of Joe Bloggs over there and John Smith over there saying the same thing about the same experience, because they may have completely different backgrounds." (PG16)

13.25   Two respondents said that in order to access social inclusion partnership status there was 'competition' between poor areas (PJ24).

> "it's like we made competitions for poor and if you're marginally not as poor, you don't get social inclusion partnership status which means you get access to other funding." (PJ24)

13.26   While respondent noted that while information exchanging was useful, but comparison leads to competition which can be destructive (PJ23).

13.27   One respondent remarked that it ought to be possible to make comparisons between projects but said that voluntary organisations were often defensive, highlighting issues of suspicion and the 'politics' (P8).

> "...it ought to be possible, you know, to make assessments on a comparable basis. I think I mean, there's difficulties of defensiveness and that is a real problem. I mean, and that it's those organisations it's those the fears, the suspicions, the concerns of voluntary organisations and voluntary and people on short term contracts or with a small "p" politics of how we organise our voluntary and public services which get in the way of that." (P8)

13.28   One respondent noted that comparing yourself against another project was a very competitive thing to do (PJ27).

13.29   One respondent opined that organisations were scared of comparisons because they see it as competition, and are concerned about being 'less favoured' if their results were not as good as a project elsewhere (P12).

13.30   One respondent articulated that projects can feel as if they are being picked on, with a 'league table' of projects, and said that he would like to undertake monitoring and evaluation that went beyond cost per job types of evaluation (PG18).

13.31   Methodology issues

13.32   Improvements needed to methods of measurement

13.33   Six respondents identified potential improvements (E2, F5, PG18, PG20, PJ22, PJ25). One respondent noted that comparison was possible, but it would have to be a subtle design in terms of processes and procedures (PJ22). Another respondent said it was dependent on how the questions were framed, suggesting that there could be key questions that were applicable to every project (PG18). One funder remarked that a standardised framework would be useful (F5).

> *"if you could get something that is standard then it makes things an whole lot easier. Because ultimately, we've got to report back to draw down money from Brussels, and we have quite a rigid framework to operate within. Yeah, so if there was something standard then we could incorporate that within our formal reporting. What happens at the moment is what I had described to you there about the myriad of different approaches, it's not as extensive, I mean we're not talking hundreds, but they are all reporting on something that we probably don't have to formally report back to Brussels on." (F5)*

13.34   One respondent noted that an individual's experience of a project was not necessarily the same as the impact it has on their life. He gave the example of an individual having a very positive experience of a capacity building project, and a less positive experience of a housing project, but housing might be the issue that they were having real difficulty with (PJ25).

> *"So, you know, you might get somebody saying that I've got a really great experience of using the capacity building project and somebody saying I've got a really bad experience of using the house and development project or something but it might be for different reasons, you know. It might be that housing's a real kind of issue at the moment and they're having real difficulties with the issues around housing and they might kind of be discussing these issues and engaging with these issues with that particular project. Whereas they might be engaging in something completely different with us." (PJ25)*

13.35   One respondent thought that if frameworks were used improvements and clients experiences could be compared, rather than comparing baselines (E2).

13.36   One respondent identified a need for proper expertise in making these kind of comparisons, noting it would have to be a properly qualified individual undertaking it (PG20).

> *"I think one of the things about qualitative information is how it's gathered and how it's gained. Em, I suppose somebody suitably qualified in collecting qualitative information for people who went to both projects then, yes, that would help and if there was a kind of standard but just by one project standing up and saying, yeah, well we feel young people gained da da da." (PG20)*

13.37   Qualitative issues

13.38   Four respondents commented on qualitative issues (P7, P13, PJ24, PJ34). One respondent raised the question of why a comparison of qualitative information would be made, expressing the view that qualitative information should be used to assess the success of the project against the project goals, and expressed concern that comparative information could be used against a project (PJ24).

13.39   Another respondent noted that it was better to look at qualitative information because it

gave the best picture of how projects were performing in comparison to each other, measuring issues of people's satisfaction and well-being, rather than relying on numbers. He said that one agency might see a lot more clients than another, but that this did not reflect the difficulty of the cases they were dealing with (P7).

13.40   One respondent working for a training project observed that if the projects were similar enough they should receive similar qualitative feedback; in the case of her project she would anticipate this to be responses in similar words about moving along and feeling more able to do something than they did at the start of the project. However, she noted that it was always possible to 'manage' qualitative data, and said that negative feedback was never included in the information that was sent out to stakeholders (PJ34).

> "The difficulty is that it's always possible to manage qualitative reflection. If you looked in our reviews, you will never find a negative piece of feedback in the stuff that gets sent out to all of our stakeholders and things like that. Then if you look at the summaries of the feedback forms and things like that, they are comprehensive and they will identify where we've had negative feedback from individuals." (PJ24)

13.41   One respondent remarked that projects could 'hide' in the qualitative information because they knew that the numbers would not look good. On the other hand, numbers alone were no reflection of quality (P13).

> "Sometimes you hide in the qualitative ones because, you know, you can't handle the numbers game. Sometimes you use numbers to suit, you know. Three out of four people succeeded in this particular exercise but only 4 out of 20 turned up. So you can say 75% of those who completed were very good. It sounds quite good, you know. It's only something like 12% of the people actually turned up. It's only 9% of the whole lot have actually got through it or whatever. Then you can play about with that." (P13)

13.42   Standardisation

13.43   Four respondents commented on standardisation issues (F5, P8, P12, PG21). One respondent noted that there was a need for standardised questions if comparisons were to be made, and referred to the work of the Question Bank at Guilford University. The use of existing surveys afforded by the question bank allowed local surveys to be benchmarked against the national position (P8).

> "I think there's more and more there are more and more surveys but there's also more recognition about trying to make survey work more integrated and having standard questions that can be used as part of national surveys but they can also be repeated as at a local level to so you end up then with maybe a much more subtle and detailed analysis on a particular issue at a local level but you can also benchmark it against what the national position is. So that you can compare it with the national survey. So, yes, undoubtedly. It can be done but it does need careful design and there are tools around to help that you know, things like the

question banks are a good way of doing that." (P8)

13.44   Another respondent noted that there was a need for standardisation of questions (F5).

13.45   One respondent said that the main method of measuring the projects in their area was through the information in the Annual Report, which did not provide a tight enough framework to allow comparisons to be made (PG21).

> *"whenever we've got money through [name] Council internal monitor, or the Executive which is the main body of their monitoring is through the annual report, I don't get a sense of what we're doing is consistent with others. They give us general headings but the rubric, the framework isn't tight enough to enable comparison, any meaningful comparison." (PG21)*

13.46   One respondent identified a need for consistency and noted work on alcohol and drugs that had happened in this area (P12).

14.0   Funding agencies

14.1   Question: To what extent should funding agencies consider qualitative information when targeting resources?

Table A27: Funding agencies and qualitative information

Theme	Sub-theme	Eval	Funders	Policy	Prog	Project	Total
Extent to which funding agencies should consider qualitative information	Very important		1	1	2	4	8
	Important	2		7	3	6	18
	Other answers		2		1	2	5
What qualitative information contributes over and above quantitative information	Qualitative contribution	1	2	3	2	6	14
Current monitoring and evaluation systems	Issues for organisations		1	4	1	6	12
	Issues for funding agencies	2		3	2	5	12

14.2   Extent to which it should be considered

Table A28: Extent to which qualitative information should be considered by funding agencies

Level	Comments
Very important	• 100% - forget about stats. and look at the qualitative (PJ23); • About 80% or 90% of what they do should be based on it? I do think they should take it very, very seriously indeed (PJ28); • I think qualitative information is really very important (PJ29); • Very much so (PG21); • I think its very important (P10); • Totally (F4). • Very much so (PG20); • The quality of work is most important (PJ31).

Important	• At least as much as the quantitative (P8); • I think the should consider it as much as the number counting (PG19); • They should consider qualitative more so than quantity (PJ30); • More important... than quantitative (PJ33); • More than we have done (P12); • I think... they should place more value on it than they currently do (P7); • They should place far more emphasis upon it (E2); • Definitely (PG18); • They should consider it a great deal (PJ22); • I think they should [consider qualitative information] (E3); • I think they should [consider qualitative information] but as part of a framework that includes quantitative as well(P9); • I obviously think that qualitative information should be used (PJ24); • They should consider all (P13); • I think they should do. (PJ32); • I think they should consider qualitative information when targeting resources (P15); • I think they have to. (PG17); • I think obviously they should (PJ25); • Funders might be less comfortable with qualitative outcomes, but that they should be prepared to gamble on projects that are well constructed and have a committed application but which have 'less conventional' outcomes (P14).
Other answers	• It depends on the organisation – some organisations are all about hard economics (F5); • I think they should regard it as important, but not as important as the quantitative information (PJ34); • I think you need to talk to the funding agencies (PG16); • I think it should be looked at (PJ26); • We do, in some sense (funding agency) (F6).

14.3   What qualitative information contributes over and above quantitative information

14.4   <u>A voice for participants and communities</u>

14.5   14 respondents noted that qualitative information provided a voice for participants and communities (E3, F4, F6, P8, P9, P15, PG17, PG18, PJ22, PJ24, PJ29, PJ31, PJ33, PJ34). One respondent said that qualitative information was more useful in terms of the Social Inclusion Partnership themes and measures; the qualitative information proves things like increase in sense of belonging, developing community capacity, raising educational attainment. She noted that the voice of people who participated was the best evidence (PJ22).

"I think in terms of Social Inclusion Partnership themes and measures, I think it's more valuable, you know. The fact that you can when I sort of look at how we report, you know, it's qualitative information which really at the end proves that we do things like increase sense of belonging, that we develop community capacity, that we raise educational attainment. It's qualitative research that actually gives us the evidence that we've done that. Not quantitative unless it's sort of backed up, like I say, you know, that example I gave you where you sort of say, well, on a qualitative basis we interviewed and researched 20 but we're offering the same thing to 500, you know. But really, you know, the things that I would if I was asked to evidence that we did those sorts of things that promote social inclusion, it would be qualitative evidence I would provide. It would be the voices of people because at the end of the day, that's the best evidence you have, isn't it?" (PJ22)

14.6   One respondent observed that in trying to target resources, the opinions of those seeking to benefit about whether their circumstances are better or worse as a result of that targeting are absolutely crucial. He noted that while it was possible to measure, for example, the number of people accessing childcare, or children's attendance rate at school, it was necessary to match these up with the perceptions of the people using the service. He concluded that you need to talk to the users of a service about what will make a difference to them, rather than trying to describe the changes that express the difference (P8).

"at the end of the day, if you're targeting resources to achieve ends, then the opinions of those who are seeking to benefit about whether their circumstances are better or worse as a result of that targeting are absolutely crucial, you know. You can you can measure whether the number of people who are unemployed or the number of people who are accessing childcare or the number of people who are the number of children participating in the attendance rates for the local school. You can measure all those things but you also and they will provide very good indicators but they're often only indicators which you then have to match up with the perceptions of the people who you're actually trying to serve as to whether things are any better or not." (P8)

14.7   One respondent raised the issue of qualitative research being empowering for participants; she said that asking people their opinion makes them feel part of the project, and helps them to feel that the project belongs to them, rather than being just a statistic. This helps to address the whole issue of social inclusion (PG17).

"if you start doing that, if you start asking people, then they do actually feel as if they are part of something, rather than people having something done to them. Which brings you back to the first question about the whole issue of social inclusion, won't it? If the recipients feel part of what they're actually getting rather than having something done unto them, and qualitative information is one way of starting that process, of people feeling that something actually belongs to them, rather than just a statistic." (PG17)

14.8   More accurate information

14.9   Several responses were made observing that using qualitative information gave a more

accurate picture of an organisation, providing additional information on issues such as quality, long term outcomes, and the impact on participants' lives. One funder noted:

> "I think it's absolutely essential and that's why our application form is so extensive and, I mean, if you speak to our applicants, they'll say, oh it's so onerous it's ridiculous. Whereas we strongly feel that we've got an extremely qualitative appraisal process. We don't number crunch. We don't have an expected unit cost for a certain type of activity. What it's down to is that information that's provided must show that there's a market demand, they must show that the beneficiaries' needs are being taken account of, that the costs are reasonable for the level of provision, that the numbers are achievable in the timescale, that the outcomes are achievable." (F4)

14.10 One respondent noted that using qualitative information allowed funders to arrive at more reliable conclusions (E3).

> "I think they should because it would at least allow them to eliminate, you know, other at least allow more reliable conclusion or more reliable conclusions about what they mean or they think they mean when they are talking about these things because they look at it entirely differently to, for example, somebody like me I would have thought." (E3)

One respondent said that social inclusion is relative and about being able to take part in society, and it might not be possible to measure that with the sort of figures that were currently measured. She noted also the existence of pockets of poverty (PJ24).

> "... social inclusion in some respects, it's it's relative and about that, you know, being able to participate and take part in society and that might not be able to be strictly measured by, you know, the sort of figures that we we measure that with in an area, you know. You referred to where you worked about pockets of poverty but if you hold those up for statistical holes in an area that doesn't compare favourably with other areas that can, you know, justify high levels of of poverty or unemployment thing." (PJ24)

14.11 Two respondents remarked that measuring the number of people involved in training projects did not give you an indication of what they did with that training. One respondent mentioned that numbers tell you a lot of people have gone through a door, but it doesn't tell you about the difference going through the door has made to them (PG19). One respondent noted that qualitative information was important in order to assess the long-term impact of a project, and to know that it had actually been of benefit to participants. She said that statistics could disguise return participants on training programmes (PG17).

> "I think it is very easy to purely look at the hard stuff, the quantitative stuff and actually not know if you are making an impact. At the end of the day people want, the recipient's of the service actually want the service, that they think it makes a benefit. Because you can do all sorts of stats of numbers through training programmes, but are on a wee merry-go-round where actually people are going on a training project and having to come back, whereas if you actually use qualitative information about people's perception of what they have actually gained, or whether it has made a difference you can see whether it's a long term

> *solution, but to do that I think we have to help people to collect qualitative information that is credible" (PG17)*

14.12 One respondent observed that qualitative information gave a 'human face' to the statistics. He gave the example of employment statistics, noting that the figures used to access funding would be the number of people who could be economically active. However, you needed to go beyond this and look at the reasons for unemployment. If an individual was on drugs it would not be sufficient to provide them with a training place, because they would also have a range of health, confidence and support issues. This respondent further noted that highly specific, but necessary quantitative information, such as 'how many people were picked up in the morning and taken to the course, how many people were given phonecalls over the weekend by a member of staff' often came down to just ones or twos, but that qualitative information showed the bigger picture of what the project was actually doing (PG18).

> *"I mean, it's needing a health support to start with, it's needing somebody to actually go and make sure that they do go and attend these things to give them some confidence and whatever. And you've missed that unless you had the most specific quantitative stuff how many people were supported and picked up in the mornings to take to the course, how many people were given phone calls over the weekend by a member of your team sort of thing. And when you get to that, you are just down to ones and twos, em, but you can overcome that by giving the qualitative stuff of of a lot bigger story about what the project's actually doing or the case study sort of thing." (PG18)*

One respondent highlighted the complex issues in play using the example of finding employment which actually made your health worse, and asking how you assess when you are doing more harm than good (P15).

> *"used the example of, you know, you get a job but it makes your health worse, you know. If you don't you know, if you don't find ways of kind of getting to analyse that kind of stuff, then, you know, you could actually be doing more arguably more harm than good. Maybe they'd have been better off signing on forever more than, you know, than getting whatever having an accident on a construction site or some kind of bronchial problem from breathing in fumes in a clean room or something like that." (P15)*

14.13 One respondent working in a project dealing with psychological issues said that it was difficult to provide meaningful quantitative information about his work. He noted the subjective nature of qualitative information, but thought it should not be ruled out on that basis (PJ29).

14.14 One respondent working for a European funding organisation said that qualitative information was essential, and that the need to collect this information made their application forms extensive. Qualitative information requested included justifications for

the market demand, a demonstration that beneficiaries needs are being taken account of, justification of costs, numbers and outcomes (F4).

> *"I think it's absolutely essential and that's why our application form is so extensive and, I mean, if you speak to our applicants, they'll say, oh it's so onerous it's ridiculous. Whereas we strongly feel that we've got an extremely qualitative appraisal process. We don't number crunch. We don't have an expected unit cost for a certain type of activity. What it's down to is that information that's provided must show that there's a market demand, they must show that the beneficiaries' needs are being taken account of, that the costs are reasonable for the level of provision, that the numbers are achievable in the timescale, that the outcomes are achievable." (F4)*

14.15   Another funder observed that they looked at the quality of an organisation to manage projects, and noted that this was always slightly subjective (F6), and that it was difficult to target resources based on this:

> *"I mean, you can argue this from both ways. You can argue if an agency's successful, if agency X is good at delivering intermediate labour market projects and we can get some kind of qualitative feel for that, do we target more money on them or do you target money on the agencies that are not doing particularly well, cos they should come up to that level, that standard." (F6)*

One respondent identified her organisation's attempts to turn anecdotes into evidence:

> *"we're looking at soft indicators is because we're, I'm probably repeating myself here, you know, everybody's saying low aspirations, you know, absolutely low aspirations, especially in [name of local authority] and nobody – everybody's talking about it but we can't actually use that information for funding at the moment because it's all anecdotal and it's all hearsay and it's all, you know – if they said to us, well what do you mean by low aspirations? Or – or how do you there's low aspirations? I mean, you can't really interview somebody and say how – how low are your aspirations?*
>
> *LK: Ha ha ha. How deprived are you?*
>
> *MS: Yeah. It's very difficult and that's something we're trying to – and it's not going to be foolproof by any means but that's why we're, em, we're wanting to use qualitative information and to try and do it kind of properly, formally, put some funding into it" (F6)*

One respondent noted that funding agencies were getting better at accepting qualitative information, and no longer took a *'cattle market'* approach (PJ31).

14.16   <u>Relationship of qualitative and quantitative information</u>

14.17   Four respondents commented on the relationship between qualitative and quantitative information (P9, PJ31, PJ33, PJ34). One respondent said that there had to be value for money in provision, therefore a balance between numbers and quality was necessary. (PJ33)

"I mean, for me, that's – it's probably more important, as I said, than quantitative although – but I'm not naïve enough to propose that just – if we were accessing 10 people a week, we'd get – I mean, you've got to have value for money and for me, it's a balance between making sure that you're actually available and accessing enough – a big enough percentage of the population you're targeting" (PJ33)

Another respondent noted that funding agencies should consider qualitative information but it should be part of a framework that includes quantitative as well (P9), and another noted that quality should be most important but numbers also had to be reasonable (PJ31).

14.18   One respondent took an opposing view to those outlined above, commenting that funders should not see qualitative information as important as quantitative, because quantitative information was less easy to manipulate. (PJ34).

"I think they should regard it as important but probably not as important as the quantitative information because I think quantitative information is less easy to manipulate. And I don't actually think there is a project or an intervention that cannot be measured in some quantitatively and I think resistance to that sort of evaluation is more a reflection on a project's insecurity than actually demonstrating their ability to have an impact on people's lives and therefore just to provide the funding. I mean, I think projects should be required to justify using public money and demonstrate that what they do actually adds something to individuals' lives. It's relatively easy to get a bunch of people to say nice things about you. You could just give them a good time. You could run lots of personal and career development sessions around aromatherapy and stress relief and hillwalking, which tend to be the bits that people like in the personal development that we run, and cut out all of the bits about kind of self exploration or looking at your own skill base or doing a CV. We would probably get the same positive feedback in terms of qualitative feedback from participants but it wouldn't it wouldn't demonstrate that they'd moved where they wanted to get to." (PJ34)

14.19   However, this respondent said that qualitative research was useful in defining who your target group actually are, because sometimes using hard measures such as geographical targeting of resources did not in fact reach those in most need. Qualitative research gave information about individual's perceptions of where they were, rather than requiring them to demonstrate it by their postcode or income level, and could address quality of life issues (PJ34).

14.20   Current monitoring and evaluation systems

14.21   Issues for organisations

14.22   <u>Difficulties</u>

14.23   Twelve respondents highlighted difficulties attached to undertaking qualitative research (F5, P7, P8, P10, P11, PG17, PJ23, PJ24, PJ25, PJ28, PJ29, PJ33). One respondent observed that it was difficult to do (PJ23). One respondent said that it was harder to access participants views in a reliable way (P8).

> *"we're not very good at doing that and I think it is more it is more expensive to do it is harder work to access those views in a reliable way." (P8)*

One respondent thought that qualitative research required a greater degree of imagination and depth of understanding about the effect of projects, and the impact projects have on people and their attitudes (P10).

> *"it's the area that requires a greater degree of imagination and depth of understanding about the kinds of effects you are looking for and the impact you have on people and their thinking and their attitudes. It's quite difficult. So it tends to be left aside a bit more as the simpler things about how many people you can get coming into a programme dominate." (P10)*

14.24   One respondent working with individuals who had experienced trauma highlighted the problems of confidentiality and ethics that arose from undertaking qualitative research. Participants often were unwilling to talk about their involvement publicly, and it was often difficult to get feedback. This was because either people did not get around to it, or they found it hard to be critical, giving very general responses such as 'yeah everything was fine' (PJ29).

> *"there's a kind of issue of an ethical issue and that kind of issue of confidentiality which makes it difficult to gather quantitative qualitative information. But it's not impossible. I'm just saying it's kind of these issues make it difficult because you're dealing with people and you're dealing with people's personal lives and maybe personal issues. It's not always easy and similarly, it can be very difficult to get people to provide feedback on what you do. For two reasons either that they just don't get round to providing the feedback or they find it hard to be critical." (PJ29)*

14.25   One respondent in an information project noted that as a second tier organisation, it was difficult for them to work out quantity, as it involved asking other voluntary organisations how their users had benefited from the information project's services. He raised the issue about double counting of outcomes, giving the example that the information project might

have provided one small piece of information for a funding application, but it might have been a very important piece of information, without which the application would fail, and asked how the agency could quantify this (P7).

> *"I think for us in particular, as a second tier organisation it's really difficult to work out quantity, 'cos we are asking member agencies how many of your users benefited from that piece of work that you did, which is another remove again. You know, it's hard enough for them to quantify it, without having to quantify it for us. Because to their mind , well, we did the bulk of that work, so why are you claiming that outcome?" (P7)*

One funder remarked that the qualitative information had to be relevant to the funding agencies aims:

> *"I think it depends on the agency to be honest, Lesley. Em, some of them would say that qualitative isn't their gig, it's all about hard economics. But I think that is maybe a bit short sighted, because as soon as you say that, somehow you go back to the thing that we were saying earlier about well it doesn't matter about, as long as we've got the number of jobs, and as long as we've got the number of new houses built, or whatever its going to be, em, not the quality of it. So, no, I think they should. I suppose one caveat that we get to that, and it is that we as a funding agency are an economic development programme, and that will always have to be our primary focus." (F5)*

14.26   <u>Resource Implications</u>

14.27   Cost and resource issues were mentioned by five respondents (P8, PJ25, PJ28, PJ29, PJ33). One respondent noted that it was more expensive that quantitative studies (P8). Another respondent called for the money that was being spent on bureaucracy to be spent on the actual day to day work, and highlighted the competitive element of funding (PJ28).

> *"But we are in competition, you see, with other folk in the area, and when it comes down to who can present the best case. We're squabbling over crumbs. So I could say, you know, let's have the money we are spending on all this bureaucracy perhaps and spend more money on the actual day to day work." (PJ28)*

14.28   One respondent said it would be useful to do more than tick box questionnaires, for example undertake a selection of interviews, but he noted that this was time consuming and costly to do so (PJ29).

14.29   One respondent observed that due to the competitive environment of funding, even the smallest amount of funding required writing up a funding application, and recording, monitoring and evaluating. She said also that smaller organisations were put off applying for larger amounts of money because the process was so daunting (PJ33).

"it seems to be even the smallest of projects because because within a competitive environment for resources the smallest of projects, the smallest pieces of money requires you to record, to monitor, to evaluate, to write up a funding application." (PJ33)

14.30   One respondent raised the issue of undertaking qualitative research as cost effectively as possible, expressing a preference for not spending a lot of money on consultants and outside bodies. He noted that that it used to be possible to undertake research exercises with the assistance of the sponsor department of the local authority, but that this was no longer the case (PJ25).

"the only difficulty I would see there is an issue I've raised at the partnership funding panel meetings is that as long as the as long as it's done with a view to, you know, being as cost effective as possible and not spending huge amounts of money on outside bodies and consultants coming in." (PJ25)

14.31   <u>Methodology issues</u>

14.32   Five respondents identified methodology issues (P7, P11, PG17, PJ24, PJ33). One respondent identified the need for a framework for measuring qualitative information, to stop each project having to struggle with it (PJ24).

"I think there is a place for it and, yes, I think there has to be a place for it in monitoring and evaluation of projects. But I think, you know, we need to sort of decide you know, I mean, it's good to hear that you're doing a Ph.D. in something like this. It's good to hear that it's being, you know, talked about cos we we do need to decide on, you know, a sort of framework for it, to stop everybody struggling with each project." (PJ24)

14.33   One respondent remarked that projects had to show evidence that their project were working, because a lot of people were lost if a project's funding was lost or you can't demonstrate what you have been doing (PJ33).

14.34   One respondent commented on the benefits of an independent evaluation because it was harder to manipulate, although he conceded that it could still be manipulated by selection of the participants that were given to the independent evaluator to interview (P7). Another respondent noted that although organisations should be encouraged to keep qualitative information, it would be useful to check this information through getting another, external, view on this. This helps to give more credence to the internal view (PG17).

"if you are talking about a big project and a big amount of money, then I think that you might want to have another view on it. Which is not to say you are not believing the internal view, but it may be about again giving more credence to the internal view, supporting the internal view, rather than coming in and attempting to pick holes in it, that's not necessarily what I would see it as doing. It would be about supporting that internal view. And giving people who are participants a chance to talk to people who are not involved. Because I think people have

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> *loyalties, yeah, that sort of thing. , em, I think you do need to actually give users the opportunity to have an independent voice as well. Because the reality is as a professional we still filter, you know?" (PG17)*

14.35   One respondent said that there may be a difference between what the community want to measure and what the agency wants to measure. He suggested that when trying to evaluate projects, agencies needed to sit down with communities and discuss what exactly is going to be delivered, what the communities expectations are of delivery, and whether or not the community can engage in that (P11).

> *"It's back to my previous point about, you talk about quantitative and qualitative information, it's really, it's what you are measuring. What the agency wants to measure may not be what the community want to measure, and what may be qualitative to an agency does not match with what the community say. And when you are trying to evaluate projects of that nature, then you really need to consider, and sit down with communities about what exactly is going to be delivered, what the community's expectations are of you delivering them, and whether or not the community can engage in that."(P11)*

14.36   *Issues for funding agencies*

14.37   Respondents made a range of comments about specific funding agencies, in addition to more general points about funding.

14.38   <u>Local authorities</u>

14.39   Twelve respondents made comments about local authorities (E1, E2, P7, P12, P13, PG18, PG21, PJ25, PJ27, PJ28, PJ32, PJ33). One respondent stated that within her local authority community education department, who part funded the project, they were '*quite serious*' in now looking at the qualitative measures, noting that it was becoming more recognised that qualitative information is important because it summarises the difference being made to a community (PJ27).

14.40   One respondent noted that the forms that they had to complete for his funding organisations, the local authority and the social inclusion partnership, were realistic and had sensible questions. He felt that the area was recognised as in need, therefore it was not so difficult to prove things. However, his organisation was still in competition with other organisations in the area, and it came down to who could present the best case (PJ28).

> *"It's quite a realistic form that you fill in, and, em, I think they are quite sensible about the questions that they ask, and I think also because they are the City they know this area that we are in anyway, so it's not so difficult to prove things. The Partnership form, it's quite simple as well. But we are in competition, you see, with other folk in the area, and when it comes down to who can present the best case. We're squabbling over crumbs" (PJ28)*

14.41   One local authority funder said that quality information should be linked to the objectives of the project, noting that there was no point in getting details on outcomes that were incidental to what the organisation's core business is. He observed that other funders, giving the particular example of the Community Fund, that were 'moving towards a numbers game', and expressed concern that this did not reflect the quality of the work (P12).

> "There will be some funders I think the Community Fund is one that worries me slightly in that they are maybe in response to some organisation they've funded in the past moving much more towards a numbers game. How many folk will you see? I understand their point of view, that they want to have maximum benefit but it's also about, well, what's the quality of the work that's been done?" (P12)

14.42   He noted that his own authority had a tendency to be quantitative based, noting high volume was seen as being the way to present yourself as a good organisation. He said that this did not reflect the difference that an intervention made to an individual (P12).

14.43   He further noted that it was harder to 'dig through' qualitative information, and was time consuming if you were looking at a lot of applications. Looking at numbers needed was easy to read, and required less thought. Organisations need to be encouraged to write up the anecdotal information that they receive, for example in their annual report, and as funders they needed to give priority to organisations making a real difference, therefore it should be a fundamental part of the decision making process (P12).

> "The other thing about qualitative information is it's harder to dig through. If you've got a lot of funding applications or you're looking at a lot of organisations, it takes time to look at that or it can take time. Whereas we get a say in we had X number of people in January, X number in July is easy to read, takes less thought. But we need to be looking at it a lot more seriously and I think that we are doing that and I think the organisations are welcoming it." (P12)

14.44   One respondent observed that in discussions with her funding local authority, a lot of the agreement came down to hard figures, and remarked that although funders were coming round to the idea of qualitative information, they still wanted the quantitative figures as well. She called for funders to be more imaginative in evaluation, noting that some areas were difficult to quantify for example 'how do you evaluate a smile?' (PJ32)

14.45   Community Fund

14.46   Two respondents expressed views about the Community Fund (the arm of the National Lottery that funds projects tackling disadvantage) (P7, PG21). One respondent thought that the Lottery had got a lot better at accepting qualitative information, with the Community Fund being less about numbers and more about outcomes and qualitative

information (PG21).

> *"the Lottery's got a lot better at that I think. The Community Fund is less about numbers and more about meanings and outcomes and qualitative stuff." (PG21)*

14.47   One respondent noted that his project had been asked a lot of quantitative by the Community Fund, and said that this focussed your mind on having to boost the numbers, whereas if the questions were of a 'in what way' nature then you had to think much more about the quality of the service provision (P7).

> *"to give it a concrete example, we're asked a lot of quantitative questions by the Community Fund, about our Lottery, Community Fund, we use the Community Fund grant how many people did we see, how many people did we assess, how many people, how many, how many. And they will say, it really doesn't matter how many you tell us, it is actually about what effect you have had. But if you always ask the how many question, I think it is placed in the mind of those that are answering that question that we have to boost the numbers, whereas if you were asking 'in what way' then it's much more about having to think then about the quality of the service provision that you have got." (P7)*

14.48   Scottish Executive

14.49   The Scottish Executive was mentioned by three respondents (E1, PG21, PJ33). One respondent observed that some of the information requested from the Scottish Executive regarding SIPs was quite meaningless, such as the number of leaflets distributed, or the number of community groups on the database, because it did not reflect the quality of any intervention (PG21). One respondent outlined why he thought it was important that the Executive considered qualitative information (E1):

> *"If the funding agency is the Executive, I would have to say that it's sadly lacking in what they understand of people's lives in communities, or communities of interest for example. I would like to think that at some point in the next few years that that kind of information would be used in terms of gauging people's needs, the nature of the problem, the process of exclusion. That is what the programmes are geared towards, em, they are not going to understand… We are not going to be able to understand what these processes are, it's not possible to understand exclusion, in relation to inclusion, if we rely on database indicators which are interested in health, housing, physical fabric of the area. I think inclusion is about relationships and process, and these things happen over time." (E1)*

14.50   One respondent said that funders found qualitative and softer indicators harder to grasp, and noted that she stressed the quantitative when applying for funding, but when implementing the work she recorded and evaluated qualitative indicators as well. She expressed annoyance that the qualitative side was not considered more, but remarked that applying for funding was a competitive process. She expressed the opinion that, led by the Scottish Executive, funders need to get away from the 'bums on seats' attitude and work with the organisations they are funding to develop qualitative outcomes. She

commented that projects could develop their own indicators, but if they weren't recognised at a funding level then it was pointless (PJ33).

> "I think the funders they need to and it may have been led by the Scottish Executive in some ways they need to get away from the bums on seats attitude and probably to work with the organisations that they're funding to look at developing ways of measuring the quality the qualitative outcomes. I think a degree of that work has been done through the Anti Poverty Forum in Dundee and that would be useful, you know. It's all very well saying projects can develop their own indicators but if they aren't recognised at a funding level, then you're missing the boat sometimes." (PJ33)

14.51   <u>Social Inclusion Partnerships</u>

14.52   One respondent commented on social inclusion partnerships (PJ25). He raised the issue of spoken qualitative information, and said that his partnership board used to ask projects to give a half hour presentation, with questions, about their project. This allowed the quality aspects to arise from the discussion, noting that funders could ask questions about what outcomes really meant, for example, whether an 'event' referred to a one hour meeting or a more structured exercise.

> "one of the things that the partnership used to do excuse me as part of the 3 year period was, to ask projects to come in and speak to the partnership board and give a, you know, I think it used to be something like a half hour presentation and answer questions, you know. So there was more kind of information and quality aspects came out from some of that discussion than there is from just submitting a 20 page document with your kind of stats and hopeful outcomes and I think the funding bodies could look for that kind of information, where they can get down to discussing with people face to face what it is they are hoping to offer and what the what does it really mean to say they're going to run 20 events in the year? What does an event mean?" (PJ25)

14.53   This respondent articulated that his partnership was looking at undertaking some kind of qualitative exercise toward the end of the three year funding in order to make more informed decisions about the next three years funding of projects (PJ25).

14.54   <u>General points</u>

14.55   Three respondents made comments about funders in general (E2, P13, PG18). One respondent stated that the whole point of performance indicators is to determine behaviour. He mentioned that if performance indicators were just about the number of people getting jobs, then organisations would choose to work with people who were easy to place and would probably have got a job anyway. He observed that in this scenario, you would have happy clients, a happy organisation and happy funders but would completely have failed to make any difference. Therefore you needed to collect performance information on the quality and relevance of the service. He gave an example

from Hong Kong, where a funder had tied 60% of their funding to qualitative feedback from two client groups, from unemployed people and from employers. He opined that this had had an impact on performance, noting that staff behaviour is bound to change if they know they are to be measured in relations to dealing with phone calls and individuals coming through the door (E2).

> "I gave you the Hong Kong example. They actually tie 60% of their funding to qualitative feedback from the two client groups, from unemployed people and from employers. And it's transformed their performance. The whole thing about these performance indicators is to determine behaviour. You start with the kind of behaviour you want, you know is it client focused, about individuals, understand their needs, em, getting them a job which fits them, and helps them go into a sustainable route to work, what kind of behaviours do you need that encourage that, and what kind of performance indicators encourage that kind of behaviour. So you don't want performance indicators that are just about getting people into any old job. Because what do you do? - you get those people, you choose to work with those clients, those clients who are closest to work and [clicks his fingers] Bob's your uncle, you get high placement rates, but you leave the problem completely untouched. You probably end up dealing with people who would have got work anyway, probably would have got that job anyway, probably would have succeeded in that job anyway, so you almost literally make no difference, but you met all the performance criteria, you probably exceeded them. Everybody appears to be happy. You've got happy clients, you've got a happy organisation, you've got happy funders, but it has completely failed to do any job at all that is worth doing." (E2)

14.56   One respondent remarked that funders are becoming more alert to qualitative issues, and more convinced by an articulate argument (P13).

14.57   One respondent expressed the opinion that qualitative information should be the way forward, but recognised that it does not allow easy comparison and does not allow a funder to decide on any given criteria. He observed it would be almost a 'gut reaction' for a funder, and felt that funders preferred clear statistics, which proved the case, were easy to read, easy to digest, easy to compare across the board, easy to prioritise and easy to give to politicians (PG18).

> "I think that obviously should be the way forward, em, but, it won't allow easy comparison and it won't allow a funder to decide on any given criteria. It would have to be sort of like almost a sort of gut reaction. They they come up with something and go well, I don't know this this one's got something in it and you can see it and it's sort of like does look as though it's doing a good job. I can't quite put my finger on it but there's something in there and, you know, when it gets down to that sort of thing, funders will be sort of oh no, we don't really want this [LAUGHTER] - they can see it, they can add them up, they can do the criteria, they can do the cost per job, they can give it you and there you go. Em, so I think there should be more in there but then it's whether or not they they'd like it. They probably wouldn't cos it's it's, em, it's the background. They all like stuff clear statistics, prove the case, easy to read, easy to digest, easy to compare across the board, easy to prioritise at least at one level and then throw it into the politicians and then they sort of like say well, now there's something in this one." (PG18)

15.0 Improvements

15.1 Question: How could the monitoring and evaluation information that your project/programme currently collects be improved?

Table A29: Improvements to monitoring and evaluation information

Theme	Sub-theme	Eval	Funders	Policy	Prog	Project	Total
Issues in monitoring and evaluation	Can always be improved					4	4
	Better informed/more training				1		1
	In the process of improving/have improved			2	1	4	7
	More time/resources	1	1	4	1	4	11
	Attitudes to monitoring and evaluation	1		3		1	5
Types of information collected	More information/more depth		1	3		4	8
	More information on who our users are			1		2	3
	Soft indicators				1		1
	Added value	1		1			2
Methods of collection and presentation	Better indicators	1		1		1	3
	Standardisation by funders		1		1	1	3
	Better forms/frameworks		1		3		4
	Better presentation			1	1	4	4
	No major changes					1	1

15.2 Issues in monitoring and evaluation

15.3 <u>Can always be improved</u>

15.4 Four respondents (PJ22, PJ25, PJ27, PJ30) thought that monitoring and evaluation systems could always be improved. One respondent declined to answer the question because he was not actively involved in monitoring and evaluation at the moment (E3).

15.5 <u>Better informed/more training</u>

15.6 One respondent said that she felt that she did not have a good enough understanding of issues such as soft indicators, measuring distance travelled and people's attitude. She observed that her particular SIP was short lived (PG16).

"It would certainly be improved with more emphasis on the soft indicators. We have tried, somewhat unsuccessfully, to improve that side of the monitoring. I think part of our problem is that we are such a short lived SIP that a considerable amount of time has been spent on getting the mechanics, the buildings, the staff, together, that I personally don't feel that I have a good enough handle, if you like,

on the soft indicators, on people's attitudes, on distance travelled." (PG16)

15.7   In the process of improving/have improved

15.8   Seven respondents noted that they had already taken steps to improve their monitoring and evaluation systems, or were in the process of doing so (P9, P10, PG19, PJ22, PJ23, PJ24, PJ28). One respondent thought that their systems had improved over the past three years, and that they were holding a planning day to look at how they could further improve. As this project worked with children and young people, the staff were researching new ways of eliciting children's opinions, and assessing the impact on their lives of participation in the project (PJ22).

> *"we're always wanting to find ways of trying to sort of evidence that because we are aware that the children aren't able to be open about their own feelings and yet, we feel that the work we do is very important because we do see the outcomes in terms of the difference that it can make to children. And we I think all the officers have things which, you know, they could find quite sort of moving in terms of relationships they've had with children and some of the circumstances they know the children have come from and some of the things that the children have expressed to them. 'Cos their ineloquence is as moving as anything when you know them, you know, because you know what's behind it." (PJ22)*

15.9   One respondent who was part of a national network of voluntary organisations articulated that their organisation was in the process of moving to new monitoring and evaluation tools which would increase the standardisation in the questionnaires etc undertaken by the different projects (PJ23). Another respondent mentioned that her organisation was in the process of writing a monitoring and evaluation framework, which would include qualitative information (PJ24).

> *"Well that's you know, that's back to the qualitative stuff. At the moment, you know, the sort of the only formality for collecting things is the the ESF outputs and targets that we have to reach for the funding there and the Scottish Enterprise Forth Valley which were the targets there. And they're you know, I'm just measuring what I absolutely have to at the moment but we are in the process of writing a monitoring and evaluation framework that, as I said to you before, that will attempt to deal with all of those things as well as the, em, the qualitative. So, you know, at the moment, I'm just collecting it in the bare minimum to get by for the funding, em, but I don't want to and I want to I'm hoping that we will become an example of good practice." (PJ24)*

15.10   One respondent said that a LEAP trainer was going to spend a full day with the Partnership Support Team in order to assist the Partnership in turning all the information they have into a system. She remarked that the feedback from the individual projects was positive, and projects felt that they were all learning together. She further observed that projects had enjoyed having visits from the Scottish Executive as it had given them a chance to show off their hard work (PG19).

15.11 One respondent noted that his organisation was going through a strategic review, and said that monitoring and evaluation should have clear learning outcomes for organisations (P10).

15.12 One respondent mentioned that the monitoring forms he had to fill in had changed from annual to quarterly, which he saw as an improvement as it was easier than putting a year's worth of work on an annual form (PJ28).

15.13 One organisation observed that they had 12 headline targets but were using a system called the Balance Score Card which cascades down measures and sub-measures from this (P9).

> *"economic development is quite a complicated process. There are a whole raft of possible measures and measurements that could be used and there is always a danger in simplifying an organisation to focus the organisation by creating 12 headline targets is quite a blunt way of measuring the scope of what this organisation does because this organisation does an awful lot more than is being implied in the 12 targets. So we're using a mechanism called the Balance Score Card now I don't know whether you've heard of that. The Balance Score Card attempts to cascade down from those 12 targets a whole series of measures and sub measures that are beginning to you might have a sharp point in terms of 12 targets but the whole range of what we do is quite a blunt way. But then underneath it, there's a whole series of sub measures that allow you to articulate different contributions or different projects to meet those 12 targets." (P9)*

15.14 <u>More time/resources</u>

15.15 Eleven respondents articulated the need for more staff time and resources to undertake monitoring and evaluation (E1, F4, P7, P12, P13, P15, PG19, PJ27, PJ29, PJ32, PJ34). One respondent in a newly established SIP remarked that the projects that they were working with were not all at the same stage in terms of their monitoring and evaluation systems, and said that information gathering would be easier in the future (PG19).

> *"once the projects have their own systems up and running all of them, a lot of them have got really good, they're collecting really good information just now, but not everybody is at the same stage. So once everybody has got their systems up it will be much easier to collect them." (PG19)*

15.16 One respondent noted that their staff were on short term contracts due to the funding regime, which was a problem if there was not enough staff time to compile the information that they had gained from evaluations. She observed the need for continuing administrative support to prevent information disappearing into a 'black hole' (PJ27).

> *"if we don't have the staff to actually compile the information and go through with the evaluations, gather it from the learners and make sure it all goes back in their*

folders and make sure it goes on the computer, make sure we can make up a report at the end of the day and pie charts and all sorts of things. It'll just go down a big black hole. So the way that we can develop and improve is by continuing to have the administrative support that can handle this information and do something with it." (PJ27)

15.17   One respondent opined that in the collection of qualitative information, time and resources were a major stumbling block because such work in labour intensive (E1). Another respondent noted that more time would help as there was a regular demand for monitoring information (PJ32).

15.18   One respondent remarked that more time to spend with customers, clients, colleagues and partners would be good. He also noted the growth in external evaluators and consultants, and observed the expense related to this (P13).

> *"If we'd more time to spend with customers and clients or colleagues or partners. If we had ongoing monitoring methods. If we had effective planning systems. If we had more time to plan. If we didn't have the mentality that, you know, evaluation is a pain in the arse, I'd rather move on to the next project." (P13)*

One respondent stated that a key improvement to their monitoring and evaluation would be to make more time routinely gather feedback from their users, both children and parents (PJ29).

15.19   One respondent said that responding to the needs of different funders was time-consuming, and participants objected to providing similar information several times over (PJ34).

> *"It's very time consuming. It does demonstrate why sometimes the students feel that they've filled this piece of paper in before or in a different format or whatever. But it just has to be on this form now because Employment Services require, for example, that you fill out a childcare allowance form on their form which enables childcarers to be paid retrospectively monthly, two months in arrears and the childminders round here don't really like to wait that long for their money so we have forms that enable students to have their childminder paid weekly in a way most of them manage. And then they have to fill in the forms for the Employment Service to enable us then to claim the monthly arrears amounts but it's the same numbers that they're entering, the same amounts, same childminder, same details of same children." (PJ34)*

One respondent noted that organisations only had a limited amount of money to spend on evaluations, and that even a short term evaluation can cost quite a lot of money (P7).

15.20   One respondent observed that it was a resource issue more in terms of time than money (P15) and another respondent remarked that time was a barrier, but also noted that this in itself was not sufficient reason not to improve (P12).

"I think that the barrier a wee bit is time constraints. But it's not a good enough answer. We should be making sure that it's inbuilt." (P12)

15.21 One funder said that she would like to speed up how quickly her organisation turned information around (F4).

15.22 <u>Attitudes to monitoring and evaluation</u>

15.23 Five respondents commented on attitudes to monitoring and evaluation (E1, P7, P12, P13, PJ33). One respondent opined that political support for labour intensive qualitative research would require a political consensus that this was important work, which would need a 'cultural shift' in the way that people think about monitoring and evaluation. He noted that the projects within the SIP had their own priorities, and there was not the time and resources needed to change the culture of projects, give them ownership of the process and help them to set the agenda on monitoring (E1).

> *"Qualitatively, I would have to say that time and resources are a major stumbling block for that type of work, because they are labour intensive and they cost money, em, if we had support of various partnership bodies, if there was a recognition that it was a priority, if there was a consensus, a political consensus that it was important to do, and I suppose that's a cultural shift about the way people think about monitoring work, then I think we would find it easier to either engage people, or to have them participate on a level which we think gives us the benefit, or the greatest benefit. Projects are still hugely difficult. There are too many projects to deal with. They have their own priorities. We don't have the time and resources that takes the time that you need to change the culture of projects, to give them ownership which can take years to engage with them on their level, to have them set the agenda for monitoring" (E1)*

15.24 One respondent observed that monitoring was seen as an unpleasant task which people would rather not have to do. He thought that attitudes were changing and that there was more evidence of criteria for success being established at the beginning of the project, rather than being invented later. He also thought that it was more accepted now that it was OK to ask questions and how a project was operating, and that this was not an attempt to 'catch them out' (P13).

> *"I think it's more accepted now the culture that it's OK to be asking questions about how you're doing all the time and that isn't a doubting thing, you know. That we can say, why are you doing that? And you don't go, why do you want to know? You know, are you trying to catch me out here? No, I'm actually interested. So when I say, why are you doing that? They say, oh yes, that's great, well why I'm doing that is ... and I say, well, shouldn't you maybe think of doing that a wee bit then? Why are you doing that and not that? I hadn't thought of that. And you actually have a mature debate about it rather than the one that is even when we're asked and the principle function of ambiguity which is we say why and not, then you can say, yeah, that's OK, I can go with that, I don't mind you asking why because it's OK, it's not doubting me, it's you wanting to ask why*

and find out more." (P13)

15.25   One respondent commented on the attitude of funders to evaluation, noting that the Community Fund was good at prompting applicants to include evaluation as part of the funding bid. However, he felt that other funding agencies were not as good at valuing evaluation (P7).

15.26   One respondent felt that an improvement would be reassuring organisations that the information sought will be useful to them and to stakeholders, and that it would actually be used (P12). Another respondent raised the issue of whether information requested for annual report purposes was ever actually used by funders, and opined that more feedback from funders would be useful (PJ33).

> *"I feel that sometimes our figures we're asked for figures in the annual reporting process and never receive feedback very seldom say, are these figures being used? Cos I would suspect they're not unless they're put as a top figure some place. I think our project and I'm sure a lot of others do put a lot of time and effort and energy into ensuring that they're abiding the sort of monitoring and evaluation but for us it's of the SIP, it's also for the health sector, it's through the City Council, it potentially will be through the Lottery. I think we monitor ourselves up to the hilt and I ... but I don't I think the annual reporting process is useful."*
> *(PJ33)*

15.27   Types of information collected

15.28   <u>More information/more depth</u>

15.29   Eight respondents thought that more information, or more in-depth information would be useful (F4, P8, P11, P15, PJ25, PJ26, PJ31, PJ34). One respondent said an improvement would be expanding their qualitative evaluations (PJ26). One respondent said in relation to feedback information used after sessions that it would be useful to have narrative information, but noted that participants often just ticked boxes and left comments boxes blank. He articulated that his project had tried to address this through undertaking social audits (PJ25).

> *"Most people tick the boxes but not give you the the kind of sentence or two to give you some greater amount of information. The only other way of doing that is the kind of exercise that we've just done recently the social audit which, you know, you have to ask people to help you with that exercise. Ask if they'll come along and take the time to sit down and speak to you for a period of time." (PJ25)*

15.30   One respondent stated that more information about long term trends and more long term tracking would go useful, in order to assess the benefit to people. Also, short term tracking looking at risk factors. He thought that subtle day-to-day tracking information is useful in assessing whether or not the regeneration process has made things better or

worse (P8).

> *"we needed to go back another 5 years later and see what the longer term we need that in the long term but we also need much shorter term tracking in terms of seeing looking at those risk factors, if you like, that are actually going to make crucial differences to people, possibly in a short term period, leading up to decision to move to vacate a block because the bulldozers are coming in, to what happened when they moved into their new home, to what actually is making a difference to whether they are capable of staying out of out of debt in that new home, to what and then 6 months down the line, have we also actually dealt with the financial shortfall in that household love because the mum is out of work and can't get any child care for her child. Those are the that is the sort of subtle day to day tracking and monitoring information that we need to be accessing to find out whether we're making any difference or indeed whether we're making things worse as a result of regeneration processes." (P8)*

15.31   One respondent noted that they had been poor at in-house evaluation, and felt that the current requirement from funders for monitoring information was not useful because it was purely quantitative, which did not reflect the quality of their service (P11). One respondent mentioned that there was a need for bigger pieces of work on evaluation and consultation in order to provide an opinion other than staff members about the project (PJ34).

15.32   One respondent remarked that they would like to have slightly more precise indicators (F4).

> *"The indicators that we use, we feel right at this moment, so it's quite a good time that you ask the question need to be better defined to ensure that people are putting the figures in the right places. So something like number of beneficiaries completing their courses does that mean completing the whole course or does it mean completing part of the course does it mean both? Things like that we need to be slightly more precise about to ensure that the figures that we're passing on to committees and the Commission ultimately are painting a true picture. But we're getting there." (F4)*

One respondent noted simply that they could do more monitoring and evaluation (P15).
Long term tracking

> *"But historically I think that's – we're not very good at, on the whole, at retaining information in the past. As I say, we have – the broom is probably the exception where we did base line work before that work started – or at the beginning of that work – we did a base line analysis in – I think it would have been 1988 – 89. We went back in 1994 after much of the regeneration activity had taken place or was underway and we needed – and we said we'd need to go back in another 5 years and see what – how the improvements had been sustained and what – we – I have struggled to argue – I have struggled to get people to go back and do that second – you know, that 10 year monitor because people perceive it as an interesting idea but is it really – I mean, we want to invest money and compare other things." (P8)*

A final respondent noted that he wanted to develop better individual action plans, that were more tailored to the individual client (PJ31).

15.33   <u>More information on who our users are</u>

15.34   Three respondent noted that more information on their users would be useful (P7, PJ25, PJ27). One respondent thought that it would be useful to have more information on who their users were, but noted that it was hard enough to get basic information such as name, address, age, etc (PJ25).

15.35   One respondent said that it would be useful to have more feedback from users about what questions they should ask for example *'is there anything that we have missed out that had made a big difference to your life?' 'Is there anything here that should go on the forms that we have overlooked?'* (PJ27)

15.36   One organisation offering an information service noted that it would like more information on its users, and thought it would have been beneficial to be able to do direct public questionnaires, and to ask users of the service where they would have found the information they require if not through this organisation. He remarked that focus groups would also have been useful in order to assess the organisation and how it could improve (P7).

> *"Well, I said that I think it would be beneficial for us to have been able to do direct, public questionnaires, although I've no idea what exactly would we would ask the public. We could ask them about the visibility of certain poverty issues, but then we couldn't be sure that it was our influence or someone else's influence that determined it. But I know that I would have liked to have done more along the lines of asking what the effect of a response to a particular enquiry was. In other words, you know, if you hadn't been able to get that particular piece of information from us do you know where else you would have got it from? How much time might that have involved. So there are quantifiable things that we have not actually been able to ask people, because we have not had the resources to do that." (P7)*

15.37   <u>Soft indicators</u>

15.38   One respondent noted that she would like to see more emphasis on the soft indicators, and said that they had tried, without much success to improve that side of monitoring (PG16).

15.39   <u>Added value</u>

15.40   Two respondents mentioned added value (E!, P12). One respondent noted that his SIP had not worked out a way to establish the added value that projects provided. He observed that there was an enormous amount of invisible work of benefit that the projects provided, and there was a need for a model that could represent this. He further

remarked that there had been some case study work undertaken with projects which had gone some way to illustrating the time projects spent in developing relationships with other projects, developing networks across Dundee and setting examples of best practice (E1).

> "And what we are not doing, what we can't do is say that the nature of project work is this, and projects have very complicated networks, and there is added value to projects that we are not really measuring out there, and there's an enormous amount of invisible work of benefit that the projects provide, and this can't be done, or can't be examined unless we have these models. It came through in the case studies that we had in the evaluation, it didn't come through as strongly as we wanted it to, but certainly we got a real sense that projects were not just delivering to young people or to disabled people, but they were spending their time developing relationships with other projects, and developing networks across [name of town], giving, setting examples of best practice. Informing, educating larger organisation about how to offer services in a different way, they offer innovation, they are very unique and they represent probably what could be done on a larger scale, but isn't because they are always seen as pilots or something that is supplementary to what they mainstream providers provide."
> (E1)

15.41   One respondent in a funding role, noted that if organisations were making a difference and providing a real benefit, then funders should reflect their pleasure in that outcome back to the organisation. He said that it would be useful to have more information about stakeholders such as family and friends of participants, to show if projects were having a benefit to more than just the participant (P12).

> "I think one that you flagged which was really interesting for me was question 13 about user relationship with family and friends. Crucial. If you're looking at making communities better places to live, then you would use stakeholders like family and friends as really important. I'd like to see us at least consider that and if possible move somewhere along the line to capture that type of information. What we ... It's just because it would show the full benefit of the activities that are taking place that folk would live in a vacuum or social and different ways and if social inclusion projects are making a difference to more people than the direct service user then that's terrific. I'm sure in most cases, they are making that difference but we don't measure it and that would be good to try and capture that information." (P12)

15.42   Methods of collection and presentation

15.43   <u>Better indicators and use of information</u>

15.44   Three respondents commented on indicators (E2, P14, PJ29). One respondent observed that there could be better indicators and highlighted a pilot project that the Scottish Executive was undertaking which sought to identify the range of activities and commodities which are considered essential for the average life of a community, and from this draw up a list of 50 or so activities. He noted that there was plenty of scope for developing more sensitive indicators for poverty/social inclusion (P14).

"the Scottish Executive's now agreed to sort of set up a project a pilot, to test how this could work. It will get together as groups of people to work with a facilitator to identify the range of activities and commodities that are considered essential for the average life of a community and draw up a list of 50 or 60 or 70 activities and assumptions. And if that's done, then quantify that in costs, break it down regionally and then use income data to establish if people are able to buy. I think there's plenty scope for developing more sensitive indicators for poverty/social inclusion. So that's a new sort of dimension or new type of indicator adding a new dimension. I don't see why that shouldn't be cohesive. The actual raw material is are already there or available. So I think something like that would add to the value." (P14)

15.45   Another respondent remarked that, in his opinion, that a good evaluation system had three elements, namely that people are asked to collect information that is essential, that this information means something to them, and it is seen by them to reflect the difference that they know they are making. He expressed the opinion that the current SIP monitoring did not meet these criteria (E2).

"the key thing here is, making sure what people are asked to collect is essential and means something to them, is valuable for them, point two. And, is seen by them to really reflect the difference they know they are making, and if any one of those three things is not in place then you haven't got an effective monitoring and evaluation system. If all three are, you've got a brilliant one." (E2)

15.46   One respondent said that an improvement would be to link the information collected by the project to information that was already being compiled by other organisations such as school attainment levels (PJ29).

"to I kind of touched on it try and link in with other information that's already available but we're not actually using information from the schools about attainment levels, about attendance levels. We just we could use that, you know, information and just see what comes out of it." (PJ29)

15.47   Standardisation by funders

15.48   Three respondents identified increased standardisation by funders as a potential improvement (F6, PG21, PJ34). One respondent called for there to be standardisation between the information asked for by different funding agencies, and observed that it would be good if projects were allowed to define to some extent their own monitoring and evaluation framework. She noted that there are few projects that are funded by one source of funding, and mentioned for one of the projects she ran they had had to deal with four different monitoring frameworks (PJ34).

"I think it could be standardised so that the different funders could agree... at the start of a project and I actually think probably that it would be good if projects were allowed to define, to some extent, their own monitoring and evaluation framework. OK, within parameters if you've got an over-arching policy that you're

trying to measure. Then there's no point in having 25 different ways to measure because you'll get no comparison or it would be very difficult to get a comparison. But I don't see any problem with a policy having a framework which projects can then be invited to design their own monitoring and evaluation which becomes part of that project's funding application which all funders then buy into. Cos there aren't generally projects that are funded by one source of money nowadays unfortunately." (PJ34)

15.49 Another respondent opined that standardised formats would be useful for thematic SIPs, noting that the framework set out by the Scottish Executive was not of use to them. He expressed the opinion that the Scottish Executive should consult with team leaders about improvements to the standardisation of systems (PG21).

"Em, I think that – yeah, it could be vastly improved and maybe this should be a role for the Exec thinking if they're going to release another lot of funding on social inclusion. Well, like previously they had urban aid, then it became social inclusion partnerships, maybe something else in the future – think about standardised monitoring and evaluation systems but for God's sake, consult with team leaders like myself on what should be appropriate and manageable because we could definitely easily do stuff with community groups. Surely all of us with our experience could come up with a very simple matrix to use about developing our work with community groups and similarly with agencies. How much institutions are moving on in terms of mainstreaming their resources, bending resources, staff time – all these sort of things could be standardised, enabling a much better and meaningful comparison. But I'm not so sure or I'm not aware of – and if there is one, that's another issue isn't it about that I'm not getting that information about these systems that other people are using. Em, so yes, vast areas of improvement needed." (PG21)

15.50 One respondent from a European funding agency noted that they had been working on consistency in monitoring information between the different European programmes, noting that agencies delivering projects in social inclusion areas could get funding from up to fifteen different sources of public money (F6).

15.51 Better forms/frameworks

15.52 Better forms and frameworks were noted by four respondents (F5, PG17, PG18, PG20). One respondent said that common methodologies for collecting and presenting qualitative information would be useful (PG17).

"We could do more about helping people to, without straight-jacketing people, we could do more about helping people to have not better qualitative information, but think about how they present it. Some common methodologies for collecting and presenting qualitative information. There are still some organisations we could help enormously to provide better quantitative information. [They laugh] There are some projects I could help, help might not be the right word, but I'm sure could provide better on-going quantitative information." (PG17)

One funder stated that the framework that they use could be improved (F5).

15.53   One respondent from a SIP articulated the steps taken to improve the monitoring forms that they used by asking projects what the problems were with the current monitoring forms and how they could be improved. From this they had developed a two stage form, with one section being the same for all projects, and the other being project specific. He noted that this related to quantitative information, and they would like to further improve methods of collecting qualitative information (PG18).

> *"we've now tried to do it as well so it's quarterly rather than annually, so we can actually sort allow them to focus in on any problems that are arising quicker, em, because they can actually see the data every quarter and also for us to get the wider picture. To be able to like say, well, hang on, we're missing totally this sector of the population, should we sort of be changing resources or doing at least a publicity campaign so that folk know what's on offer in this their area. Which it could be as simple as that. Em, so we're doing that. The next bit is this qualitative stuff which is obviously a crucial one and we're trying to get a handle on and I think that's how it's going to be sort of improved over the next next stage." (PG18)*

15.54   One respondent remarked that they had developed a monitoring framework after a series of discussions with people involved in the SIP, such as Police, Children's Hearing, voluntary organisations, heath visitors and teachers, but that it was still being adapted. She raised some specific difficulties, such as information not being available, and people gate-keeping information (PG20).

> *"At the moment, we're trying to do the monitoring framework and what we did when we put the monitoring framework together is, em, we're very democratic and we had, em, sessions with masses of pupils from the police children's hearing, voluntary organisations, parents, health visitors, teachers, you name it, we had them there. And we all bartered round these issues with what we were looking at with two specific groups and then we met again and again and then we all came up with a monitoring indicator and it's a nightmare. Absolute nightmare. Em, so there's a lot, you know, we're going to have to revamp quite a bit of what we're doing. And there could be information isn't there and we're not able to to get qualitative information and people are gatekeeping that's one of the main issues. Em, and also we feel we're not really getting to the nitty gritty of what it is we're trying to do. So, yeah. We need to adapt it but I think that's it I think it would be sad if we said no, we don't need to change it. We devised it when the whole thing started 2 years ago, we don't need to change it." (PG20)*

15.55   <u>Better presentation</u>

15.56   Four respondents identified better presentation as an improvement (P12, PG17, PJ23, PJ30). One SIP programme manager thought that she could do more work to help people to present their qualitative information better (PG17). One respondent thought it would be useful if users of the service were prepared to being involved in publicising the benefits of the service (PJ23). One respondent said that it would be good to have an annual report

for the sector as a whole, for example across a local authority, rather than have each individual project presenting an annual report (P12).

> *"what we'd like to see is almost like some type of annual report type thing for the sector as a whole which is highlighting where organisations are doing really well but in a collective sense, say, across [name of local authority area], the type of things happening. Because it's public money that's going into these organisations, although they're all doing their annual reports separately, it would be good to maybe say in this area of service provision, here's what happening. In that area, here's what's happening, here's the good news. Or here's the things we'll need to do to make things better in the future." (P12)*

15.57   One respondent noted that there were no changes planned to the information that they sought from their users (PJ30).

16.0   Other Comments

16.1   *Question: Do you have any other comments on the issue of qualitative research in evaluating social inclusion projects?*

Table A30: Other comments

Theme	Sub-theme	Eval	Funders	Policy	Prog	Project	Total
Other comments	Indicators and definitions		1	1	1		3
	Training, information exchange and advice				2	3	5
	Research/Qualitative research	3	1	3	1	6	14
	Mainstream services			1		1	2
	Resources				1	2	3
	Funding agencies and processes			1	2	2	5
	Other			2	1	1	4

16.2   Indicators and definitions

16.3   Indicators were commented upon by three respondents (F4, P13, PG13). One respondent from a rural area highlighted the shortcomings of current social inclusion indicators when applied to rural areas. She observed that car ownership is often used as an indicator of deprivation, but noted that people in rural areas have to have cars. She suggested that the age of the car might be a more appropriate indicator. She highlighted also the seasonal nature of employment in the area, which meant that unemployment varied dependent on the time of year; this had an impact on baseline information. She said also that in rural areas everyone knows everyone else, and expressed the opinion that there was a lot of support for the SIP locally (PG16).

> *"Transport is major, major issue, and one of the traditional indicators of deprivation in rural areas is car ownership. Which doesn't work in rural areas because people have to have cars. What would be very interesting would be to look at the age of the cars. An awful lot of people in rural areas drive old cars. It's true!" (PG16)*

She also noted the inapplicability of crime statistics to rural areas:

> *"Murder is a great one, because we have one every blue moon, but if it is being quoted as a percentage, if your murder rate has suddenly gone up by 100% you think 'oh dear I don't think I want to go and live there' and then you find it is one. Literally one body. Very unfortunate still for the one body. But it can scale, the scale of gross monitoring. I mean you can do the same on urban SIPs, I'm aware of that, but somehow with rural SIPs, the smaller numbers the errors become huge." (PG16)*

16.4   One respondent raised the issue of the definition of life-long learning, noting that the Scottish Executive had originally defined this as post-16 people of working age (P13).

16.5   One respondent opined that a recognised way of measuring soft outcomes would be welcome (F4).

> *"I think the soft indicators and perhaps a recognised way of measuring soft outcomes would be welcome." (F4)*

16.6   <u>Training, information exchange and advice</u>

16.7   Training, exchange of information and advice were noted by five respondents (PG20, PG21, PJ22, PJ31, PJ32). One respondent mentioned that they had had excellent training from the SIP on monitoring and evaluation, but that there was a need for more of it. She said that smaller organisations often did not have the expertise to monitor and evaluate effectively. She noted that it would be helpful if there was a body they could go to for advice (PJ22).

> *"I think, you know, if there was now, we have had some training from the Social Inclusion Partnership on monitoring and evaluation and it has been excellent training but I think there need to be more of it because, I mean, I even think, you know, we at least as a project have a sort of professional base, you know, in that the officers who are employed through the project are, you know, professional officers. And given that we find it quite hard, you know, some of we're a big project we're the largest project apart from Dundee Social Inclusion Partnership team [LAUGHTER] We're the largest project with the exception of them so when you look at some of the other projects not projects like Sheila's, which again are like us but smaller but the same sort of professional basis it would be very hard for them, I think, to have the expertise to monitor and evaluate effectively." (PJ22)*

16.8   One respondent remarked that she was about to undertake training, and expressed the opinion that her SIP could learn from more establish regeneration partnerships through a sharing of good practice. One respondent thought it would be useful for people working in similar types of work to get together and share practice, learn from mistakes and establish transferable good practice (PG21). Another respondent noted the work his SIP had done to promote networking (PJ31).

16.9   One respondent observed that the SIP had been instrumental in arranging training for staff, which had increased her confidence in undertaking monitoring. She noted that if on-going support and training is provided, better quality information will be collected (PJ32). One SIP manager said that qualitative research was one of the key things that came out of the training needs assessment for local groups, and that they would be providing more training on the issues (PG20).

> *"I think people should be better equipped to do it. I think there should be more training. Qualitative research is one of the key things that came out in our training*

needs assessment for local groups to do and that's one of the things also we'll be looking at training more." (PG20)

16.10   Qualitative research

16.11   14 respondents commented on issues of qualitative research (E1, E2, E3, F6, P7, P8, P10, PG18, PJ22, PJ24, PJ28, PJ30, PJ33, PJ34). One respondent opined that it was the qualitative information that they had collected that had served to motivate staff and justify why the project existed. She noted that nobody was very much inspired by numbers. (PJ22)

> *"it's the qualitative research that's given you that has given us, you know, the sorts of reasons why we do this work, you know. It's that research which gives you the motivation to do this work, you know, and the justification in the feeling that this is worthwhile, you know those things have come from qualitative research. Nobody's really very much inspired by numbers I suppose." (PJ22)*

> *"It's more important that you've maybe got, say, 10 students that you've improved the quality – quality of life rather than having, say, 20 students on a course and some of them are just there, em, and they don't alter their lifestyle at all because they don't want it to." (PJ30)*

16.12   One respondent called for more qualitative research to be undertaken in order to establish how people's lives have been changed as a result of being involved in a project. He opined that we need to value soft indicators (P7). One respondent stated that qualitative information would be useful to establish whether people in his SIP area were actually feeling any better about the area, and whether people outside the area thought any more of it, for example would they consider moving there? (PG18)

> *"I think that, you know, it would be useful to have the sort of angle on whether or not the people in [name of area] are actually feeling any better about it and then maybe whether or not the people in wider [name of city] are feeling any better about it. Would you consider now moving to [name of area] sort of question or what have you heard about [name of area]? Has it improved sort of thing." (PG18)*

16.13   One respondent observed that the feedback he had received from focus groups was that the community were learning more from qualitative research than from an annual report. He noted the need for monitoring and evaluation to be a learning experience, and that qualitative research did this more than numbers. However, he observed that qualitative research only involved small numbers of people, who were not necessarily representative of the wider community (E1).

> *"I think because it's only recently that we have got involved in that, and focus groups there has been a real sense from the community that they are learning from qualitative research more that they would have from a quality profile on an annual report every year. We've always said from the beginning that we would prefer that the monitoring and evaluation framework was a learning experience for*

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everyone, and I think that the qualitative work probably does that for the community more than finding out about a change in the community in relation to unemployment or mortality rates." (E1)

16.14   One respondent noted the importance of qualitative information, seeing it as more important that the quantitative. One respondent opined that qualitative research was critical, but that there was a lot of misunderstanding about how effective it can be, and how it can be done (E2). One respondent suggested that more work could be undertaken on finding out the right qualitative questions to ask, and one way to do this would be to work with people working in the field (PJ28). One respondent hoped that qualitative evaluation would not become overly prescriptive, but she felt there was a need to develop a framework and value for qualitative measures (PJ24).

> *"finding the right qualitative questions to ask would be worth really going into. There are things that it is worth trying to get out of it, and so, maybe it would be the case of actually asking people working in the field as it were, to try and put down questions that would lead to the emphasis being better. I lot of people notice things in their work, it would be good to try to take advantage of that."*
> *(PJ28)*

16.15   One respondent said that qualitative research should be used because it provides insights and the weaknesses of an evaluation framework can sometimes be shown up through qualitative perspectives. He remarked that there were no methodological reasons for not using it, but observed that it can be more resource intensive (E3).

> *"I think my sort of standard comments about the use of research would be (a) it should be used because what you do get insights (b) the weaknesses of an evaluation framework can sometimes be shown up, if you like, through qualitative perspectives; (c) it would have given you an insight into issues so yeah. I would have thought I mean, certainly methodologically there can't be any case for not bothering with it, practically it's a wee bit more resource intensive." (E3)*

16.16   One respondent opined that qualitative information should be given equal footing with quantitative information, but that projects need support in doing this and funders had to recognise the worth of it (PJ33).

> *"we did have some quantitative data through the health audits which is actually quite shocking because something like, you know, 12% were registered disabled in Adler and almost 50% were on regular medication and that shocked even me working in community health and so the quantitative figures will always have their use and they're there and they're necessary and that's good to an extent because, as I say, you need to be accessing a significant proportion of population to make the biggest change. But qualitative has to be given an equal footing with that. But I think projects need support in doing that and equally, if you do do it, it's got to be recognised through funding bodies that there's a real worth to that and used. I don't know if sometimes it's used enough. I mean, it sits there in reports and some of the powerful most powerful evidence of our project is verbatim comments from people. They can say more in a quotation than I could ever say in doing a whole half-hour presentation things that people say to you are actually very, very powerful." (PJ33)*

16.17   One respondent remarked that there should be more qualitative research undertaken, and people should be better equipped to do it. One respondent said that there should be more qualitative research, noting that it was the second stage from evaluation. Monitoring is very close to the project, and evaluation is a slight step back, with research being a further step back which has the merit of pulling a range of projects together and deriving a lessons from those projects. This can then be fed back into the projects and inform future projects (PJ34).

> *"I think the more the merrier would be my main comment because I think that there are lots of different types of social inclusion projects and there are lots of different learning outcomes that we can get from them delivering social inclusion projects and I think research is actually it's like the second stage from evaluation. Evaluation monitoring is very, very close to the project. Evaluation is a slight step back. Research is an even bigger step back and it has the merit of being able to pull together a range of projects, and kind of derive lessons from that range of projects which, if they're fed back to the participants who have responsibility either for managing projects or developing projects, can actually inform future projects and make sure that the projects meet the targets that people are aiming to meet and measure, you know, whatever we're trying to measure. So I would like to see more." (PJ34)*

16.18   One respondent thought that a lot of research that was undertaken did not find its way into the decision making process, and that decision makers had to be made aware of the value of research (P10).

> *"So, I think what you have got to be very careful about is to try and instil in amongst those that are making the decisions, the value of the research, the value of enquiry, em, about what's been happening. And the need for them to listen to it. And what you've got an awful lot of the time is opinion centred decision making, right, so that it's not really based on evidence." (P10)*

16.19   One respondent said that his organisation had not put a lot of effort into qualitative research because the politicians they worked with usually wanted figures (F6).

> *"it's a difficult area. The qualitative research – we haven't put an awful lot of work into this, partly because the political systems that we all end up working for want figures. A politician wants to stand up and say – not all of them, I mean, some of them like to paint figures as well but they usually want figures and to be able to stand up and say, project X has created 53 jobs and has a 62% success rate in getting people that come on to the project into jobs. Sometimes they like examples, but it's usually anecdotal and it's off the painting pictures side. It's much more difficult to find ways of getting across qualitative information in that way."(F6)*

This respondent also noted that there was a demand for figures to ensure accuracy:

> *"We've got an opportunity in Scotland because of the new parliament, the new Executive to change the way that we do that. But it's quite hard, you know. We're – everybody in the public sector is more accountable about what they do*

with resources, so we are under more pressure all round to collect more and more information and it's usually quantitative information and it's usually about – still about the standard things. It's not about necessarily how much money we spend. It's more about the ouputs. So it is more output orientated than it's been in the past. In the past, say 10 years ago, people would get away with saying, we have spent £200 million on economic regeneration. Projects would be less accurate about what we'd done with that money, what we've done – so we've now got a focus on what we do with the money in terms of output but it tends – tends to remain quantitative and less qualitative information." (F6)

"The qualitative research we haven't put an awful lot of work into this, partly because the political systems that we all end up working for want figures. A politician wants to stand up and say not all of them, I mean, some of them like to paint figures as well but they usually want figures and to be able to stand up and say, project X has created 53 jobs and has a 62% success rate in getting people that come on to the project into jobs. Sometimes they like examples, but it's usually anecdotal and it's off the painting pictures side." (F6)

"I think there are – at the end of the day, figures – hard stats won't tell us whether people feel any better for all this. So you have to access those feelings and those feelings are much more subtle. And the ways I think you can do that through social science techniques like surveys, focus groups and you can support that with people's panels." (P8)

16.20   <u>Mainstream services</u>

16.21   Two comments were made about mainstream services, that is services that are not targetted just on areas of deprivation (P13, PJ25). One respondent felt that it was unfair that social inclusion type projects were subject to monitoring and evaluation to a greater extent than local authorities, and said he would be interested to see how they measured up if put through the same processes. He expressed the opinion that social inclusion partnership money was seen as just another part of local authority budgets. He concluded that a standard set across both social inclusion partnerships and local authorities would be interesting and useful (PJ25).

"at times it it feels a bit I suppose a bit unfair that social inclusion type projects are asked to jump through all these hurdles and continuously prove themselves of the benefits of their work. When we work in an environment where local authorities now treat social inclusion partnership money like another part of their budget, where it was never intended for that for those purposes. They just see it as another way of kind of backing up and resourcing some of the services that they should be providing themselves but at the same time, they ask us to continuously justify what it is we're doing and why we're doing it. The same doesn't seem to happen from the other side." (PJ25)

16.22   One respondent noted that social inclusion projects needed to dovetail with services that are equally available to people in not so excluded areas such as health, transport and leisure (P13).

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16.23   Resources

16.24   Three responents commented on resource issues (PG16, PJ29, PJ33). One respondent opined that there was a need for more resources for evaluation. He compared social inclusion projects with the National Health Service, whom he said received more funding, as they were set up as much more research based. He expressed the opinion that it was important that answers were sought for some of the difficult questions in social inclusion projects, and there must be a recognition of the cost of this kind of work (PJ29).

> "I suppose the key thing is as far as I can see our project is largely about delivering a service to people and a lot of projects are. Now, because of that, it means that the majority of facilities are targeted towards delivering a service, not to evaluating the service. Now, that isn't minimising points of evaluation. If you compare the kind of project that funding levels of projects like ourselves within the National Health Service cos I've come across people who are funded but what they tend to do is set up as part of the research design projects which are very much more research based. These are extremely costly in terms of their level of funding that's provided for these and I do think that it's equally important that we do try and answer some of the difficult questions in social inclusion projects."
> (PJ29)

16.25   One respondent viewed monitoring and evaluation as an integral part of a project, whether or not you are resourced to do it (PJ33). A respondent from a rural SIP noted the time and resource constraints on getting the different SIP projects together to network (PG16).

16.26   Funding agencies and processes

16.27   Five respondents raised issues regarding funding agencies (P15, PG17, PG21, PJ22, PJ28). One respondent thought that the Scottish Executive should give more credence to qualitative research, and felt that at they end of the day they were still interested in quantitative information (PG17).

> "I think that the Scottish Executive needs to take more credence about it. The reality is at the end of the day they are still interested in the hard quantitative information. And that's the reality. And in some way we have got to impact on those major funders view of qualitative research. It's still seen as the tail-end Charlie, and at the end of the day what people are interested in is how many people are now going to college. They might still think that they live in a bad area, and all these things that are about qualitative measures. We still need I think to push that whole issue, and I think particularly for what are still fairly short term funded programmes. Because people might only be so far down the line."
> (PG17)

16.28   One respondent thought that qualitative information should be taken more seriously by funders. Another respondent noted that there was a presumption that funders would

understand the qualitative information (PJ28).

> *"This qualitative aspect here is worth trying to be evaluated. Presuming that the people who are going to be looking at it, the funders of it, that they will understand what it means. I think there is an explanation needed there. Because I think people can see certain things, and understand them, on the funding side." (PJ28)*

16.29   One respondent working with the black and ethnic minority community stressed the need for more creativity in monitoring and evaluation in order to meet the needs of the BME community. He remarked that a lot of monitoring was undertaken in English, and was paper based, and expressed the opinion that more cultural diversity could be brought into monitoring. He suggested the use of photography, arts based information and other languages as monitoring tools (PG21).

> *"let's bring an element of cultural diversity to monitoring and evaluation and accept that there are different ways and means of evaluating other than annual reports and that there should be a mixture of this sort of stuff – tape stuff – I think that's very valuable. Photographic stuff, arts based stuff, stuff in different languages." (PG21)*

16.30   He also raised the issue of where responsibility lay for translation, noting that the Community Fund, for example, expected their application form in English, and minutes of meetings etc in English. He suggested that the groups should be able to submit tapes of management committee meetings in Urdu or Punjabi, and that it should be the Community Fund's responsibility to translate them, in accordance with the principles of the Race Relations Amendment Act (PG21).

> *"So let's bring an element of cultural diversity to monitoring and evaluation and accept that there are different ways and means of evaluating other than annual reports and that there should be a mixture of this sort of stuff tape stuff I think that's very valuable. Photographic stuff, arts based stuff, stuff in different languages. Em, I'll give you an example. A group applies to the Lottery, em, they have to fill the form out in English. OK, they might be able to get a Punjabi to translate the form. Most of their minutes will be expected in English, in an English format and we're currently in debate so I'm going to be in debates with the Lottery about well, why can't we just submit tapes of management committee meetings in Urdu or Punjabi? And you get the translator and figure it out of that because that's your responsibility to take into account cultural diversity. Em, and under the Race Relations Amendment Act, they should be doing that. They should be catering and delivering for racial diversity, racial equality and they're not. They're making it. They print their forms in different languages but in terms of monitoring and evaluation, the emphasis then becomes get yourself a white organisation who can translate it for you and knows the ropes." (PG21)*

16.31   He further observed that literacy and numeracy issues were not confined to BME communities, and were common to all disadvantaged communities (PG21).

16.32   One respondent highlighted the fact that social inclusion partnership money had been

allocated in accordance with the quality of the bids, but that this had meant that areas of need had not necessarily received funding. Money had gone to the areas where staff had expertise at making applications (P15).

> *"I was on the team that looked at the bids. When we looked the social inclusion partnership money was given to people, em, on a basis that balanced need and confidence about ability to deliver something. Now, whilst that at one level, that's a reasonable thing to do when you're spending public money because arguably, there's no point in giving whole a whole load of money to an area that has huge need if it doesn't look like they've got any ideas or any infrastructure or any mechanism for actually making that mean something to socially excluded people at a local level. On the other hand, my experience of that was that some areas that had less need, em, got money because they were good at making bids, because they had that level of expertise" (P15)*

One respondent noted that more support and guidance on funding would be useful (PJ22).

16.33   Other

16.34   Four other diverse responses were received (P11, P13, PG18, PJ27). One respondent said that when research was being undertaken that related to local communities, the community should be engaged in looking at measures that take account of their expectations and existing level of understanding, and draws that into the evaluation process (P11).

> *"I'll just reiterate my earlier point about when that type of research is being undertaken, especially when it relates to local communities, then local communities should be engaged in looking at particular measures that take account of the expectations, the existing levels of understanding and draws that into the evaluation process, and there is some recognition made that the locals, what may have been, as I said the differences between what agencies and funders may think is qualitative, compared to what communities think is fair measures." (P11)*

16.35   One respondent stated that project aims should be defined at the very beginning of a project, and information collected that related to these aims, in order to prevent participants being asked the same questions several times (PJ27).

> *"it's all about making sure you know what your your ultimate aims are and what the project's about, so that you're not tracking information that's of no use to you. Cos learners do get fed up as well if you ask a million questions so it's about doing it in the most effective way possible" (PJ27)*

16.36   One respondent noted that monitoring and evaluation was useful to counter the impression given in the media of his SIP area, observing that when ever a story related to the area was printed the paper used a picture of a car propped up on bricks in an area of

the estate that had been demolished some years before (PG18).

16.37   One respondent highlighted the need for agencies to work together in a more integrated manner (P13).

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CODING TABLES

The responses were analysed on a question-by-question basis and allocated to categories with the following definitions:

Coding Table 1: Relevance of social inclusion as a descriptive term

Themes	Responses	Definition
Positive responses	Fundamental	Extremely positive terms used to describe social inclusion including: vital/fundamental/heart.
	Very relevant	Strongly positive terms used to describe social inclusion including: very relevant/key/hugely relevant/very important
	Relevant	Positive terms used to describe social inclusion including: relevant/apt/quite relevant.
Neutral responses	Shorthand term	Responses noting that inclusion was a shorthand way to refer to a range of issues.
	Best we've got	Responses noting that no-one had identified a better term than social inclusion.
Negative responses	Key issue is poverty/jobs	Responses noting that the key issue was jobs/employment/ economic inclusion.
	Not relevant	Responses noting that social inclusion is not relevant to client groups.

Coding Table 2: Positive responses to the relevance of social inclusion as a descriptive term

Themes	Sub-themes	Definition
Concept of social inclusion	Social inclusion recognises importance of individuals' ability to participate in society/ Democratic process	Responses refer to participation, ability to participate, ability to enjoy opportunities, access to provision/democracy/services.
	Describes client group	Responses link social inclusion to specific client groups.
Approach	Partnership - social inclusion approach brings together different agencies, cross community work	Responses highlight partnership/working together/development.
	Describes voluntary sector activity	Responses link social inclusion to voluntary sector activity.
	Holistic approach, addresses range of issues	Responses identify issues of co-ordination/bringing together.
Terminology	Better than previous terms	Responses identify social inclusion as better than /more descriptive/peferable to previous terms.

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Coding Table 3: Negative responses to the relevance of social inclusion as a descriptive term

Themes	Sub-themes	Definition
Concept of social inclusion	Real problem is poverty/jobs	Responses rate poverty/unemployment/jobs/economic development as a more important issue than social inclusion.
Approach	Geographical targeting	Responses identify limitation to geographically based assessments of need.
Terminology	Wide term, non-precise	Responses identify limitations due to social inclusion being a wide term/broad term/imprecise.
	Jargon, not meaningful to client groups	Responses identify limitations of social inclusion as it is jargon/not meaningful to clients, includes examples of terms used in preference by clients and examples of clients not understanding term social inclusion.
	Interpreted differently by different people, subjective	Responses identify that social inclusion is a subjective term/has different meanings for different people.

Coding Table 4: Outcomes of social inclusion projects

Theme	Sub-theme	Definition
Providing opportunities	Employment	Responses refer to employment/jobs/work/economic development.
	Education and training	Responses refer to education/training/skills.
	Young people	Responses refer to young people/children/school.
	Participation	Responses refer to involvement/participation/possibilities/ networks/aspirations/opportunities/connections/voice.
	Equality of opportunity	Responses refer to disadvantage/equality/equality of opportunity/fairness/discrimination.
Empowerment	Confidence/capabilities for individuals	Responses refer to confidence/self-esteem/opinions for individuals.
	Confidence/capabilities for communities	Responses indicate community action/community confidence/community capacity building.
Improved services	Accessing services	Responses refer to access to services/using services/confidence to use services.
	New ways of working	Responses refer to innovation/knowledge development/geographical working/linking/partnership/strategic work.
	Limitations	Responses refer to limitations/realism/demands/unreasonable expectations.
Improved circumstances	Tackling poverty and social exclusion	Responses refer to addressing disadvantage such as poverty/housing/crime/money issues/mental health issues.

Coding Table 3: Negative responses to the relevance of social inclusion as a descriptive term

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Coding Table 5: Difficulties of quantifying the outcomes of social inclusion projects

Theme	Sub-theme	Definition
Difficult issues to quantify	Areas of difficulty	Responses identify areas of work that are difficult to quantify such as awareness raising/equality or identify issues that are difficult to quantify such as outcomes/anecdotal evidence/attitude.
	Not difficult	Responses note that quantification is not difficult/difficulties can be overcome/quantification is possible.
Methodology	Quantifying and interpreting opinions	Responses identify difficulties relating to measurement/ relationships between issues/quantification/interpretation.
	Timescales	Responses identify difficulties relating to timescales.

Coding Table 6: Differences between measuring poverty, social exclusion and social inclusion

Theme	Sub-theme	Definition
Quantifying poverty	Easier to measure than exclusion	Responses note that poverty is easier to measure/more quantifiable/more tangible/more concrete/ there is more reliable data for poverty.
	Relationship of poverty to income/resources	Responses link/compare poverty and income, including poverty is wider than income/money or income is the key element of poverty, examples of poverty/income relationship.
Relationship between poverty, social inclusion and social exclusion	Relationship of poverty to inclusion and exclusion	Responses identify areas of similarity including poverty and inclusion/exclusion have close relationship/interchangeable/as wide as/same thing/no difference/same issues. Responses identify areas of overlap highlighting circular nature of poverty and exclusion/wide scope of terms. Responses identify key differences between the terms including distinctions made by culture/psychology/process.
	Relationship of inclusion to exclusion	Responses identified no difference between the terms/two sides of the same coin. Responses noted little difference between the terms/grey areas. Respondents noted differences between the two terms.
Other issues	Subjectivity of poverty and inclusion	Respondents identified issues relating to subjectivity of the terms including subjectivity/state of mind/norms.
	Other issues	Other responses given to this question.

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Relationship between poverty, social inclusion and social exclusion	Relationship of poverty to inclusion and exclusion	Responses identify areas of similarity including poverty and inclusion/exclusion have close relationship/interchangeable/as wide as/same thing/no difference/same issues.

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| | Other issues | Other responses given to this question. |

Coding Table 7: Themes emerging relating to measurement of quality of life

Theme	Sub-theme	Definition
Individual's perception	Need to ask individual/use qualitative methods	Responses indicated that individual's had to be asked/matter of personal perception.
	Methods	Responses give examples of how individual's views of their quality of life can be solicited or the absence of accurate methods of measuring this.
Proxies	Types of proxy	Respondents indicated that there were proxies that could be used to assess including examples of proxies that could be used.
Community quality of life	Issues relating to community quality of life	Responses related to community quality of life.

Coding Table 8: Responses to 'Can improvements to people's quality of life be measured in the context of social inclusion projects?'

Theme	Sub-theme	Definition
Methods	Possible to measure	Responses noting it was possible to link improvements in quality of life back to participation in social inclusion projects.
	Assumptions	Responses noting that it could be assumed that a participants quality of life had improved due to changes in their lifestyle or destination after leaving the project.
	Feedback	Responses noting that feedback received by projects indicated whether individuals quality of life had improved.
Limitations to methods	Not possible to measure	Responses identifying limitations to linking quality of life improvements to participation expressing concerns about accuracy.
	External influences	Responses identifying limitations to linking quality of life improvements to participation expressing concerns about isolating impact of social inclusion project.
	Samples	Responses identifying limitations to linking quality of life improvements to participation expressing concerns about sampling.
	Other	Responses identifying limitations to linking quality of life improvements to participation expressing concerns about other issues including time-consuming nature of the work//timescales/lack of standardisation/limit to impact of projects.

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Coding Table 9: Opinion based information

Theme	Sub-theme	Definition
Opinion based information	Resident Satisfaction	Respondents identified issues and gave examples of measurement of resident satisfaction.
	Project User Satisfaction	Respondents identified issues and gave examples of measurement of project user satisfaction.
	Fear of Crime	Respondents identified issues and gave examples of measurement of fear of crime.
	Issues of measurement	Issues relating to the measurement of opinion based information including technical limitations/sampling/geography/external influences/reliability/usefulness to participants and examples of measurement of opinion based information other than satisfaction or fear of crime.

Coding Table 10: Users' relationships with family and friends

Theme	Sub-theme	Definition
Areas where social inclusion projects can help	Examples cited	Responses identify areas where social inclusion projects can have an impact on participants relationships.
Measuring the impact on relationships	Asking the participant	Responses identify methods of establishing the impact projects have on relationships by asking the participants.
	Asking the participant's family	Responses identify methods of establishing the impact projects have on relationships by asking the participant's family.
	Use of related indicators	Responses give examples of indicators that could indicate the impact projects have had/are having on participants relationships.
	Other	Other suggestions for methods of establishing the impact projects have on relationships.
Limitations	Limitations and difficulties	Responses identify limitations to measuring opinion based information including: limitations of qualitative research/headcounts/confidentiality/invasiveness/accessing information/timescales/realism/not requested.
	Negative impact	Responses identify negative impact on activists/participants due to involvement in social inclusion projects.
Word of mouth	Word of mouth	Responses identify individuals accessing project due to word-of-mouth recommendations/participants making work-of-mouth recommendations of the project/word-of-mouth recommendations as a measure of the success of the project.

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Coding Table 11: Measuring changes in confidence

Theme	Sub-theme	Definition
Methods	See change over time	Responses noted that changes were visible in individuals over a period of time.
	Part of evaluation process	Responses noted that questions relating to confidence were part of their evaluation process.
	Need to ask participants/residents directly	Responses noted that in order to establish changes in confidence it was necessary to ask the individual concerned.
	Soft indicators/frameworks	Respondents referred to the use of soft indicators systems as a method of establishing increases in confidence.
	Other	Responses identified other methods of establishing improvements in confidence.
Proxies	Indicators	Responses identifying examples of indicators that could be used as proxies for confidence.
Issues	Community confidence	Responses raising issues of community confidence.
	Collecting data	Responses relating to the collection of data for soft indicators.
	Limitations	Responses identifying limitations to measuring changes in confidence including; extent to which measurement is possible/subjectivity/differences between individuals being measured/credibility of measurements/baselines.
	Other	Other responses given to this question.

Coding Table 12: Job readiness

Theme	Sub-theme	Definition
Job readiness	Elements of job readiness	Responses giving examples of the elements of job readiness.
	Barriers to finding employment	Responses giving examples of the barriers to finding employment.
Measurement	Indicators	Responses giving examples of indicators of job readiness.
	Issues relating to measurement	Responses raising issues relating to measurement of job readiness including: partial outcomes/adequacy of measurements/aggregation of outcomes/appropriateness to client group/qualitative aspects/measures of success.
Issues	Role of employment in social inclusion	Responses raising the issue of the role of employment in social inclusion including: quality of jobs/expectations of jobs/preparation for employment.

Coding Table 11: Measuring changes in confidence

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Methods	See change over time	Responses noted that changes were visible in individuals over a period of time.
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Issues	Role of employment in social inclusion	Responses raising the issue of the role of employment in social inclusion including: quality of jobs/expectations of jobs/preparation for employment.

Coding Table 13: Quantitative indicators

Theme	Sub-theme	Definition
Quantitative indicators	Number of users as an indication of quality	Responses discussing whether number of users is an indication of the quality of the service provided. Provision of examples both for and against.
	Limitation of number of users as a measure	Responses noting limitations of number of users as a measure of quality including: ambiguity of numbers/impact of intervention/qualitative aspects/multiple users/do not reflect work undertaken/non-specifics and includes positive examples of small numbers of users and negative examples of large number of users.
	Need to reflect quality of user experience	Responses noting that numbers do not reflect the experience of the project users.
	Need both qualitative and quantitative	Responses identifying a need for both qualitative and quantitative information.
	Difficulty in comparing quantitative indicators	Responses noting difficulties with comparisons based on quantitative indicators.
	Bending service to meet targets	Responses regarding services being bent in order to meet targets.
	Funders expect quantitative information	Responses received regarding funders' attitudes to qualitative measurement.
	Cost of monitoring and evaluation	Responses regarding the costs of monitoring and evaluation.
	Other comments	Other comments received to this question.

Coding Table 13: Quantitative indicators

Theme	Sub-theme	Definition
Quantitative indicators	Number of users as an indication of quality	Responses discussing whether number of users is an indication of the quality of the service provided. Provision of examples both for and against.
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	Funders expect quantitative information	Responses received regarding funders' attitudes to qualitative measurement.
	Cost of monitoring and evaluation	Responses regarding the costs of monitoring and evaluation.
	Other comments	Other comments received to this question.

Coding Table 14: Participant's assessment of how they have benefited

Theme	Sub theme	Definition
Ability of participant to assess how they have benefited from participation	Participants ability	Responses referring to participant's ability to assess how they have benefited from their participation including: how good they were/best placed/better placed than staff/vote with their feet/accuracy.
	Practical changes	Responses identify the ability of project users to identify practical changes in their life as a result of participation/recognition of hard outcomes.
	Varies between individuals/projects	Responses noting that project users' ability to describe how they have benefited from their participation varies between individuals/varied by type of project.
	Client specific issues	Responses identified issues relating to specific client groups including: children/young people/volunteers/dementia sufferers/individuals with learning difficulties.
	Understate ability/impact of project	Responses identifying potential for project users to under- or overestimate their abilities or to under- or overestimate the assistance of the project.
	Verbal skills	Responses relating to the role of verbal skills in measurement.
Views of non-participants	Views of non-participants	Responses relating to the views of non-participants including: importance of the views of non-participants/sampling/ representativeness.
Issues for project/programme staff	Need to listen and act on views	Responses identifying the importance of listening to what project users say/acting on what project users say.
	Need for trust	Responses identifying the need for a trusting relationship between person undertaking the research and the project user.
	Correct methods	Responses stressing the importance of using the correct methods including: language/frameworks/expectations.
	Variation between staff/participant	Responses identifying differences/similarities between staff/participants views of participants' abilities.
	Other	Other responses received to this question.

Coding Table 14: Participant's assessment of how they have benefited

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	Varies between individuals/projects	Responses noting that project users' ability to describe how they have benefited from their participation varies between individuals/varied by type of project.
	Client specific issues	Responses identified issues relating to specific client groups including: children/young people/volunteers/dementia sufferers/individuals with learning difficulties.
	Understate ability/impact of project	Responses identifying potential for project users to under- or overestimate their abilities or to under- or overestimate the assistance of the project.
	Verbal skills	Responses relating to the role of verbal skills in measurement.
Views of non-participants	Views of non-participants	Responses relating to the views of non-participants including: importance of the views of non-participants/sampling/ representativeness.
Issues for project/programme staff	Need to listen and act on views	Responses identifying the importance of listening to what project users say/acting on what project users say.
	Need for trust	Responses identifying the need for a trusting relationship between person undertaking the research and the project user.
	Correct methods	Responses stressing the importance of using the correct methods including: language/frameworks/expectations.
	Variation between staff/participant	Responses identifying differences/similarities between staff/participants views of participants' abilities.
	Other	Other responses received to this question.

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Coding Table 15: Comparisons

Theme	Sub-theme	Definition
Positive aspects	Learn from each other	Responses noting that comparisons were useful as project can learn from each other/exchange ideas/network.
	Provides benchmarks	Responses noting the usefulness of comparator information for benchmarking.
	Possible	Responses noting that comparisons are possible, but which did not elaborate further.
Negative aspects	Limitations	Responses that identified differences between projects that make comparison difficult including: geography/management structure/job descriptions/client group/users' needs/users' expectations/funding/overall differences.
	Competition	Responses identifying issues of comparisons leading to competition between projects including: staff concerns/destructive/competition for resources/suspicions.
Methodology issues	Improvements needed to methods of measurement	Responses identifying potential improvements to methods of measurement including: questions/frameworks/measuring impact.
	Qualitative issues	Responses relating to qualitative information including: comparisons of qualitative information.
	Standardisation/constitution	Responses identifying a need for standardisation of questions/frameworks/consistency.

Coding Table 16: Funding agencies and qualitative information

Theme	Sub-theme	Definition
What qualitative information contributes over and above quantitative information	Qualitative contribution	Responses identifying what qualitative information provides over and above quantitative information including: voice for individuals and communities/ more accurate information and identification of the relationship between qualitative and quantitative.
Current monitoring and evaluation systems	Issues for organisations	Responses raising issues relating to undertaking qualitative research including: resource implications/ methodology issues.
	Issues for funding agencies	Responses raising issues relating to funders including: local authority/Community Fund/Scottish Executive/SIPs/general points about funders.

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Coding Table 17: Improvements to monitoring and evaluation information

Theme	Sub-theme	Definition
Issues in monitoring and evaluation	Can always be improved	Responses noting that monitoring and evaluation systems can always be improved.
	Better informed/more training	Responses noting the desire to be better informed/have more training on monitoring and evaluation issues.
	In the process of improving/have improved	Responses noting that organisations are in the process of improving their monitoring and evaluation systems and examples of this.
	More time/resources	Responses noting the need for more staff time and/or resources to undertake monitoring and evaluation.
	Attitudes to monitoring and evaluation	Responses commenting on attitudes to monitoring and evaluation.
Types of information collected	More information/more depth	Responses noting that more information/more in-depth information would be useful.
	More information on who our users are	Responses noting that more information on who their users were would be useful.
	Soft indicators	Responses noting more emphasis on soft indicators would be useful.
	Added value	Responses commenting on the 'value added' by projects.
Methods of collection and presentation	Better indicators	Responses noting better indicators would be useful.
	Standardisation by funders	Responses noting that increased standardisation in the monitoring and evaluation information required by funders would be useful.
	Better forms/frameworks	Responses noting better frameworks would be useful/identifying potential improvements.
	Better presentation	Responses noting that better presentation of information would be useful/identifying potential improvements.
	No major changes	Responses noting that no major changes were planned.

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Coding Table 17: Improvements to monitoring and evaluation information

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Coding Table 18: Other comments

Theme	Sub-theme	Definition
Other comments	Indicators and definitions	Responses commenting on the indicators/definitions in current use.
	Training, information exchange and advice	Responses relating to training/information exchange/advice.
	Research/Qualitative research	Responses identifying issues relating to qualitative research including: motivational use/experience of user/importance/relationship to quantitative research/ need for more qualitative research to be undertaken/use of qualitative research.
	Mainstream services	Responses identifying issues relating to non-targeted services including: funding/dovetailing.
	Resources	Responses identifying issues relating to resources.
	Funding agencies and processes	Responses relating to funding agencies and qualitative research including: Scottish Executive/Community Fund/SIPs/general comments.
	Other	Other comments received under this question.

Coding Table 18: Other comments

Theme	Sub-theme	Definition
Other comments	Indicators and definitions	Responses commenting on the indicators/definitions in current use.
	Training, information exchange and advice	Responses relating to training/information exchange/advice.
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