EVPA CoLab AWARD
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ROUTES TO SCALE FRAMEWORK AND THE DRIVE PROGRAMME
A FRAMEWORK TO ENCOURAGE COLLABORATION AND CLARITY ON HOW TO ACHIEVE LASTING IMPACT, WITH A CASE STUDY ON DRIVING CHANGE AROUND PERPETRATORS OF DOMESTIC ABUSE

Submitted by Social Finance, UK

Social Finance is pleased to put forward our work in system change and practice for consideration as a candidate for EVPA's Colab Awards 2021.

We are putting forward (a) our **Framework** to encourage collaboration and bring clarity on how to achieve lasting change and routes to scale, and (b) with a practical example of the approach, as illustrated by the successful **Drive** partnership – a collaboration between Social Finance, Respect and SafeLives that is shifting policy and practice around *perpetrators* of domestic abuse in England and Wales.

BACKGROUND

A. Which **type of organisation** are you (tick all that apply)?
1. An Intermediary: an advisory, capacity building organisation or research organisation supporting capital providers, impact delivery organisations and other stakeholders and/or enhancing knowledge in the impact economy.

B. Please briefly summarise your **mission**

Social Finance is a not for profit that develops partnerships to create lasting social change. Our focus is on ensuring public, private and philanthropic capital is invested for impact. Much of our work is designed to change systems so that they work for people, and through this we are actively shaping policy, practice and investment in fields such as refugee integration, edge of care, school exclusions and mental health to employment. Our mission is to be an engine for social change, and that includes sharing our learning on what it takes change lives for the better.

We describe our Building Routes to Scale Framework, and use the example of Drive throughout this submission to illustrate our approach to both developing system change work, and the kinds of collaboration the Building Routes to Scale Framework enables. **The Drive programme is a collaboration between Social Finance, Respect and SafeLives, which addresses a gap in**

work with high-harm perpetrators of domestic abuse. It works across the domestic abuse specialist sector and with public sector partners to develop sustainable, national systems in England and Wales that respond effectively to perpetrators.

C. Which of the **use cases** does your practice(s) apply to? Please tick all that apply!
   - Social innovation in public services / with public authorities

D. Which **system practice field(s)** does your practice apply to? Please select the most relevant (max three).
   - Systems diagnostics
   - Strategy design
   - Management, learning & adaptation

E. Please give us a brief background 1) what motivated you to act and who initiated the practice(s), inside or outside your organisation, and (if applicable) 2) describe the event that triggered your engagement.

Social Finance developed the **Building Routes to Scale Framework** over the past 3 years. It builds on programmes such as **Drive**, and our other programmes, and on other learning reports we've published in recent years (e.g. Making Change Happen, Designing Outcome Metrics). Development of the Routes to Scale Framework was triggered by our own internal reflection that achieving impact at scale requires both **clarity** on what you are seeking to build and **effective collaboration** across organisations. We developed the Framework to advance and codify our thinking and experience on what it takes to create lasting impact for people, whilst also providing a tool that can be practically applied in different contexts to bring people together to make change at scale.

The **Drive** programme is an example of this work in practice and was initiated by Social Finance's Impact Incubator in 2016, itself a collaboration with a group of UK charitable foundations seeking to drive systemic change. Together, the Impact Incubator partners identified a need and started to explore how to respond, and Social Finance initiated discussions with potential partners.

THE PRACTICE(S)

F. Briefly **analyse the situation before you introduced the practice**.

As the language and goal of 'system change' has become more common amongst those delivering or funding social change, we have observed there is often **a lack of clarity around what is actually meant by system change.** While 'theories of change' are commonly used in the social sector, these tend to focus on individual interventions or approaches. Targeting change across a system needs a clear articulation of systems-level outcomes, a way to identify the range of root causes that can hold issues in place, and a common language for partners to agree the building blocks that are needed for lasting change. We have observed some use the term system change loosely or without definition - perhaps also inadvertently alienating those who are part of the current system, despite them being essential to enable lasting change.

Through our work developing systemic responses we have found that **organisations often work in silos, with different understandings of what is required and using different language.** Yet no single actor can shift how an entire system operates, and progress on a social issue requires different stakeholders to play their part. Collaboration is essential, and that in turn requires building a shared understanding of the nature of the problem and the systems around it, identifying the roles different actors could play and defining strategies.

We have historically found **that the support collaborations need to come together and for partners to understand each other is lacking** – particularly across the structural boundaries

that exist between different sectors, with asymmetric power dynamics or cultural inertia to change. Success requires new tools and ways of encouraging lasting collaborations. **Many collaborative efforts are also not given the resources and time needed** – whether early enough, at a senior enough level, or over the sustained period needed to enact the change they seek. In our experience **they fall down when they fail to quickly find common ground and are not sustained when they lack a shared route map**.

The result of these themes is to fuel competition for resources, poorly aligned activity or resource flows and limited information exchange. Drive is a good example of this: when Social Finance's Impact Incubator programme approached the issue of *perpetrators* of domestic abuse, we saw similar themes. There was no investment in dialogue around the issue, leading to lack of consensus amongst specialist organisations on what constitutes effective and desirable interventions, and understandable fears that it might even decrease victim/survivor safety. Policymakers and hence resources and legislation were not directed towards changing perpetrator behaviour, and whilst there was the potential to use statutory data to focus efforts, the opportunities were being missed.

G. Please describe the **actual results** you sought to achieve with your practice, **the parameters you sought to influence most**; roles, relationships, rules, and resources and how?
H. Please describe the **intended results** you sought to achieve with your practice and **the parameters you sought to influence most** – if considerably different from the actual results described above.

The Framework was not developed to be theoretical nor simply to use once and discard, rather **it is an action-oriented tool.** Consequently, the actual results and the *original* intended results will differ in terms of what it prompts initially. **Accordingly, we respond to G and H together.**

The Framework is a tool which encourages a strategic focus to initiatives aimed at achieving lasting social change and facilitates cross-organisational discussion to align effort. It is aimed at any changemakers who seek to develop system level ventures, be they governmental, voluntary sector or funder. Through developing the tool, we sought to aid clarity and alignment on defining **outcomes sought,** and identifying the **strategies** to achieve them.

- On **outcomes**, our starting point was to bring together lessons from successful social ventures and our own experience to develop a definition of impact at scale – across a system. We sought to define both the overarching areas of impact that suggest meaningful change for people and society, but crucially also the 'building blocks' that hold that change in place. Whilst not a traditional systems diagnostic tool, the Framework is intended to be used collaboratively to encourage dialogue around which building blocks are missing, and thus advance shared understandings of both what is needed and how to measure progress.

  For example, when developing the Drive partnership, through dialogue we came to a shared understanding around the need to shift sector practice (i.e. beyond any one organisation), the need for different permanent funding flows, and a policy environment that recognised the role of and encouraged effective perpetrator work. It also highlighted the need for new public conversations, with the narrative shifting from 'why doesn't she leave' to 'why doesn't he stop', and politicians and other public figures feeling able to talk about perpetrator work as a crucial part of the response to domestic abuse.

- On **strategies**, the Framework seeks to map the range of possible strategic levers that could underpin progress towards these building blocks, and also highlights the foundations needed to support these. It explicitly recognises that multiple routes are required and encourages reflection on respective roles.

For example, on Drive, we identified strategies such as building an evidence base, shaping sector practice, altering funding flows, improving regulation and challenging the status quo – all clearly needing input beyond that from any one partner organisation.

Using the Framework as an action-oriented tool that will shape and adapt a response to a particular challenge over time, as explained above, **can be illustrated by the Drive partnership.** We found over time on our work on Drive, it has driven ongoing dialogue and learning on:

1. **Strategy** – enabling clarity of purpose and helping stakeholders to continue to situate efforts in relation to others and assess which strategic levers to pull next and/or whether to pursue an emerging window of opportunity. On Drive, we subsequently identified a strategic gap around the statutory workforce and shifted towards building internal experts within local statutory settings and supporting such champions to co-deliver subsequent phases of work.
2. **Communication** – providing a framework to explain what long term change is being pursued, the logic behind choices, and a way of building shared understanding amongst staff, partners, funders and other stakeholders. On Drive, the clarity of purpose has been effective in drawing others in, shifting a disparate sector to a place where 120 organisations signed a call to action, calling for government action.
3. **Adaption** – supporting stakeholders to read, shape and respond to the changing environment, assessing progress and encouraging reflection on what else needs to be developed. Drive has used the Framework to define other strategic gaps and secure resources to explore how to meet these, for example it recently secured £900k to pilot an early intervention programme for perpetrators which includes an innovative housing element.

Whilst we developed and used the thinking internally on initiatives like Drive, the Framework was publicly launched in spring 2021. **Early evidence is that it is prompting the kind of dialogue and collaboration we envisaged.** For example, it is starting to reinvigorate collaboration around the London Funders network group on Violence Impacting Young People, providing a clarity of focus in this important issue area, where initiatives and dialogue had been drifting.

I. Please specifically explain the **role other actors and collaboration played** in this practice (if not the main practice itself) and insert a figure that illustrates the main stakeholders and partnerships that play a role in the practice you are presenting here.

As detailed above, the Framework itself is **designed to facilitate the kind of collaboration required to achieve lasting social change**. It is written to be **accessible to different audiences** or organisational positions and enable each to identify with and **define strategies towards common goals.**

The Framework itself has been developed as a result of collaborative efforts over several years. Specifically:

1. The Framework has been informed by the practical work Social Finance has done, over many years, to develop and encourage collaboration across a range of social issues. This includes the collaborative partnerships we have formed as social impact bonds, and the many other collaborative projects we have supported across the spectrum of partners. It is our routine practice to proactively reflect and learn with our partners and seek to codify learnings. For example, over the past 12 months we collaborated with a wide range of partners to publish a series of reports, 'Changing Lives, Changing Systems', capturing the lessons learnt and their reflections around a number of specific initiatives:
   - Lessons from reducing and preventing domestic abuse
   - Supporting people with health conditions into work
   - Reconnecting lonely older people with their community

2. Through our Impact Incubator programme, we have run a learning strand over the past 5 years on how to think about and drive systemic change. We have convened stakeholders

from across different sectors and run a series of learning events exploring the themes captured within the Framework. We shared and iterated the draft versions of the Framework with the core foundation funders of the Impact Incubator, which include the National Lottery Community Fund, Esmee Fairbairn Foundation, Tudor Trust and Paul Hamlyn Foundation. Specific parts of the Framework developed out of the Impact Incubator learning includes **the need for consistency of funding** and a **clear story**, which **are identified as the foundations** required in the Framework.

Using Drive as a use case, the collaborative nature of how we use and enable change using this Framework is reflected in how the Drive partnership developed. The original collaboration of Social Finance, Respect and SafeLives came together to define shared goals and identify where to focus together. Funders joined the collaboration early, with Lloyds Bank Foundation for England and Wales in particular coming alongside the three founding partners to help define an understanding of the problem and strategies to shape the system. Others such as Comic Relief and Tudor Trust also joined early – and all have remained involved in different ways since. With a clear vision and focus, the partnership leveraged early philanthropic support to secure £5m+ of statutory resources to test a new approach, and 5 delivery focussed organisations came alongside to enable delivery in 3 local areas. Over the past 5 years, Drive has continued its model of leveraging additional funding from both national and local government sources, supported by flexible foundation investment, together totalling over £15m to date. This has included both grant funding and some innovative guarantee structures developed collaboratively with the funders involved to backstop delivery funding. Drive's direct reach to beneficiaries has continued to grow, today being delivered across England and Wales through a network of specialist delivery partners, police and crime commissioners and local government teams. The breadth of expertise that has been aligned to work together, and the approach of drawing in and enabling collaboration between statutory partners, non-statutory organisations and funders has been at the heart of Drive's success in delivering the system change outlined in J. below.

YOUR INSIGHTS

J. What went well and why? What were the challenges you faced and how did you overcome them? What would you do differently today and why?

Framework: The tool has been **very well received in a wide range of settings** – we've used it successfully with central government departments, groups of national NGOs, healthcare commissioners, foundation forums, local co-production partners, and international development settings. Despite these disparate audiences in each interaction stakeholders report it forces them to think about their goals and roles and **has opened more space for co-operation with others**.

One of the **key challenges of developing the Framework was the definitional challenges** it throws up. Some stakeholders are rooted in quantitative approaches, yet success looks very different across social issues and there is no single measure or threshold which fits all situations. Similarly, how you define the issue affects the right way to view impact at scale - mental health won't ever be 'solved', but we can affect the likelihood and severity of suffering, for example, or improve how society responds. Others point to organisational scale or financial measures, but, whilst important, these too are incomplete. To overcome these, we took a different view of scale, and instead rooted our definition of success as being a combination of products, services or practices expanding their reach, systems that embed change and society and culture shifting their perspective. This approach enables the flexibility required to build a definition relevant to the social issue being considered.

It remains true that judging success when using this approach measures will always have an element of subjectivity – how much 'reach' is success? or by what measure do you consider society's perspective to have changed? Our reflection today is that our approach remains valid,

as it still focuses stakeholders on the dimensions of lasting change and provides a framework for such subjective decisions to be debated and made.

Drive: The systematic approach articulated in the Framework has been very successful in enabling change under the Drive programme. From the beginning, the partnership benefited from clarity on roles, enabling three organisations who had not worked together in this way to not only define clear shared system goals, but also a have a clear framework to sustain the collaboration and enable it to adapt, grow and articulate a clear rationale to draw others in. The strategy of developing the evidence base alongside **challenging the status quo** through **asking 'why doesn't he stop?'** helped engage policy makers and minsters, and the alignment achieved in the **Call to Action led by Drive** was cited as resulting in a perpetrator focus being central to the **recent Domestic Abuse Act** and **£45m of new government funding** being directed to the issue.

K.   Which three pieces of advice would you give to your peers?

1.   Enable collaborations to start with a problem, not a solution

A key value the Framework brings is that it starts with identifying the change you want to see in people and society, and works back from there. Delivering successful system ventures means bringing stakeholders together and getting clarity on shared system goals is often a precursor to successful system change ventures. Building from a clear articulation of system-level goals provides space for stakeholders to identify the most appropriate strategies and building blocks to aim for, each playing their own role whilst sharing a focus on the destination. So often, we've seen scaling attempts fail to bring others with them, as they are developed through the lens of scaling a particular organisation's solution. Starting with the problem – the lack of behaviour change for domestic abuse perpetrators - and the resultant clarity on the required building blocks for change was fundamental to the Drive partnership's success. It has meant that, whilst there is a successful intervention being delivered within Drive, the Drive partners have never focussed on just scaling 'the Drive model' – but rather on delivering strategies that achieve their shared system goals.

It is however inherently harder to build collaborations like this; funding often flows to solutions not to collaborations which seek to start from the other end. Funders can play a key enabling role by investing in this kind of initial exploration, providing organisations with the capacity, freedom and confidence to start thinking – and collaborating – differently.

2.   Develop a shared narrative

When we developed the Framework, we included a focus on society and culture shifting their perspective alongside products, services or practices expanding their reach, or systems embedding change. Often we find that stakeholders divide into those who focus on one area of these, with shifting perspectives often left to advocacy efforts. In reality, a combination is likely to be needed to achieve impact at scale and across a system. For example, to transform road safety the product solution of cheap, effective seatbelts was needed, alongside the system embedding change through legislation requiring them – which in turn could not have worked without public culture shifting to accept using them. The Framework can be useful for reminding stakeholders of the need to focus on all three and develop the partnerships or complementary strategies to achieve that. Thus, despite a delivery focus on testing a new programmatic response to build the evidence base, the Drive programme also invested significantly in creating a simple narrative to reframe the issue.

3.   Work with the context

Using the Framework makes it clear that there are likely to be multiple strategies required to achieve the building blocks for impact at scale. In our work developing the Framework we noted that different strategies have been successful at different times, and that successful approaches often worked with the grain of the policy context, whilst stretching and pushing against some of

these policies in the areas that matter. This needs tools like the Framework to be used actively to focus and refocus stakeholders on their shared goals, and be open to flexibility and adaption. The Drive programme built one of its initial responses to take advantage of the opportunity presented by new statutory duties given to Police and Crime Commissioners, and has continued to adapt to its changing context- for example using the shift to online delivery during Covid to broaden its training offer to help non-specialist professionals identify and manage risks, enhancing its workforce development strategy.

FURTHER RESOURCES

The Changing Lives, Changing Systems: Building Routes to Scale report and its sister report on the Drive programme – Lessons in Reducing and Prevening Domestic Abuse can be found at https://socialfinance.org.uk/resources/publications

https://www.socialfinance.org.uk/projects/changing-lives-changing-systems

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