



System Maturity Conditions for Place-based Systemic Approaches to Physical Activity Inequalities

Version 5. July 2026.

National Evaluation & Learning Partnership QCA

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Conditions for addressing physical activity inequality



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Note: we have made some changes to the structure and content of the matrix in 2026.

Please visit www.evaluatingcomplexity.org for explanation of the changes and guidance on how to use this resource.



1. Process for identifying the barriers and enablers of physical activity

There are processes for developing a deep understanding and (shared) knowledge of what supports and/or prevents people being physically active, within the local context.

	<i>Absent or limited</i>	<i>Emerging in practice</i>		<i>Establishing in practice</i>		<i>Embedded in practice</i>	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Sector integration of physical activity	a) Data and insight: Effective capture and use of data and insight						
	People do not gather, share, and use information on what supports or prevents people being physically active <i>in the local context</i> . Demographic data identifying personal characteristics <i>is not collected</i> .	There are isolated examples of gathering and sharing information , data and insight on the practical, social and cultural factors that support or prevent people being physically active within the local context. Data on inequalities is sometimes collected and analysed to inform policy and practice. Some people may be starting to build this understanding , but these insights are not widely valued or used to inform policy and/or practice.	Information, data and insight on the practical, social and cultural factors that support or prevent people being physically active within the local context is often gathered and interpreted , using existing evidence and relevant theories to understand what is working and why. Data on inequalities is routinely collected and analysed . However, there are gaps in the data and/or in terms of who is involved and/or how it is used to inform policy and/or practice. Data and insight are only shared between partners and interested parties occasionally.	Information, data and insight on the practical, social and cultural factors that support or prevent people being physically active within the local context are routinely gathered and interpreted , using existing evidence and relevant theories to understand what is working and why. This highlights diverse perspectives and is interpreted to inform policy and/or practice. This data and insight are regularly shared between partners and interested parties in meaningful and relevant ways .			

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	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strengthening community & individual capacities	b) Community perspectives: Community perspectives on challenges, strengths and priorities are valued and underpin place-based working on PA						
	Barriers and enablers of physical activity and strengths that support physical activity in the local context, are defined by organisations and are incongruous with community perceptions of assets and barriers.	There are isolated examples of working with local people* and/or organisations and networks that represent those with lived experience of inequality, to develop a deep understanding of what supports or prevents people being physically active. This is not widely valued or used to inform policy and/or practice.		There is some engagement with local people and/or organisations and networks that represent those with lived experience of inequality in processes for developing and sharing understanding of what supports or prevents people being physically active. These may be only partially representative of the diversity of experiences of inequalities. This is gaining support and beginning to inform policy or practice.		Common understandings of local strengths, challenges and priorities emerge from regular communication and strong relationships between local people and/or organisations and networks which represent those with lived experience of inequalities. This insight is routinely used to shape the work of all sectors to promote PA and wellbeing.	

*local people may refer to residents and / or communities of interest or identities.

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	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Tackling structural inequalities	c) Understanding root causes: Consistent understanding of how social, cultural, and economic constraints may affect physical activity levels						
	Limited understanding that choices are constrained. Little or no consideration of power dynamics, and discrimination that contribute to poor working and living conditions.	Emerging understanding that choices are constrained by social, cultural and economic processes. Those in charge recognise that policies and processes should consider how power dynamics and discrimination contribute to poor working and living conditions.		Growing understanding of how choices are constrained by social, cultural and economic processes. Organisations can demonstrate how they consider and explore power dynamics and discrimination with some disadvantaged groups.		Widespread and consistent understanding of how choices are constrained by social, cultural and economic processes. This includes consistent attention to power relations and discrimination, across policy areas. This is routinely used to inform wider responses to the underlying causes of inequalities.	

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2. Organisational processes, policies, structures and governance

Administrative systems, policies, structures and processes effectively enable and encourage place-based ways of working to address inequalities.

	<i>Absent or limited</i>	<i>Emerging in practice</i>		<i>Establishing in practice</i>		<i>Embedded in practice</i>	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Sector integration of physical activity (1)	a) <i>Processes & practices</i> : Partners implement practices, policies, and organisational structures to enable shared decision-making and flexible collaborative working, shaped by the needs and aspirations of communities						
	Organisational structures, policies, decision-making and administrative processes drive siloed, transactional working . Processes are rigid and often exclude partners who could support the work. Risk aversion leads to widespread reluctance to try new ways of working.	There is growing understanding of how organisational structures, policies, decision-making and administrative processes affect implementation of a PBSA. People are beginning to highlight unhelpful or restrictive processes and/or to challenge risk averse ways of working, where they are disproportionate. Some short-term 'workarounds' are established to support place-based working, within and across organisations but with limited line of sight to longer term change.		Some new organisational structures, policies, decision-making and administrative processes (including team structures, job descriptions, commissioning & funding) are being adopted to promote equitable and collaborative ways of working . These may be limited to certain elements of the work in the Place. Some funders and partner organisations can demonstrate how they address barriers and restrictive processes, to enable collaborative ways of working, and take a proportionate attitude to risk.		Organisational structures, policies, and administrative processes have been redesigned throughout the Place . This facilitates collaboration, including equitable and flexible decision-making, responsive to individual and community circumstances, e.g., team structures, job roles, information flow, sharing of resources. Redesigned commissioning and funding processes are grounded in values and practices of equitable collaboration, shared purpose and learning rather than targets. They are designed to build sustainable long-term capacity and collaborative ways of working. Attitudes to risk are proportionate.	

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	Absent or limited	Emerging in practice		Establishing in practice		Embedded in practice	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Sector integration of physical activity (2)	b) Inclusive comms practices: Partner organisations adapt communications to align and engage with diverse cultural needs						
	Strategies, practices, and communications are not responsive to traditions, values, beliefs, language, and accessibility needs of groups who are less likely to be active. Assumptions or stereotypes held by local people or staff are not challenged.	There are some examples of strategies, practices, and communications which seek to understand and respond to traditions, values, beliefs, language, and accessibility needs, of groups who are less likely to be active. Some people in the partnership are noticing and challenging commonly held assumptions or stereotypes.	Many people working on the PBSA recognise how their own and the organisations’ framing and implicit assumptions about physical activity and inequalities may produce ways of communicating that fail to connect with some less active people or groups. There are examples of changes in practice in communications and engagement, including around evaluation. Partners are proactively engaging in a two-way dialogue with communities to understand the traditions, values, beliefs, language, and accessibility needs of groups who are less likely to be active. Language and accessibility needs are usually addressed.	Across the partnership, most people working in the PBSA recognise how their own and their organisations’ past framing and implicit assumptions about physical activity and inequalities may have produced ways of communicating that failed to connect with some less active people or groups. Strategies, practices, and communications, including evaluation-related work, consistently consider, differing traditions, values, beliefs, language, and accessibility needs, of groups who are less likely to be active. This enables, and is shaped by, two-way dialogues with communities. Language and accessibility needs are consistently and proactively addressed.			

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	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Tackling structural inequalities	c) Processes address causes: Administrative systems, policies, structures and processes enable more equitable sharing of power and resources to address inequalities and their underlying drivers						
	Decision-making and administrative processes reflect and reproduce inequalities. The distribution of resources tends not to take account of inequalities.	Emerging understanding that administrative processes maintain inequalities and fail to address discrimination. Some administrative approaches are being adopted to enable distribution of resources to disadvantaged groups.		New administrative processes are being adopted to enable sharing of power and resources with disadvantaged groups to tackle structural inequalities. Significant resources are directed to disadvantaged groups.		New administrative processes have become embedded. These enable sharing of power and resources with disadvantaged groups to tackle structural inequalities. Mainstream resources are deliberately and fairly directed to disadvantaged groups.	

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3. Capacity and capability across the workforce, volunteers and in communities

Action to develop capacity and capability across the workforce, volunteers, and communities to work in a place-based systemic approach to enable physical activity.

	<i>Absent or limited</i>	<i>Emerging in practice</i>		<i>Establishing in practice</i>		<i>Embedded in practice</i>	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Sector integration of physical activity	a) <i>Partner capacity & capability</i> : Partners are investing in building capacity and capability for place-based systemic working						
	There are no capacity and capability building strategies in planning for place-based systemic working. There is no agreed/or supported, dedicated time, for employees to work in a place-based systemic way.	Partner organisations are developing <i>plans to invest resources (including employees’ time)</i> in capacity and capability building for place-based systemic working. This may include recruiting for the skills, knowledge, and attributes required. <i>OR</i> There is a recognition that some employees’ time is needed to support this way of working but existing capacity and capability building strategies have <i>limited or low uptake</i> .	Partner <i>organisations are investing resources (including employees’ time)</i> in capacity and capability building strategies and/or recruiting for the skills, knowledge, and attributes for place-based systemic working. Training, development and support for networks to share best practice is offered widely and has strong uptake. There are some employees with dedicated time to work in a place-based, systemic , and collaborative way with a focus on addressing inequalities.	There is an established and growing workforce of people with the skills, knowledge, and attributes for systemic, place-based and collaborative working. This is embedded in job descriptions and priorities across the partnership organisations. Recruitment and continuous professional development policies prioritise these skills, knowledge, and capacities. Training, development and support for networks is embedded in mainstream practice, such as PDR and induction policies.			

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3. Capacity and capability across the workforce, volunteers and in communities

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	<i>Absent or limited</i>	<i>Emerging in practice</i>		<i>Establishing in practice</i>		<i>Embedded in practice</i>	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strengthening community & individual capacities	b) VCFSE capacity & capability: Working with communities and voluntary organisations to build capacity and capability						
	There are no plans or strategies for capacity and capability building with local people* to work together to tackle problems of inactivity. Local community organisations do not share skills or ways of working with each other.	Plans or strategies are being co-designed with VCFSE partners, to work with local people to build the skills and knowledge to work together to tackle problems of inactivity. Community organisations are beginning to recognise they can support each other to build skills and local knowledge.	There are coherent, proactive partnership strategies, resources and actions in place, which work with local people to build skills and knowledge to work together to tackle problems of inactivity. These are offered widely and have broad uptake across diverse communities. There are short term fixes to mitigate poor working and living circumstances, to enable participation. Community organisations are starting to support each other, to share skills, building collective capacity to work in this way.	A broad and representative range of local people demonstrate and continue to build the skills, strengths, and capacities to work together to nurture movement and PA in their communities, on an ongoing basis. This work includes active involvement of people and communities who face barriers to participation. People are fairly rewarded for participation in capacity and capability development work. A network of community partners is established and driving collaborative work across the VCFSE sector (e.g. joint funding bids).			

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Tackling structural inequalities	c) Community capacity – causes: Support and resources for communities to build the capacities and capabilities to advocate and act on the causes of inequalities						
	There is a high level of insecurity, poverty, poor working and living conditions and mental stress . People living in these conditions feel powerless.	Plans being co-designed with communities and/or emerging examples of support that build capacity and capability for local people to define and act on aspects of their lives which foster dignity and control.		Initiatives are in place that build capacity and capability for local people to define and act on aspects of their lives which may foster dignity and control in their lives.		Initiatives that build capacity and capability for local people to define and act on what matters most to them are widely embedded and sustained . Evidence of increasing experiences of dignity and control in their lives.	

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4. Cycles of learning and action

There are appropriate methods in place to learn from experience and, over time, improve place-based working to address physical inactivity.

	Absent or limited	Emerging in practice		Establishing in practice		Embedded in practice	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
General 1	a) Learning culture: Systemic learning culture and behaviours						
	Learning culture, (that is an environment of asking questions, seeking new knowledge and exploring different ways of doing things), is not valued. Evaluation may be seen as a ‘nice idea’ and in competition with time for delivery or conceived as a way to validate existing practice or manage performance. People want or expect certainty in relation to the outcomes of their actions. Simple solutions to complex problems are sought. There is a lack of safety in sharing information. Problems or ‘failures’ tend not to be spoken about – with no constructive learning taken from them. There is limited belief in the possibility of change.	Some people /teams working within the place recognise the value of learning. They encourage others to be curious, to ask questions, to think about how and why change is or isn’t happening, and to explore different ways of doing things. Some people and organisations recognise that simple solutions, alone, will not be enough to solve complex problems. While some recognise them as opportunities to learn, fear of airing unsuccessful initiatives remains the norm. There is a belief in the possibility of change within some individuals and teams.	Many teams/partners within the Place show curiosity about the how and why change is or isn’t happening, drawing on a range of different people, sources and settings. Continuous learning is often, but not always, recognised by partners as a key element of a PBSA. There is increasing use of reflective practice, and awareness of the different kinds of value that such learning can bring to this work, including building trust and confidence to try different approaches. There are some shared ‘learning spaces’, in which people feel safe to be open and honest in talking about their experiences, including unsuccessful initiatives, which are seen by many as opportunities for learning and growth.	Continuous learning culture is embedded as a core part of the place-based systemic approach, shaping decision-making and practice across the Place Evaluative ways of thinking and working are made accessible and widely seen as something everyone can engage in. The different kinds of value that learning processes bring are widely recognised and understood. Space is created across the system for regular reflection and high levels of trust between individuals and organisations enable openness and constructive criticism. A culture of curiosity prevails over fear of failure, enabling people to feel safe as they openly explore how and why change is or is not happening, drawing on a variety of people, sources and settings. Feeling ‘uncomfortable’ and accepting uncertainty is commonly accepted.			

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	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
General 2	b) Embedded learning: Embedded learning capacity and processes						
	There is a lack of policies, processes, training, capacity and resources to support continuous learning (for example to reflect on practice and share ideas, knowledge, or evaluation data about effective or ineffective initiatives). Actions are disconnected from the learning processes.	There are a few examples of teams or organisations are developing policies, processes, training and resources to support learning in the contexts of complex systems. This may be dependent on external facilitation or communities of practice. There are a few examples of learning process within partner organisations or local networks where learning informs decisions and continuous improvement.	Several teams and organisations have put in place the processes, training, capacity, and resources to support evaluative thinking and ways of working. These are designed to be accessible and engage a wide range of people. These learning practices inform action and decision-making, drawing on findings from other place-based systemic approaches, as well as locally captured insight from a variety of sources. This way of working is increasingly adopted within local networks and collaborations, in which insights and learning are shared, but transfer of learning into action may be inconsistent.	Learning policies, processes, training, capacity and resources to support evaluative thinking and ways of working are consistently supported and prioritised across the system . These processes and practices are developed and adapted to be engaging and accessible to enable everyone with an interest in this work to participate. Organisations and networks are committed to maintaining the capacity and capabilities to develop and to engage in evaluative practices. Inclusive learning processes are embedded and shared across partnerships and individual organisations and recognised as a key aspect of collaborative place-based working. These pay attention to local people's experiences and wider evidence, in a continuous cycle of learning and action Evaluation data and findings are shared in accessible formats and in welcoming spaces so that people can engage with and understand the process, learning, and implications for community-led and partner action. This includes permission to stop doing things that are not working.			

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	<i>Absent or limited</i>	<i>Emerging in practice</i>		<i>Establishing in practice</i>		<i>Embedded in practice</i>	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
General	c) Appropriate methods: Appropriate methods for evaluation and learning in place-based working						
3	Evaluation methods used are not appropriate for place-based working. For example, use of simple 'before and after' evaluation of interventions, seeking to 'prove' their impact, with little attention to the influence of local context. Evaluation processes are narrowly focussed on quantifiable outcomes or targets defined in advance and with no regard to local definitions of what is valued. They may be regarded as a reporting/monitoring requirement of funders, to be complied with rather than as a way of working. People tend to have fixed or expert mindsets and distrust or disregard lived experience insights.	Those leading this work recognise that that place-based systemic working needs appropriate evaluation methods, but strategies and resources are not yet established to address this comprehensively. Some complexity sensitive evaluation methods (e.g. those that account for context, consider multiple 'impacts', including unintended outcomes, explore changes over time and seek to explain changes etc.) are being used in some parts of the system. There are some examples of processes for capturing and valuing local partners and local people's experience about how things are working/changing (or not).		A range of complexity sensitive evaluation methods have been adopted in some aspects of the PBSA. These are understood and valued by people and organisations involved, and help develop understandings of how and why change is or is not taking place. Local people with lived experience of physical inactivity, those implementing PA activities or involved in agencies locally are often engaged in evaluation/learning processes and providing insights into what makes a difference locally.		A range of evaluation methods and tools appropriate for whole-system place-based approaches are widely understood and consistently adopted. This enables learning and adaption in collaborative spaces, which informs and shapes the ongoing work across the Place. These methods use a variety of information sources, consider dynamic relationships and contexts, to explore how and why change is or is not taking place. They avoid reliance on narrowly defined measures and outcomes. Local people with lived experience of physical inactivity, those implementing PA activities or involved in agencies locally are actively contributing to the framing, design, and implementation of evaluation and learning processes and providing insights into what makes a difference locally.	

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5. Collaboration

There is productive partnership working around a common purpose.

	<i>Absent or limited</i>	<i>Emerging in practice</i>		<i>Establishing in practice</i>		<i>Embedded in practice</i>	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Sector integration of physical activity	a) Cross-sector collaboration: Collaborative practice within and across sectors						
	Organisations work in silos to tackle physical activity inequalities. There is a lack of mutual understanding and shared value of physical activity within and across organisations, and PA inequalities are widely seen as the responsibility of the PA sector alone. Departments or organisations compete for resources to the detriment of tackling the underlying causes of physical inactivity. Decision-making is not shared. Contradictions in policy and practice inhibit productive working partnerships to encourage PA (for example economic policies to encourage people to drive into city centres, at the cost of active travel solutions).	Potential partners identify the benefits of working together to tackle systemic barriers to enable people to be more active. There is effective work taking place to build relationships within and across organisations. There is growing honesty and trust between people, and ideas around sharing resources. There is an acceptance that collaboration may involve compromises or lead to innovative solutions. There is recognition that decision-making should be shared between partners. There is recognition of where policy/practice can inhibit productive working and plans to work more in partnership.		There are some examples of people in organisations working together across the local place, within and across policy areas and ideas to tackle systemic barriers and/or create more comprehensive physical activity opportunities. Organisations have developed a shared purpose, based on effective communication and growing trust among people and partners. Many partners agree on how to make resources and assets work more effectively to tackle physical activity inequalities, and this often drives collective decisions. There are examples of changes in behaviours, practice and policy which demonstrate shifts away from destructive competition and contradictions.		Organisations are consistently working together throughout the local place, within and across policy areas and ideas to tackle systemic barriers and/or create more comprehensive physical activity opportunities. The shared purpose is widely owned and embedded in organisations' plans and practices across key place-based partners. High levels of trust enable routine shared and equitable decision-making even in cases where partners may have differences of opinions. Collaborative practice across and within organisations is the norm and persists beyond individual relationships. Contradictions in policy and practice are routinely unravelled and resolved and competition is supported only when it drives innovation.	

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Strengthening community & individual capacities	b) VCFSE collaboration: Thriving community sector that works together on physical activity						
	Limited attention is given to physical activity as part of usual work for Voluntary Community Faith and Social Enterprise (VCFSE) organisations in the place. VCFSE organisations are precarious (i.e. live 'hand to mouth') and/or competitive which inhibits collaboration.	Some VCFSE organisations recognise how PA can align with their aims and are willing to work with others to incorporate physical activity into their work and widen reach to those who may be inactive. These efforts tend to be time limited and/or are bound to external funding. (i.e. Efforts to incorporate physical activity are intermittent / sporadic).	Many VCFSE organisations recognise how PA can align with their aims. They are collaborating with others to incorporate physical activity into their ongoing work with individuals and communities and to widen reach to those who may be inactive. Physical activity is becoming part of usual practice for some VCSFE organisations as a way of contributing to their core objectives.	A network of VCFSE organisations is working together, with a common purpose, and with other place-based agencies to build physical activity into their work with individuals and communities. This includes, widening reach to those who are underserved and pooling resources. This way of working is sustainable and not dependent on short-term funding. For example, faith-based organisations work with community development charities and local sports clubs to encourage young people to maintain their education.			

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	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Tackling structural inequalities	c) Collective action on inequalities: Collaborative strategy for addressing structural inequalities						
	Little interest or an absence of attention from multiple partners to tackle structural inequalities Partners feel powerless to change this	Recognition of the need to collaborate across and within organisations to tackle Structural Inequalities effectively. Roles and responsibilities for addressing these are unclear.		Unified and integrated strategy for addressing structural inequalities is developing / developed collaboratively across policy areas, with cross-sector ownership. In some areas, roles and responsibilities for addressing these are clear.		Unified and integrated strategy for addressing structural inequalities is effectively implemented, leading to change in policy and practice within and across sectors. Roles and responsibilities for delivery of the strategy are clear throughout the partnership.	

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6. Leadership

Policymakers, workforce, volunteers and residents act together to build on strengths and remove barriers for tackling physical activity inequalities.

	<i>Absent or limited</i>	<i>Emerging in practice</i>		<i>Establishing in practice</i>		<i>Embedded in practice</i>	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Sector integration of physical activity	a) Strategic leadership: Strategic leaders, across sectors, promote place-based systemic approaches to tackle physical activity inequalities						
	There is a lack of sustained, visible leadership, within the Place, for tackling physical activity inequalities. Leadership for tackling physical activity inequalities is limited to the sport and leisure sector.	There is emerging visible leadership, within the Place, for place-based systemic approaches to tackle physical activity inequalities. There are emerging leaders across multiple sectors, within the place, beyond sport and leisure, who are beginning to address the breadth of influences on physical activity.	There is sustained visible leadership, across multiple sectors, within the Place, for place-based systemic approaches to tackle physical activity inequalities leading to changes in policy and practice. Leaders use their influence to facilitate diverse contribution to decision making and enable others to act. Leaders are starting to recognise, challenge and change practices and processes which are counterproductive to physical activity (e.g. economic policy to welcome cars into city centres may contradict active travel policies).	There is widespread, sustained visible leadership and long-term commitment, within the Place, for place-based systemic approaches to tackle physical activity inequalities. Policy and practice support commitments to prioritise physical activity. Leaders use their influence and facilitate diverse contribution to decision making and enable others to act. Leaders use their positions to effectively challenge contradictory policies and practices.			

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6. Leadership

Policymakers, workforce, volunteers and residents act together to build on strengths and remove barriers for tackling physical activity inequalities.

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General	b) Shared leadership: People across sectors and at all levels take on roles and responsibility to tackle physical activity inequalities and can act autonomously						
	People at different layers* within and across the place are unable or unwilling to make decisions about what works to address physical activity inequalities.	There is limited distribution of decision making within organisations and across partners . Some people take on responsibility and initiate action, but this may be compromised by context (e.g. time restrictions or lack of strategic influence).		There is some distribution of decision making to people at all layers within organisations to take decisions and actions, aligned with the shared vision to address physical activity inequalities. Representatives of less active communities are enabled to participate in partnership decision-making and convene collective action to address needs and opportunities. People without formal leadership positions take on some roles and responsibilities within their sphere of influence (i.e. policy makers can influence workforce, residents can influence neighbours and community organisations they are engaged with).		There are multiple people at all layers within organisations and across sectors, including representatives of less active communities, who take informed decisions and actions, aligned with the shared vision to address physical activity inequalities. People without formal leadership positions take on roles and responsibility and feel in control of what they do and empowered to convene or contribute to collective decision-making and initiate action. They highlight things that are not working and there are effective ways to influence upwards/more widely to resolve systemic challenges.	

***layers** refers to how people may be organised in society including traditional hierarchical intra-organisational structures. For example, directors/ manager/ officer, and includes the public and volunteers.

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7. Community-led action

Action is shaped and led by communities and supported by community-focused strategies.

	<i>Absent or limited</i>	<i>Emerging in practice</i>		<i>Establishing in practice</i>		<i>Embedded in practice</i>	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Sector integration of physical activity	a) Lived experience in PA initiatives: Meaningful involvement of people with lived experience in developing sector-led PA initiatives						
	Local people have limited influence over decisions about local programmes and resource allocation for physical activity, even if they are occasionally consulted and/or community engagement is not equitable and inclusive of diverse perspectives. There may be historical mistrust and lack of communication between communities and local agencies.	There are isolated examples in which local people who are directly affected have some involvement in development and design of sector-led programmes and physical activity initiatives (e.g. patients of a cancer pathway can input into the development of an activity programme to support them during treatment). Efforts are made to ensure this is done equitably and respond to diverse perspectives within communities. Historic mistrust and communication challenges are recognised and worked on.		Local people who are directly affected, are often involved in designing, producing and evaluating sector-led programmes and physical activity initiatives . This happens across multiple sectors. There is evidence of progress in addressing historic mistrust and communication challenges, and disadvantaged people and communities are increasingly and equitably included in these processes.		Local people who are directly affected, including those seldom heard and experiencing disadvantage are routinely actively involved in designing, producing and evaluating local programmes and physical activity initiatives, through various sectors. This practice is rooted in shared values and practices, embedded in the cultures of the whole system of organisations working in equitable, transparent and accountable ways. This leads to increasing levels of understanding and trust between disadvantaged communities and partner agencies.	

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7. Community-led action

Action is shaped and led by communities and supported by community-focused strategies.

	<i>Absent or limited</i>	<i>Emerging in practice</i>		<i>Establishing in practice</i>		<i>Embedded in practice</i>	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strengthening community & individual capacities	b) Community-led action: Community-led action supported by agencies						
	There is limited resident or community-led physical activity . This may be due to living and working conditions working against the development of community-led initiatives or lack of responsivity of local agencies to community needs.	There are a few community-led initiatives for physical activity, with some support where needed from local agencies/partners. Some local people are confident to get involved in physical activity, due to familiarity and reputation of local groups/organisations and/or the individual leading them. Tensions between local people and communities may limit access, in some cases.	Communities are developing and delivering a range of actions to enable and promote physical activity with some involvement of people with lived experience of PA inequalities. These are often supported by local agencies and partners where needed (for example with support for equipment, venues, bid writing/marketing etc). Many local people are confident to get involved. They can move between initiatives and opportunities due to positive relations between groups.	Communities are regularly working together to develop and deliver a wide range of actions to enable and promote physical activity. These are made accessible and promoted accordingly with active involvement of people with lived experience of PA inequalities. Systemic action by local agencies and partners ensures community-led initiatives are routinely and responsively supported where needed. Local people and/or community-led initiatives for physical activity build confidence and connections in communities, leading to greater innovation, investment and independence from sector-led initiatives.			

*local people may refer to residents and / or communities of interest or identities

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	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Tackling Structural Inequalities	c) Community influence: Local people's influence on decisions about things that affect their lives						
	Local people have few, if any, opportunities to share ideas, influence decision-making and solve problems together.	Emerging networks of friends, family or community members share ideas and solve problems together. These voices are increasingly heard by managers and policymakers in local agencies.	Established networks of friends, family or community members share ideas and take collective action to advocate for change, influence the decisions of local agencies and solve problems together. Trust within communities and with agencies is increasing in some places.	Disadvantaged communities are acting together to bring about meaningful change in their lives, by acting and advocating for themselves. Decision-makers in local agencies consistently engage in dialogue with communities to understand their issues and co-produce action. Diverse needs and perspectives are equitably represented in this. Community connections, trust, health and wellbeing of the whole community are growing stronger.			

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8. Physically active cultures in local settings

Active cultures create a social environment for physical activity, encouraging people to move more in ways that suit them.

	<i>Absent or limited</i>	<i>Emerging in practice</i>		<i>Establishing in practice</i>		<i>Embedded in practice</i>	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Sector Integration of physical activity	a) <i>Active organisational settings: Organisational cultures normalise PA and everyday movement in local institutional settings and workplaces</i>						
	Physical activity and wellbeing is not widely considered as relevant for paid employees and volunteers, or other participants in institutional settings, such as education or health and care services provision.	There are some examples of policies and practices that promote physical activity for paid employees, volunteers or people they work with in institutional settings. These respond to diverse individual characteristics but may be limited to a few organisations or settings, or not effectively implemented.	Policies and practices which promote physical activity in the everyday practices of paid employees, volunteers and people they work with are being implemented in many settings . In some settings physical activity or movement is increasingly becoming established as the norm. These policies and practices are increasingly adaptive and responsive to the individual characteristics of their employees and volunteers, and people they work with, but some barriers remain.		Policies and practices which embed physical activity in everyday practices are widely and effectively implemented , making regular movement the norm , and leading to increased wellbeing for paid employees, volunteers and people they work with. These policies and practices are adaptive and responsive to individual characteristics , leading to inclusive active cultures in workplaces and institutional settings. Most people in most settings are moving more during the day, and long periods of sedentary activity are unusual.		

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8. Physically active cultures in local settings

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Strengthening community & individual capacities	b) Inclusive cultures for PA: Physically active cultures in communities facilitate inclusive participation in movement / physical activity						
	Values and beliefs within many communities inhibit participation in physical activity, including concern about/experience of negative social / cultural consequences. PA is seen as exclusive and only for certain kinds of people, while some people may feel unsafe or that that they don't belong in PA settings and activities.	Within some less active communities, individuals are beginning to challenge existing negative attitudes towards PA, and to promote more positive values and beliefs about the role of being active in happy, healthy, connected lives. There are some examples of local people who have experienced barriers to participation feeling more confident and able to be active in ways that suit them.	There is evidence that in many areas and communities, people who have previously been inactive, increasingly value physical activity, and regard it as something 'normal' for people like themselves. Increasing numbers of people are moving more because of more active travel choices, or within existing social settings, or participating in organised activities. There are multiple examples of local people who have experienced barriers to participation increasingly feeling confident and able to be active in ways that suit them.	Throughout the Place, physical activity is widely valued and embedded as a routine part of life , even among groups who have tended to be less active. This represents a large-scale shift in beliefs and attitudes to PA, seen in more active travel choices, within existing social settings and participation in organised activities. Most people with experience of barriers to participation , can now experience the freedom and confidence to be active in ways that suit them and that they value and enjoy.			

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9. Built and natural environments that enable physical activity

Local natural and built environments are attractive, accessible and safe, encouraging movement and physical activity.

	<i>Absent or limited</i>	<i>Emerging in practice</i>		<i>Establishing in practice</i>		<i>Embedded in practice</i>	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Sector integration of physical activity	a) Place management for PA: Local built and natural environments are designed, managed and invested in ways that enable and encourage movement and PA						
	Physical activity, everyday movement and informal interaction are rarely considered in planning, transport, housing, regeneration or environmental decisions. Environments may create or reinforce barriers to movement, access and interaction, with little coordinated action to address them.	Physical activity is recognised in some strategies, plans, policies or projects. However, consideration remains fragmented and dependent on particular teams, individuals, funding or opportunities. There is limited evidence that it influences routine environmental decision-making across the wider system.		Physical activity, movement and accessibility increasingly influence how built and natural environments are planned, designed and managed. Established relationships, policies and collaborative processes support action across relevant sectors. However, this influence is not yet consistent across all systems, geographical areas or decisions.		Physical activity, movement and accessibility are routinely embedded in the systems that plan, design, invest in, manage and renew built and natural environments. Policy, governance, collaboration and community participation sustain this influence, while long-term investment, stewardship and learning support environments that enable everyday movement and interaction.	

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GEN – access to natural environments and public open spaces	b) Parks & open spaces for PA: Parks and open spaces are enjoyed as welcoming places for being physically active, for everyone						
	Access to natural environments and public open spaces is limited or uneven. Spaces may be difficult to reach, enter or use, or experienced as unsafe, poorly maintained or unwelcoming. Some communities face substantial practical, social or cultural barriers.	Some spaces are recognised and used as community assets, with work beginning to improve access, safety, attractiveness or opportunities for use. However, experiences remain uneven, barriers may be poorly understood or only partly addressed, and improvements are often localised or focused on provision.		Natural environments and public open spaces are increasingly accessible, safe, welcoming and used for movement, physical activity and social interaction. Places are developing a stronger understanding of who uses spaces, who does not, and the barriers shaping different experiences. However, inequalities in access, confidence, belonging or experience remain.		Natural environments and public open spaces are widely accessible, safe, welcoming and valued as shared community assets. Evidence shows sustained use by different communities, with inequalities actively addressed. Communities meaningfully influence how spaces are designed, used and cared for, supported by coordinated improvements, maintenance, activities and stewardship.	

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Tackling structural inequalities	c) Place regeneration: Action to address structural inequalities reflected in living environments						
	The poor condition of the local built environment and infrastructure (including local amenities and travel) where disadvantaged local people live undermine community activity, safety, and local pride.	Local agencies recognise the need for investment and are engaging with local people to understand their needs and aspirations. Small scale improvements to local housing, amenities, and/or public realm are taking place.		Some community-orientated regeneration and renewal programmes are being implemented, to improve local living conditions, including housing, local amenities and public realm. This is shaped with participation of disadvantaged groups		Large-scale, long-term investments in regeneration and renewal programmes are improving living conditions for disadvantaged communities by investment in housing, local amenities and public realm. This responds to the needs and aspirations of disadvantaged groups and cultivates community pride and cohesion.	

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