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

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National Evaluation & Learning Partnership QCA

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Conditions for addressing physical activity inequality

(2023 informed by evidence and shaped by stakeholders involved in place-based systemic approaches)

Integration of physical activity into sectors	Strengthening community & individual capacities	Tackling structural inequalities
1. Understanding the barriers and **enablers** of physical activity		
2. Distributed and collective **leadership**		
3. Collaboration across organisations		
4. Capacity and capability across the workforce, volunteers and in communities		
5. Facilitative processes and proportionate, representative **governance**		
6. Co-production, local people-led initiatives **(community power)**		
7. Focus on **inequality and intersectionality**		
8. Cultures and **social norms** for wellbeing and physical activity		
9. Physical environments that enable wellbeing and physical activity		
10. Cycles of **learning and action**		

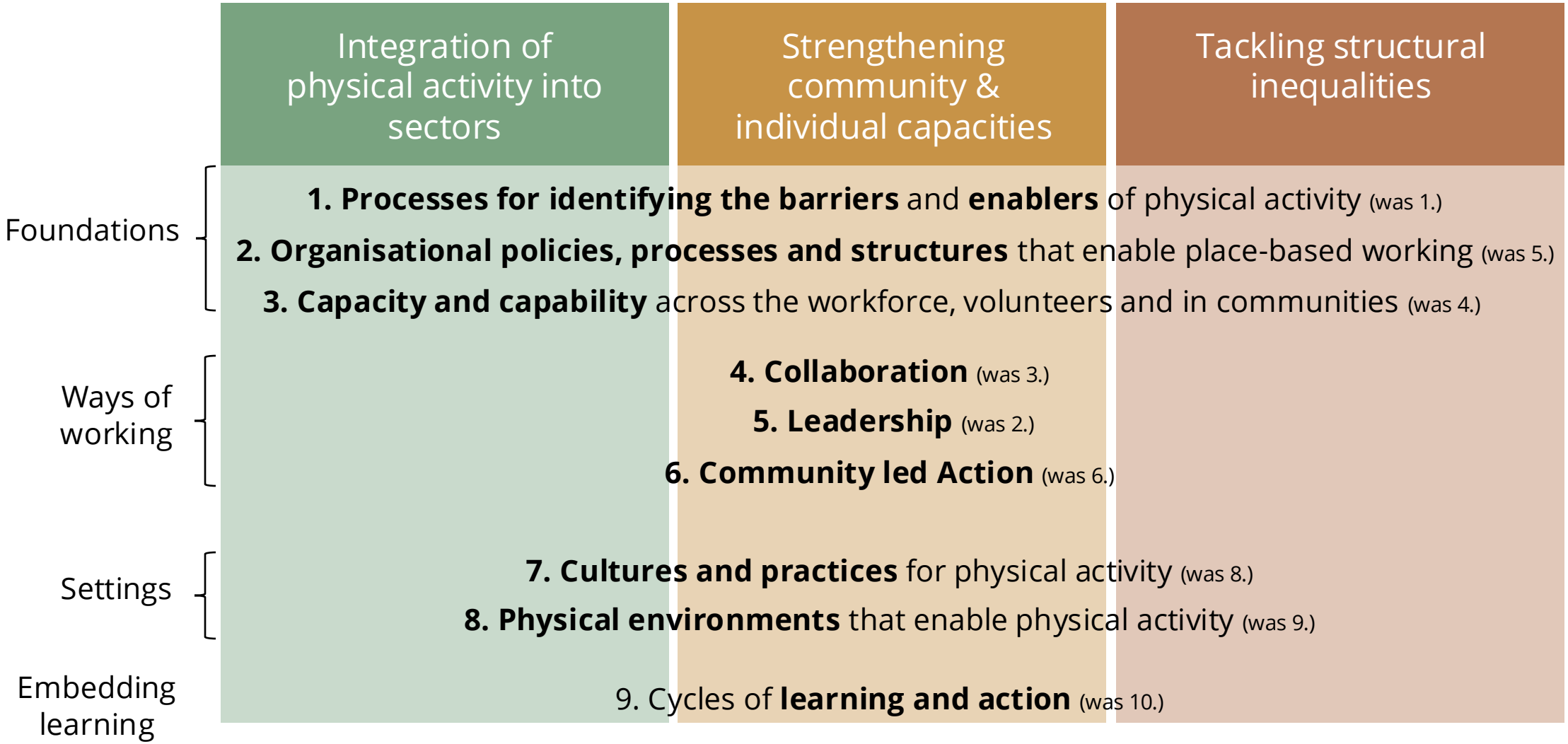
Overview of changes in 2024 SMM

We have made changes to the matrix in response to feedback from partners, data analysis and our own reflections on experiences of using the 2023 version.

- A focus on inequality and intersectionality is now integrated into all the maturity conditions.
- Number of sub-conditions reduced from 33 to 27, removing overlap where this existed.
- Condition descriptors have been revised to clarify the meanings and distinctions between conditions and sub-conditions. We've tried to use plain English wherever possible.
- We have re-ordered the remaining nine conditions into logical groupings, based on data analysis to help make clearer how they relate to each other.

Conditions for addressing physical activity inequality

(2024 version adapted based on participant feedback and data analysis)



1. Process for identifying the barriers and enablers of physical activity (1/3)

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

	No change	*Emerging in practice*		*Establishing in practice*		*Embedded in practice*	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Sector integration of physical activity	**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 *in the local context.* Demographic data identifying personal characteristics *is not collected*.	There **are plans for, or 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** in relation to existing evidence and theory. 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 is 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 is **routinely gathered and interpreted** in relation to existing evidence and theory. This highlights **diverse perspectives and is interpreted** to inform policy and/or practice. This **data and insight is regularly shared** between partners and interested parties **in meaningful and relevant ways**.	

1. Process for identifying the barriers and enablers of physical activity (2/3)

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

	No change	*Emerging in practice*		*Establishing in practice*		*Embedded in practice*	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strengthening community & individual capacities	**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 starting to get traction and there are clear plans for it 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.

1. Process for identifying the barriers and enablers of physical activity (3/3)

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

	No change	*Emerging in practice*		*Establishing in practice*		*Embedded in practice*	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Tackling structural inequalities	**Consistent understanding of how social, cultural, and economic constraints may affect physical activity levels**						
	There **is limited understanding** that choices are-constrained by social, cultural, and economic factors and discrimination. There **is little or no consideration of power dynamics** and perceptions/stereotypes which disadvantage people with particular characteristics, identities and/or lived experiences, in the local context.	There is ***emerging understanding*** that choices are constrained by social, cultural, and economic factors and discrimination. People in positions of responsibility are ***beginning to recognise*** that policies and practices should consider and explore the power dynamics and perceptions/stereotypes which disadvantage people with particular characteristics, identities and/or lived experiences, in their local context.		There is a **growing understanding** that choices are constrained by social, cultural, and economic factors and discrimination. Organisations can **demonstrate how they consider and explore** the power dynamics and perceptions/stereotypes which disadvantage people with particular characteristics, identities and/or lived experiences, in their local context.		There is **widespread and consistent understanding** of the ways in choices are constrained by social, cultural, and economic factors, and discrimination. This includes power dynamics and perceptions/stereotypes which disadvantage people with particular characteristics, identities and/or lived experiences. This is **routinely used to inform** wider responses to these determinants.	

2. Organisational policies, processes, and structures enable place-based working (1/3)

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

	No change	*Emerging in practice*		*Establishing in practice*		*Embedded in practice*	
	1	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*	*7*
Sector integration of physical activity	**Partners implement policies, practices and organisational structures to enable place-based systemic working**						
	Organisational structures, policies, decision-making and administrative processes drive **siloed, transactional, and programmatic 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 recognition of the need to change organisational structures, policies, decision-making and administrative processes**. **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. People are **beginning to highlight** unhelpful or restrictive processes and/or to challenge risk averse ways of working, where they are disproportionate.		New organisational structures, policies, decision-making and administrative processes (including team structures, job descriptions, commissioning & funding) are **developed and adopted to promote place-based systemic working**. Funders and organisations are proportionate in their attitude to risk and can **demonstrate how they consider and address** unhelpful or restrictive processes, to create collaborative ways of working.		Organisational structures, policies, decision-making and administrative processes have been **redesigned to promote place-based systemic working**. e.g., team structures, job roles, information flow, sharing resources. Redesigned commissioning and funding processes build sustainable long-term capacity and collaborative ways of working Attitudes to risk are proportionate.	

2. Organisational policies, processes, and structures enable place-based working (2/3)

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

	No change	*Emerging in practice*		*Establishing in practice*		*Embedded in practice*	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Sector integration of physical activity	**Partner organisations adapt communications to align and engage with diverse cultures**						
	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.	Strategies, practices, and communications **occasionally consider** 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 may be occasionally challenged.		Strategies, practices, and communications **often align** and engage with traditions, values, beliefs, language, and accessibility needs, of groups who are less likely to be active. Language and accessibility needs are usually proactively addressed Assumptions held by communities or staff are often actively challenged.		Strategies, practices, and communications **routinely and systematically align** and engage with traditions, values, beliefs, language, and accessibility needs, of groups who are less likely to be active, in ways that are appropriate and effective. Language and accessibility needs are proactively addressed in this. Assumptions held by communities or staff are actively surfaced and always challenged.	

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2. Organisational policies, processes, and structures enable place-based working (3/3)

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

	No change	*Emerging in practice*		*Establishing in practice*		*Embedded in practice*	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Tackling structural inequalities	**Policies, administrative systems, structures and processes enable more equitable sharing of power and resources to address inequalities and their underlying drivers**						
	Organisational structures, decision-making and administrative processes **reflect and reproduce the inequalities** embedded in the organisations involved, which reflect those in the wider society. Discrimination and prejudices that contribute to poor working and living conditions are **not explored.** The distribution of resources tends not to take account of inequalities.	There is **emerging insight** into the ways in which prejudices and power differentials are consolidated in organisational structures, decision-making and administrative processes, maintaining inequalities and failing to address discrimination. **Some resources** are allocated to support disadvantaged groups and communities.		New organisational structures, policies, decision-making and administrative processes are **being adopted or developed** to enable **sharing of power** with people and communities and to **tackle structural inequalities.** Discrimination and prejudice are explored, **often meaningfully,** with some disadvantaged groups. **Significant resources** are focused on disadvantaged groups and communities.		New organisational structures, policies, decision-making and administrative processes are **embedded widely** in the local system. These enable **sharing of power** with people and communities to **tackle structural inequalities.** There is systematic cross-policy consideration of discrimination and prejudice, including the unrecognised assumptions, biases and practices of organisations. **Mainstream resources are proportionately weighted** towards people and communities experiencing greater disadvantages.	

3. Capacity and capability across the workforce, volunteers and in communities (1/3)

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

	No change	***Emerging in practice***		***Establishing in practice***		***Embedded in practice***	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Sector integration of physical activity	**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 ***plans to invest resources (including employees' time)*** in capacity and **capability building** for place-based systemic working. This may include recruiting for the skills, knowledge, and attributes required. *OR* There is a recognition that some employees' time is needed to support this way of working but existing capacity and capability building strategies have ***limited or low uptake*.**		Partner ***organisations are investing resources (including employees' time)*** 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. Recruitment and continuous professional development policies prioritise these skills, knowledge, and capacities.	

3. Capacity and capability across the workforce, volunteers and in communities (2/3)

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

	No change	*Emerging in practice*		*Establishing in practice*		*Embedded in practice*	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strengthening community & individual capacities	**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.	There **are plans or strategies in development**, to work with local people to build 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 conditions to enable participation. Community organisations are starting to support each other, to share skills, or building each other's 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 solve collective problems of inactivity and inequalities on an ongoing basis. This work includes proactive engagement to involve the 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 evolving, from which collaborative work emerges (e.g. joint funding bids).	

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

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

	No change	*Emerging in practice*		*Establishing in practice*		*Embedded in practice*	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Support and resources for-communities to build the capacities and capabilities to advocate and act to address inequalities							
Tackling structural inequalities	There is a high level of **insecurity, poverty, poor working and living conditions and mental stress**. This adversely affects opportunities and infrastructure for wellbeing and rewarding PA, and people tend to feel powerless to change these .	There are **plans** to build the capacity and capability for local people to define and act on key factors impacting on their experiences of dignity and control in their lives and localities. (e.g. housing, employment issues, public services, or experiences of discrimination).		Initiatives are **in place** which build the capacity and capability for local people to define and act on key factors impacting on their experiences of dignity and control in their lives and localities. This is inclusive of local people who have fewer opportunities, support networks and resources, who may otherwise not participate.		Initiatives are **widely embedded and sustained**, throughout the place, which build the capacity and capability for local people to define and act on key factors impacting on their experiences of dignity and control in their lives and localities. This is inclusive of local people who have fewer opportunities, support networks and resources, who may otherwise not participate.	

4. Collaboration (1/3)

There is productive partnership working around a common purpose.

	No change	*Emerging in practice*		*Establishing in practice*		*Embedded in practice*	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Sector integration of physical activity	**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 physical activity (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** within and across policy areas and ideas to tackle systemic barriers and/or create more comprehensive physical activity opportunities. There is a **shared purpose across organisations**, based on effective communication and growing trust among people and partners. Partners agree on how to make resources and assets work more effectively to tackle physical activity inequalities, this often drives collective decisions. There are examples of changes in behaviours, practice and policy which demonstrate shifts away from destructive competition and contradictions.		There are **multiple examples of organisations working together** 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 across place-based partners**. Shared decision-making is routine, the process is equitable, 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.

4. Collaboration (2/3)

There is productive partnership working around a common purpose.

	No change	*Emerging in practice*		*Establishing in practice*		*Embedded in practice*	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strengthening community & individual capacities	**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 is intermittent / sporadic).		**Many** VCFSE organisations recognise **how PA can align with their aims**. They are supported and willing to work with others to incorporate physical activity into their work and 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 are working together, with a **common purpose**, and with other place-based agencies to build physical activity into usual work, widen reach to those underserved and pool resources. For example, faith-based organisations work with community development charities and local sports clubs to encourage young people to maintain their education.	

4. Collaboration (3/3)

There is productive partnership working around a common purpose.

	No change	*Emerging in practice*		*Establishing in practice*		*Embedded in practice*	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Tackling Structural Inequalities	**Collective impact on inequalities**						
	There is a **widespread apathy** or absence of attention from multiple partners across policy areas to tackling structural inequalities. It is seen as responsibility of other agencies/local people and/or partners feel powerless to influence these factors.	There is **shared recognition** that structural inequalities are at the root of many societal problems and that there is a need to collaborate across and within organisations to tackle them effectively. There may be conversations at strategic level about how to do this, but a way forward isn't yet agreed.		There is positive engagement and **examples of collaborative working** between policy areas to tackle common root causes. There may be a unified and integrated strategy for tackling structural inequalities, but roles and responsibilities and shared procedures for implementing is less visible.		There is a **unified strategy** across policy areas. Shared decision making about how to allocate resources to tackle underlying root causes is the norm. Roles and responsibilities are clear and there is mutual accountability. There are **multiple examples of joint work** that effectively addresses structural inequalities, for example, developing 'one team' across organisations to work with communities.	

5. Leadership (1/3)

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

	No change	*Emerging in practice*		*Establishing in practice*		*Embedded in practice*	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Sector integration of physical activity	**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 and **disrupt 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** supports 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.**	

5. Leadership (2/3)

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

	No change	*Emerging in practice*		*Establishing in practice*		*Embedded in practice*	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Sector integration of physical activity	**People 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.** People take on some responsibility, but action may be compromised by context (e.g. time restrictions or lack of systemic influence).		There is **some distribution of decision making** to people at all layers to make decisions about action to address physical activity inequalities. They take on some roles and responsibilities within their sphere of influence (i.e. policy makers can influence workforce, residents can influence other residents and workforce they are engaged with)		There are **multiple people** at all layers who make informed decisions about action to address physical activity inequalities. They take on roles and responsibility and enact them autonomously. 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 i.e. Directors/Manager/Officer, and includes the public and volunteers.

5. Leadership (3/3)

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

	No change	*Emerging in practice*		*Establishing in practice*		*Embedded in practice*	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strengthening community & individual capacities	**Community leadership**						
	Local people, including those who are inactive, are **not included** in decision making about what creates the conditions for people to be physically active.	There are a **few** local people and advocates who **make or influence decisions** to create conditions for and/or lead on actions for activity. Community leadership is project based, only, and is not systemically and routinely supported.		There are **some local people** and advocates **who make or influence decisions** to create conditions for and/or lead on actions for physical activity. Local people's influence sometimes reaches beyond their own local community. This not representative of diverse voices in the place.		There is a **multitude** of local people, representative of the place, including those who are underserved and/or have lived experience of inactivity, who **make or influence decisions** to create conditions for and/or lead on actions for physical activity. Local people's influence often reaches beyond their own local community.	

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6. Community-led action (1/3)

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

	No change	*Emerging in practice*		*Establishing in practice*		*Embedded in practice*	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Sector integration of physical activity	**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.	Local people who are directly affected have **some involvement** in decisions about sector-led programmes and resource allocation for 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, have **some influence in designing, producing and evaluating** sector-led programmes and resource allocation for 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 **have a lot of influence in designing, producing and evaluating** local programmes and resource allocation for physical activity initiatives. This runs through the culture of whole systems of organisations, which operate in equitable, transparent and accountable ways, leading to increasing levels of understanding and trust between disadvantaged communities and partner agencies.	

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6. Community-led action (2/3)

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

	No change	*Emerging in practice*		*Establishing in practice*		*Embedded in practice*	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strengthening community & individual capacities	**Supported community-led initiatives**						
	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 initiatives** for 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 initiatives for 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.	

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6. Community-led action (3/3)

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

	No change	*Emerging in practice*		*Establishing in practice*		*Embedded in practice*	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Tackling Structural Inequalities	**Local people's influence on decisions about things that affect their lives**						
	Priorities for development in local Places are **not based on community priorities**. Local people are not included in decision making about things that affect their living and working conditions. Communities feel powerless.	Some local people and/or advocates are voicing their issues and concerns. Some local people have **opportunities to influence** decision making about things that affect their working and living conditions.		Local people experience **real influence on priority setting** and other decision making leading to increasing confidence in their ability to bring positive change. Proactive efforts are made to ensure multiple perspectives are included, but this is not yet fully representative of all people affected.		Local people are **driving and shaping partnership working** to address underlying causes of inequalities. Local people routinely influence decisions about things that affect their working and living conditions. Diverse needs and perspectives are equitably represented in this. Collective and individual social capital, community pride and health and wellbeing of the whole community are growing stronger. Local people have dignity and control in their lives.	

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7. Cultures and practices for physical activity (1/2)

There is a culturally inclusive social environment for physical activity which enables people to move more in ways that suit them.

	No change	*Emerging in practice*		*Establishing in practice*		*Embedded in practice*	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Sector Integration of physical activity	**Cultures and practices in workplaces enable and support physical activity/moving more in daily work routines**						
	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.	

7. Cultures and practices for physical activity (2/2)

There is a culturally inclusive social environment for physical activity which enables people to move more in ways that suit them.

	No change	*Emerging in practice*		*Establishing in practice*		*Embedded in practice*	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strengthening community & individual capacities	**Inclusive cultures encourage and facilitate 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 communities, values and beliefs about the role of being active in happy, healthy, connected lives, **are shifting.** 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 physical activity is **increasingly valued and enjoyed** in throughout the place, including within those communities with higher levels of inactivity. There are **multiple examples** of local people who have experienced experience barriers to participation increasingly feeling confident and able to be active in ways that suit them.		Physical activity is **widely valued and increasingly the norm** throughout communities in the place. Social environments are culturally inclusive and encourage and facilitate physical activity for everyone. **Everyone** in the community, **including those with experience of barriers to participation**, can experience the freedom and confidence to be active in ways that suit them and that they enjoy.	

*communities may refer to geographic communities, or communities of interest or identities

8. Built and natural environments that enable physical activity (1/3)

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

	No change	*Emerging in practice*		*Establishing in practice*		*Embedded in practice*	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Sector integration of physical activity	**Design and management of built and natural environments to promote interaction and physical activity**						
	The physical and **built** aspects of the place, including housing, local amenities, travel and access to natural spaces) **have evolved in ways that discourage** and/or **inhibit** informal interaction and physical activity.	There are **planned improvements** to the built environment. (e.g. through local plans/strategy). This might include planning for transport, house building and improved infrastructure and access to natural spaces, to be designed and managed to encourage informal interactions and physical activity.		**Some** aspects of the physical and built environment, including housing environments, natural spaces and infrastructure (including amenities and travel) are **designed and/or managed to promote inclusion and** encourage informal interactions and physical activity. This addresses barriers to these resources experienced by local people experiencing disadvantage.		The physical and built environment, including working and housing environments, natural spaces and infrastructure (including amenities and travel) **are sustainably designed and/or managed** to encourage informal interactions and, physical activity. This actively promotes equal accessibility for everyone in the community.	

8. Built and natural environments that enable physical activity (2/3)

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

	No change	*Emerging in practice*		*Establishing in practice*		*Embedded in practice*	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
GEN – access to natural environments and public open spaces	**Parks and open spaces are enjoyed as welcoming places for being physically active, for everyone**						
	There is limited access to the **natural environment and public open spaces**, in the local context. The local parks, open spaces and natural environments are not regarded as ~~a~~ community assets and access to open spaces is not equitable in the local context. These spaces are often regarded as unsafe or unattractive.	Local parks, open spaces and natural environments are **recognised and used** as ~~a~~ community assets in some places but **access** to these spaces is **not equitable**. Spaces are sometimes regarded as unsafe or unattractive.		There is **widespread access** to the natural environment and public open spaces which encourages activity, and these spaces are valued, recognised and often used as assets. Accessing these spaces is **not equitable** for all local people. Some groups may feel uncomfortable using these spaces or experience practical barriers to access such as distance, or lack of accessible pathways.		Access to the natural environment **and public open spaces** is **equitable and safe** for all local people. These public open spaces are **recognised, valued and well-used**, as community assets for all. As attractive environments, they play a significant role in encouraging movement and social interaction, and communities feel a sense of shared ownership of such spaces.	

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

8. Built and natural environments that enable physical activity (3/3)

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

	No change	*Emerging in practice*		*Establishing in practice*		*Embedded in practice*	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Tackling structural inequalities	**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**.	Some work is **planned/in progress** to address the poor condition and safety of the local built environment and infrastructure (including local amenities and travel) where disadvantaged local people live, facilitating community activity, safety, and local pride.		**Significant community-oriented regeneration/renewal** work is in progress to improve the condition of the local built environment and infrastructure (including local amenities and travel) where disadvantaged communities live. This is guided by evidence for health promoting places, enabling increasing community activity, safety, and local pride.		**Large-scale, long-term investment in regeneration / renewal programmes is taking place.** These programmes are **shaped by participation of local people** and respond to local priorities and needs in improving the condition of the local built environment and infrastructure (including local amenities and travel). This work is guided by evidence for health promoting places, enabling increasing community activity, safety, and local pride.	

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

9. Cycles of learning and action (1/3)

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

	No change	*Emerging in practice*		*Establishing in practice*		*Embedded in practice*	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
GEN 1	**Learning culture**						
	There is **limited belief** in the possibility of change. Learning culture, (that is an environment of asking questions, seeking new knowledge and exploring different ways of doing things), is **not valued** or is seen as a luxury and in competition with time for delivery. Simple solutions to complex problems are sought. People want or expect certainty in relation to the outcomes of their actions. 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 a belief in the possibility of change within individuals and across places. **Some** within the place **recognise the value of learning**. People feel encouraged to be curious, to ask questions, seek out new knowledge, and explore different ways of doing things. People and organisations are increasingly comfortable 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 **culture** that encourages **continuous learning** across some groups within the place. People understand that complex challenges mean developing complex solutions which need to adapt and evolve over time. There is increasing recognition of the different kinds of value that such learning can bring. Unsuccessful initiatives are seen by many as opportunities for learning and growth.		Continuous learning culture is **established** as **a core part of the place-based systemic approach**. This includes paying attention to the different kinds of value that this can bring to everyone engaged or affected. Feeling 'uncomfortable' and accepting uncertainty is commonly accepted. People widely see uncertainty as an opportunity for learning and are ready to learn from initiatives that have not gone to plan, and to adapt their approach accordingly.	

9. Cycles of learning and action (2/3)

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

	No change	*Emerging in practice*		*Establishing in practice*		*Embedded in practice*	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
GEN 2	**Embedded learning processes**						
	There is a **lack of policies, processes, training 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 **emerging** individual and team and cross-place policies, **processes, training and resources** to support learning. 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.		There are **established** individual and team and cross-place policies **processes, training and resources** to support learning which informs action and decision-making. This draws on findings from other place-based systemic approaches, as well as locally captured insight. This way of working is increasingly adopted in a **range of local organisations,** as well as within some local networks and collaborations. Actions and decisions are increasingly informed by learning processes.		Learning policies, processes, training and resources are **supported and prioritised across the system** as a core tool for operationalising a place based systemic approach. **Inclusive learning processes** are embedded in partnerships and individual organisations. These pay attention to local people's experiences and wider evidence, in a continuous cycle of reviewing actions, with insights and learning leading to adaptation and improvement. This includes permission to stop doing things that are not working.	

9. Cycles of learning and action (3/3)

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

	No change	*Emerging in practice*		*Establishing in practice*		*Embedded in practice*	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
GEN 3	**Evaluation uses appropriate methods for place-based working**						
	Evaluation is not valued, and/or methods used are not appropriate for place-based working. For example, there is only adherence to traditional pre-post evaluation of interventions, with little attention to the influence of local context. Evaluation processes are narrowly focussed on outcomes or targets defined in advance and with no regard to local definitions of what is valued. 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 need 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 and these are locally valued by people involved. Local people with lived experience of physical inactivity, those implementing PA activities or involved in agencies locally are engaged in evaluation/learning processes and providing insights into what makes a difference locally.		Evaluation methods appropriate for whole-system place-based approaches are widely understood and adopted across the place partnership and inform adaptive ways of working. Local people with lived experience of physical inactivity, those implementing PA activities or involved in agencies locally are contributing to the framing, design, and implementation of evaluation/learning processes and providing insights into what makes a difference locally. Evaluation data is shared in accessible formats and in welcoming spaces so that people can make sense of the data to inform action.	

Appendices

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National Evaluation & Learning Partnership_QCA

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Conditions for addressing physical activity inequality

(2023 informed by evidence and shaped by stakeholders involved in place-based systemic approaches)

Integration of physical activity into sectors	Strengthening community & individual capacities	Tackling structural inequalities

1. Understanding the barriers and **enablers** of physical activity

2. Distributed and collective **leadership**

3. Collaboration across organisations

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

5. Facilitative processes and proportionate, representative **governance**

6. Co-production, local people-led initiatives **(community power)**

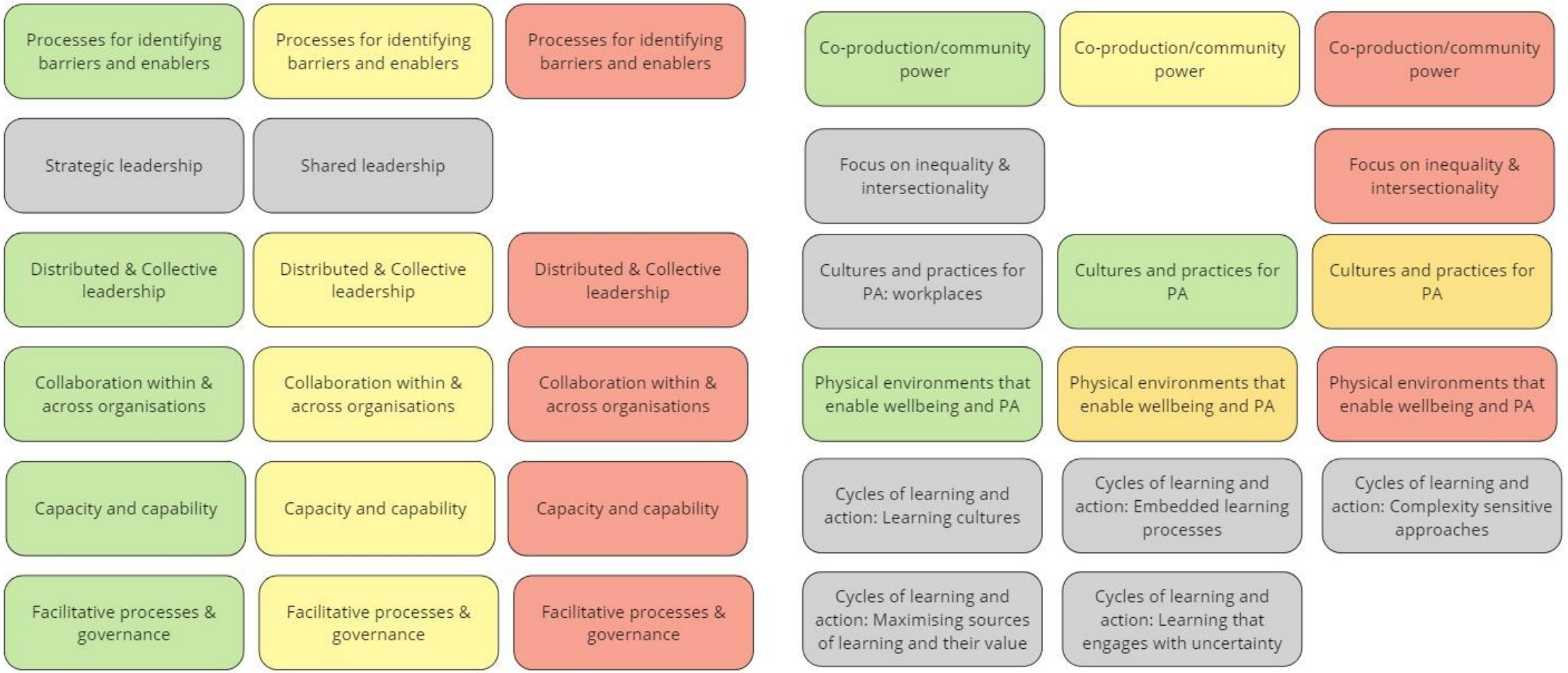
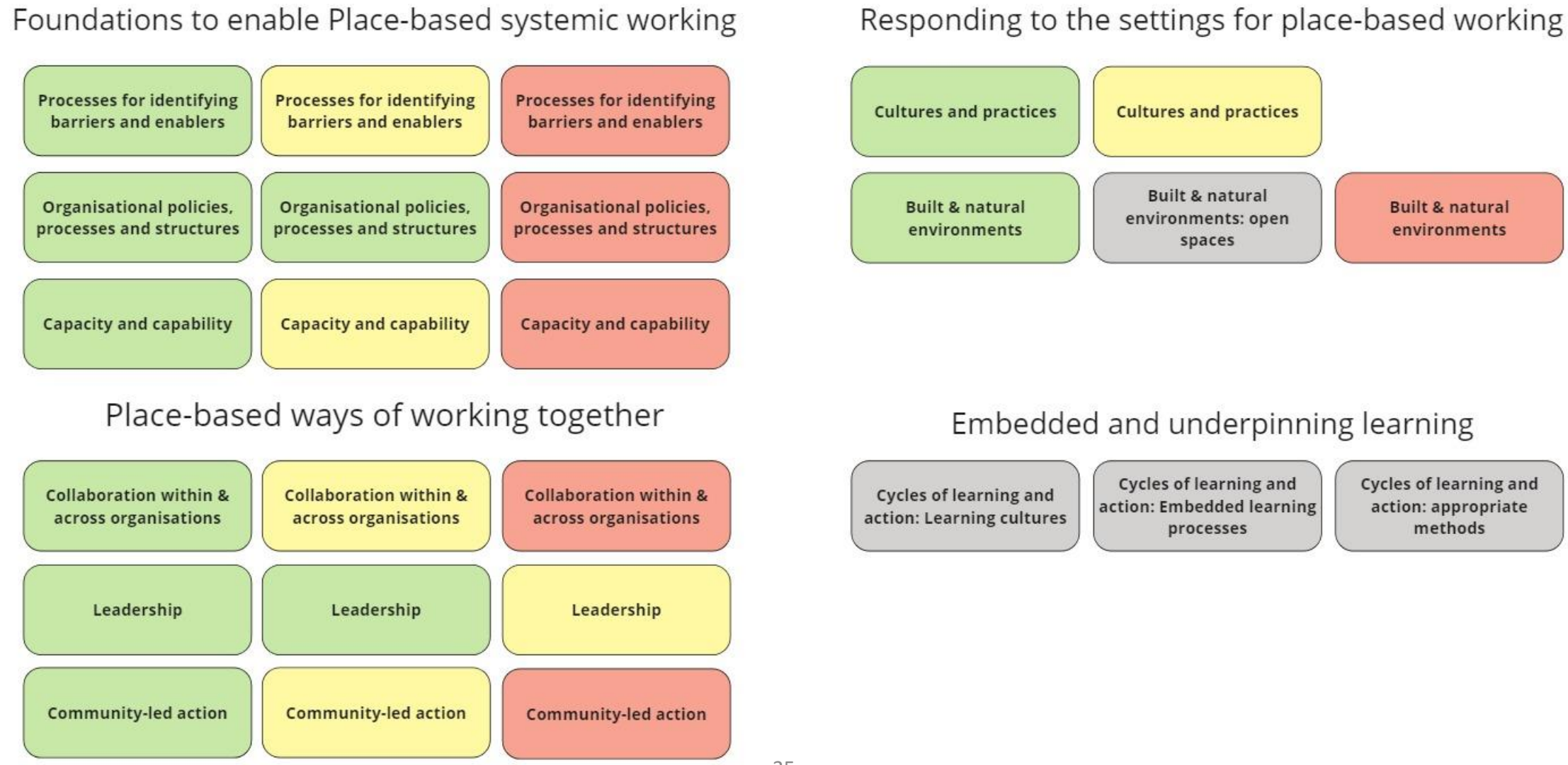
7. Focus on **inequality and intersectionality**

8. Cultures and **practices** for wellbeing and physical activity

9. Physical environments that enable wellbeing and physical activity

10. Cycles of **learning and action**

System Maturity Matrix 2023



System Maturity Matrix 2024