

Large Grants 2025/28

Report by Saty Kaur, Chief Officer Corporate Solutions

Report for Decision

1 Recommendations

Council is recommended to

- Note the issues highlighted and proposed actions set out at 3.4-3.8
- Note the establishment of a Short Life Working Group to progress options for the grant funding programme
- Approve option 4 within 3.14 as recommended by Business Transformation Steering Group

2 Purpose of Report/Executive Summary

To provide an update on the current programme and options for the next round of large grants funding 2025/28.

Date Wednesday 31 January 2024

Report Contact:

Saty Kaur, Chief Officer Corporate Solutions

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3 Background

- **3.1** In preparation for the Council's budget setting 2023/24, a range of savings proposals were presented to elected members through the Business Transformation Steering Group (BTSG) for consideration and referral to Council. These were also subject to community consultation prior to the budget setting Council meeting.
- **3.2** BTSG considered the Council's grant funding programmes specifically the small grants programme and the large grants programme. BTSG decided not to continue with the annual small grants programme for 2023/24 onwards and the funding was removed to contribute to the Council's recurring savings target.
- **3.3** With regards to the Council's large grants programme, as this is a three-year programme with funding committed for the 2022/25 funding period, no decision was made at that time on the fund for the 2025/28 programme. Officers were remitted to provide further information on the existing grants programme to enable members to determine the future programme. This was aligned to the Transformation Blueprint Theme 1 Follow the Money.

Main Report - challenges

- **3.4** As part of the Transformation Blueprint, grant funding is included in Theme 1 as an area of focus. Initial scoping work has identified that the Council does not have a full overview of where money is being awarded via commissioning and grant funding. Some of the challenges around grant funding include:
 - the complexity of managing and facilitating external grant funding on behalf of Government(s)
 - the wide range of grants funded through the Council across all three Directorates; and the further lack of knowledge/awareness in the Directorates of what is being funded from different services; and
 - the crossover between grant funding, commissioning and other service provision that may be delivered on behalf of the Council.
- **3.5** It is the assessment of officers that a significant piece of work is required to be undertaken to improve the current position and develop a strategic approach to grant funding for the Council. It is proposed that a short life working group (SLWG) is established to bring together the different services who are currently involved in grant funding and commissioning, and the scope should include all funding streams and not just the large grants which was the initial prompt for the savings proposal.

- **3.6** The SLWG will comprise Council officers, representation from the Third Sector Interface and communities, and an independent critical friend. The draft scope of the SLWG includes:
 - Comparison of grant delivery models across Scotland
 - Options for funding core costs against the current approach of funding projects
 - Development of an options appraisal for commissioning vs grants
 - Establishment of a full council grants register
 - Proposals to attract additional external funding sources for the Council and the third sector.
 - Adoption of an agreed data/evidence informed approach to allocating funding.
 - Strengthening the third sector joint working/partnership approach to delivering outcomes for communities
- **3.7** The SLWG will be chaired by the Chief Officer Corporate Solutions and progress will be regularly reported to the Business Transformation Board and Business Transformation Steering Group. This gives elected members oversight and scrutiny of the work programme as it develops.
- **3.8** Following consideration of this report at today's meeting, it is intended that the SLWG meet in April (after the Easter recess) and the full Terms of Reference and membership is agreed.

Current position - Large Grants 2022/25 and 2025/28

- **3.9** For the 2022/25 funding round, applications for over £4.4m (total over 3 years) was received for a funding pot of £1.56m (which equates to £520k/year).
- **3.10** The council approved large grant funding for this three-year period which supports 28 community/third sector projects and initiatives aimed at reducing poverty, improving health, learning outcomes, climate change and supporting the most vulnerable members of our communities. This is split across 4 themes:
 - Learning Outcomes (total for three years £437,740) table 1
 - Health Outcomes (total for three years £713.442) table 2
 - Economic Circumstances (total for three years £173,484) table 3
 - Carbon Emissions (total for three years £133,782) table 4
- **3.11** The Year 1 monitoring reports have been received for the projects (activity/outputs up to March 2023). Tables 1-4 below illustrate the awards made and a short summary of outputs from these reports.

Organisation	Purpose	Outcomes	Awarded Year 1	Awarded Year 2	Awarded Year 3	Total Awarded (over 3 years)	Outputs/achievements from Year 1 monitoring
Edinburgh Napier University (Progress Through Learning Midlothian)	To continue to deliver and develop the Progress Through Learning Midlothian (PTLM) project; working in partnership to widen participation in further and higher education, improve qualification levels and participation in lifelong learning.	Increase in unrepresented groups applying for FE/HE courses; build confidence and motivate people to pursue pathway into college/university; 2 locally delivered adult learning courses with credits towards entry; free and impartial guidance and advice to individuals and groups; partnerships with CP groups strengthened; deliver Careers & advice fayre annually.	£18,018	£18,479	£18,849	£55,346	193 people have used the service. 3 courses run with 22 participants. Partnership winter warmer events with 26 attendees and training delivered by Scottish Refugee Council to develop specialist support and work.
MVA	Community Engagement and Development Officer to deliver a programme of community engagement and capacity building aimed at grassroots community groups, third sector organisations and individual community activists and social entrepreneurs.	Support new/aspiring groups with governance and funding advice; partnership working in Dalkeith/Woodburn to support food pantry development & town centre regeneration; 1:1 capacity building with 30+ organisations and social enterprises; 12+ training workshops offered to 3 rd sector; regular bulletins to reach all groups.	£18,141	£18,600	£19,374	£56,115	 195 people used service. 3 new groups given governance and funding advice, supported groups with constitutions and other related matters, 13 training events ran with 195 attendees. 85 updates sent out to 600 subscribers. Main focus on funding events to support groups applying for Investing in Communities and UKSP funding streams. Meet the Councillors event well received, £10,000 of climate funding secured to create Climate Action plans in Damhead and Penicuik.

Table 1 – Learning Outcomes

IntoWork	Continuation and extension of existing specialist supported employment service for disabled people/people with health conditions.	1:1 employability support to 23 people who have a health condition or disability per year; 80% will progress towards or retain employment.	£23,450	£23,450	£23,450	£70,350	37 people engaged with service (24 new). 24 referrals to internal Welfare Rights Service with financial gain of £32,027.08. Wellbeing support offered to 4 clients on 1:1 basis
Gorebridge Community Development Trust	Core funding to allow the Development Trust to continue to lead services and expand social and recreational activities for local people.	25 volunteers supported annually to increase confidence, self-esteem and social skills, enhance employability skills by obtaining qualifications (20% uptake), improve chances of meaningful employment and reduce social isolation	£23,450	£23,450	£23,450	£70,350	Over 4,000 using service – 25 volunteers supported each year. New Volunteering Strategy produced and 6 volunteering sessions offered, increasing numbers of volunteers working with Pantry. 2 young people supported on Young People's Guarantee secured employment and new trainee taken on; 3 new activity groups created including crafts, walking, Heritage and Play café and increasing number of participants engaging in classes, learning activities and café (approx. 2,500 users)
Volunteer Midlothian	Running costs for the Transform Project – an inclusive volunteering project that offers 14-25 year olds the opportunity to volunteer as part of a small group with full support and supervision.	32 young people volunteering per year; 80% more confident, continue with volunteering and/or in positive destination at end of volunteering; 90% achieving SCQF volunteering skills.	£21,509	£22,034	£22,475	£66,018	Exceeded targets set with 40 young people engaged in Transform. 168 sessions delivered, 13 young people attending Making Your Volunteering Count session and 24 taking part in SQA Volunteering Skills module. Successful event at Lasswade HS where young people organised and prepared afternoon tea for elderly members of Forward Mid. One young volunteer has become a Support Volunteer with Transform

RUTS - Vocational	Deliver nationally recognised (SQA & SCQF) vocational and sector specific qualifications specifically designed to support progress into employment, better employment and volunteering opportunities.	Increase confidence, wellbeing and motivation of participants and support them to gain qualifications and move into employment/modern apprenticeship – up to 50 per year will complete qualification; in work support to those moving into employment and intensive support to those that need it.	£22,493	£22,493	£22,493	£67,479	44 people using service - 38 qualifications achieved. 22 participants re-engaged with education or entered FE/HE. 2 participants moved into employment. 12 receiving intensive employability support. 7 training workshops delivered to 44 participants.
Access to Industry	Support unemployed residents who face significant disadvantage in moving into the labour market and whose learning and employment prospects are compounded by a history of substance misuse and/or offending. They may also have other barriers such as homelessness and mental health issues.	Person centred approach to those with multiple barriers to employment – 25 people assessed and action plans created; attendance at community-based classes; 6 people progress as peer supporters/volunteers; 10 jobs gained and sustained at 10 weeks.	£17,361	£17,361	£17,361	£52,082	34 people supported, 49 qualifications achieved, 8 progressing into volunteering roles, 4 into employment sustaining at 13 weeks, 2 re-entering employment, 4 into FE and 14 completed vocational skills training. Clients achieving qualifications including work related ones and 11 now joined SQA Local Investigations Course.
TOTAL			£144,421	£145,868	£147,452	£437,740	

Table 2 – Health C	Dutcomes
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Organisation	Purpose	Outcomes	Awarded Year 1	Awarded Year 2	Awarded Year 3	Total Awarded (over 3 years)	Outputs/achievements from Year 1 monitoring
Y2K	Core costs towards the project which supports and improves the health and wellbeing of local young people as well as building their resilience and transferrable life skills.	Improve mental health of young people through project and 1:1 interventions; reduce risk taking behaviour through workshops and support and deliver healthy living programmes.	£23,050	£23,394	£23,748	£70,192	528 young people have used the service. 152 young people engaged in 1:1 support, 6 group work sessions delivered for 33 young people who are involved or are at risk of offending. 5 healthy living programmes with 44 young people. 40 young people achieved Dynamic Youth Awards
Gorebridge Community Cares	Support the delivery of a holistic programme of work to reduce inequalities focusing on 5 themes; physical and mental health, employment, education and training, green space and play.	Increase access for community members to sources of help to improve health & financial position; provide emergency funds for food, personal hygiene and clothing; improve family life by reducing social isolation & increasing connectiveness; cooking workshops for children; REHIS training for community members; CV and IT clinic delivered; provide befriending, support groups for those with ASN, study groups.	£22,966	£23,300	£23,300	£69,565	Over 1,000 people accessing services. 101 CAB referrals made, 130 signposting; 3 community trips 162 attending; 334 visiting Santa's Grotto; 15 cooking sessions delivered; 32 people accessed CV and IT clinic; regular activity groups (craft club and study club); 25 friendly voice calls and 29 sessions of Souper Friday (soup and rolls being distributed)
Edinburgh Rape Crisis Centre	To meet the increasing need for specialist, trauma-informed outreach support service for women, non-binary people and members of the transgender community aged 16 and over in Midlothian who are	Survivors of sexual violence feel safer and have greater control of their lives and choices; are more informed about the impacts of trauma and are able to self- manage these; increase their wellbeing and resilience.	£23,450	£23,450	£23,450	£70,350	63 people using service - 77 new referrals, provided trauma and counselling support to 63 survivors of sexual violence. 147 sessions of Here and Now support sessions for new adult referrals and 213 sessions of longer-term support. 40 people accessing Advocacy support through criminal justice

	affected by rape, sexual assault, childhood sexual abuse and commercial sexual exploitation.						advocacy.
Dalkeith CAB	Holistic outreach support for older people, isolated due to the impact of Covid, health conditions, disability, and other issues. Help provided through home visits, meeting at local community groups and by phone.	Older people facing fewer poverty related barriers through accessing all entitlements; increased confidence and wellbeing of older people; support through home visiting and engaging with other health agencies/projects.	£15,069	£14,797	£15,092	£44,958	628 people supported with financial gains of £226,882,37. Clients referred to other services e.g. health as appropriate.
Midlothian SureStart	"Family Friends" project to befriend/support peers focussed on families with children aged 0-3 who are struggling with low mood or social isolation.	Train buddies to support families to increase confidence, wellbeing and self- agency; 20 families supported annually to benefit from buddies approach	£22,542	£23,425	£23,436	£69,404	15 people using service and 15 families supported. 5 of the Buddies have undertaken Excel Training Programme to support them further as volunteer buddies; 4 buddies moved on.
Lothian Veterans	Provide advice and help to military veterans and their families; including housing and benefits advice, employability services, referral for health issues, emotional support, peer support, social inclusion activities and physical activities aimed at improving physical and mental health.	Increased social connectedness, reduced isolation and increased confidence for veterans and their families through delivering regular events, a safe place to meet, group activities, support and advice.	£18,550	£19,110	£19,670	£57,330	479 used service – 470+ registered users offered support and advice and access to wider services. 451 support sessions provided. 745 attendances at weekly social club (average of 20 per session)

MYPAS	Contribution to the core costs of the organisation to underpin delivery of all MYPAS current and future Midlothian services – drug and alcohol work, LGBT+ Service, Open Access Community Counselling, Family Counselling and Art Therapy.	Reduce issues around problematic substance use through intensive 1:1 support sessions for young people; provide targeted groupwork programmes to increase knowledge around problematic substance use; reduce social isolation of LGBT+ young people through support groups; improve mental health and wellbeing through open access community counselling for young people; family counselling sessions; art therapy sessions.	£22,796	£23,024	£23,254	£69,073	295 people accessed service – exceeded targets for open access community counselling, drugs and alcohol support work and one to one art therapy. 409 intensive 1:1 support sessions for 49 young people with substance use issues. 4 group programmes for 27 young people delivered. 44 groups provided on weekly basis. 14 young people engaged in ongoing individual support with 119 sessions delivered. 5 young people and their families received support. 50 young people attended 636 sessions.
Penicuik & District YMCA- YWCA*	Contribution towards core costs to support the establishment of a youth development programme and develop sustainable	Reduce inequalities in health by developing work with young people through youth work and partnership working; increase opportunities for 1:1 support; reduce offending behaviours by	£21,454	£21,858	£21,858	£65,171	Focus of grant changed at end of Year 1 following some organisational difficulties in year 1. Outcomes renegotiated and governance agreed.
	future through maximising income.	providing safe community spaces & activities; improved access to training and learning for young people; create partnership with RUTS to develop a community hub; work with OSC providers to increase access for parents/children.					1,034 people engaged with project: 65 children accessing breakfast and after school activities; support to 185 families; delivered free hunger places; developed partnerships with Scots Corner and Ladywood CC's; delivered drama to 16 children weekly; free tennis coaching for families delivered; outdoor planting with families delivered.

Play Midlothian	Address inequalities and use play to benefit groups of children who might not have access, or who need additional wellbeing support, particularly those from disadvantaged communities, disabled children, and socially excluded groups.	Increase access to quality play experiences that support health and wellbeing, build skills and confidence; increase physical activity including open play sessions and targeted sessions for those with ASN and families.	£22,310	£20,112	£16,278	£58,700	796 used service - 156 sessions delivered - 73 stay for play sessions in Mayfield and Dalkeith; 79 non-school sessions; 60 school sessions; 320 Play for All sessions for disabled children and their families.
Children 1st	To meet the mental health and trauma recovery needs of Looked After Children and those on the Child Protection Register. Supporting children and their families to build confidence and resilience, facilitating access to help, reducing stigma and increasing social connectedness.	Support Kinship Carers through transition needs in placement; develop understanding of trauma on emotional development and ensure children's voices are heard; develop stronger relationships and confidence in family groups.	£23,295	£23,295	£23,295	£69,886	84 people used service – 13 families with total of 48 individuals; children within 5 families receiving direct trauma recovery support; 6 families undertaken whole family trauma support sessions.
Play Therapy Base	Play Therapy support for children 3-14 year old who are experiencing emotional distress or mental health issues. 1 to 1 Play Therapy sessions or Filial therapy with parent and child.	Support children in early years & their families to be healthy, to learn & to reach their potential & be resilient; offer access to timely and appropriate support; focus on care experienced children.	£22,938	£22,938	£22,938	£68,815	48 people used service - 15 children received 1:1 sessions, 18 families assessed for support, 14 children attended drop-ins.
TOTAL			£238,420	£238,703	£236,319	£713,442	

Organisation	Purpose	Outcomes	Awarded Year 1	Awarded Year 2	Awarded Year 3	Total Awarded (over 3 years)	Outputs/achievements from Year 1 monitoring
MFIN	To coordinate financial inclusion activity across Midlothian focussing on key anti-poverty awareness raising activity. Develop an affordable food network and bring together agencies active in food and community growing. Support activity around tackling fuel and digital poverty and promoting solutions.	Maximise resources to tackle poverty and financial exclusion; individuals are better able to make informed financial choices; households better able to access food and fuel with dignity; reduce digital exclusion.	£14,113	£14,431	£14,968	£43,512	114 people engaged in service – weekly newsletter, meetings held every 6 weeks, commissioned research on affordable food in Midlothian, Affordable Food event held as part of Challenge Poverty Week, training in energy advice for staff and partners.
Home Link Family Support	Provide early intervention practical support to families with children in their early years to minimise the impact of poverty and to improve outcomes for the whole family.	Support 20 families to access benefits, housing, energy and debt advice to make real sustainable changes; Families will be more confident to participate in community activities; improve health and wellbeing of children and families through offering play opportunities, group work, engagement with early years and family learning.	£19,529	£19,872	£20,221	£59,622	128 people used service – supported 76 children and 41 families with 75% lone parents and 80% living in 3 priority areas. 20 families attending stay and play sessions, PEEP and Bookbug and linking in with local activities. 41 families accessing home visiting support.

Table 3 – Economic Circumstances

MAEDT	To continue to operate and provide essential services and facilities for the people of Mayfield and Easthouses. To grow and develop new services and facilities in response to needs identified by the community.	Advocate for people of Mayfield through involvement in forums, working groups & committees; increase use of outdoor space and income using community garden and pavilion; develop café, garden and pantry to increase access to healthy food, volunteering and training opportunities for local people; alleviate effects of poverty.	£23,450	£23,450	£23,450	£70,350	2000 people used service – 7 supported to access planning system to voice objections to local applications. Record number of people using Pavilion over summer period; café and lunch club popular amongst older and more isolated people; room and garden hires increasing; café now generating profit. Secured funding for outdoor cooking facilities and sessional staffing to deliver community cooking sessions. Work with Lawfield Nursery – children achieving Grow and Learn in Nature Awards, youngest group in Scotland.
TOTAL ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES			£57,092	£57,753	£58,639	£173,484	

Table 4 – Carbon Emissions

Organisation	Purpose	Outcomes	Awarded Year 1	Awarded Year 2	Awarded Year 3	Total Awarded (over 3 years)	Outputs/achievements from Year 1 monitoring
The Orchard Project	Create and develop a food forest with orchard, a training and demonstration site, at the Midlothian Community Hospital	Foster greater biodiversity; provide a reliable and usable yield contributing to food security; develop and upskill	£12,300	£11,900	£13,100	£37,300	104 people have been in attending events such as training workshops and community days and designing

	(MCH).	volunteers; build stronger sense of community, achievement and climate action.					and planting the forest garden.
Changeworks	Develop and support community climate action in the Dalkeith area to take action to address the climate emergency.	Engage 2,000 people in Dalkeith area over 3 years to raise awareness of climate change and carbon positive actions towards net zero.	£16,149	£16,101	£16,421	£48,670	594 people have accessed the service. Focus has been on establishing project within the community of Woodburn/Dalkeith. 103 families supported to act. 4 events hosted and 14 drop-in sessions run.
							16 referrals made to Home Energy Scotland and 15 to Affordable Warm Service.
							25 people attended event on Air Source Pumps.
							Maildrop now in place to engage vulnerable households and building partnerships with local groups.
Cyrenians	Deliver a range of activities centred around food growing and support people to grow their own and learn what to do with the produce.	Support communities to be more self-sustaining and socially connected; increase access to affordable food and promote food growing; develop employment and volunteering in green sector; conserve green spaces.	£15,910	£15,794	£16,108	£47,812	Engaged with 309 people. Delivered 1 block of cooking sessions, supported volunteers joining garden team, delivered 14 community meals with 259 people attending, running weekly free food drop in.
TOTAL			£44,359	£43,795	£45,629	£133,782	

3.12 In addition, for the 2022/25 round, transition funding of £101,551 was awarded to 4 organisations over the same three-year period. This was awarded to groups who did not qualify for a large grant due to availability of funding but were defined as meeting a need where there was an existing gap in service provision (Table 5).

Organisation	Purpose	Awarded Year 1	Awarded Year 2	Awarded Year 3	Total Awarded (over 3 years)	Outputs/achievements from Year 1 monitoring
Grandparents Parenting Again & Kinship Carers (MIDLOTHIAN)	Peer support worker to deliver training.	£2,610	£5,219	£5,219	£13,048	46 people used service – 7 kinship families supported on 1:1 basis; group sessions offered; 2 visits from Champion Board to support group
Pathhead Youth Project	Delivery of youth work and summer programme for under 18s in the area.	£5,449	£5,129	£5,185		34 people accessed service – drop-ins run; all summer activities fully booked; young people participated in community events including school fair, Cranston WRI, Pathhead Music Collective Ceilidh
Midlothian Foodbank	Contribution to running and staffing costs to deliver emergency food aid.	£12,633	£12,633	£12,633	£37,899	6,400 accessed service in total – emergency food demand up by 13%. 2,800 people received parcels. Thursday lunch club growing with Dalkeith CAB providing informal advice and support to participants
Food Facts Friends	Contribution to running and staffing costs to deliver activities from the community hub.	£12,050	£11,164	£11,627	£34,841	1,101 people accessed the service overall. Food collections expanded with better choice; addition of Food Pantry store. Children 1 st have permanent space in Hub; instalment of recycling used clothing box; free food provided outside front door; learn digital skills and job group amalgamated to provide job search assistance and advice
TOTAL		£32,742	£34,145	£34,664	£101,551	

- **3.13** The current grant funding is in place until March 2025; however, work requires to be carried out in 2024 if the funding is to continue for a future three-year round. The indicative timetable is as follows:
 - Design of funding criteria and promotion: April 2024 July 2024
 - Applications open: August 2024 September 2024
 - Assessment of applications: October 2024
 - Recommendations to Council for approval: November 2024
 - Notification to applicants of funding outcome: December 2024
- **3.14** In light of the challenges set out in 3.4-3.8 and the proposal to establish a SLWG to develop a strategic approach to funding, **Council is asked to consider the following options and approve option 4 as recommended by officers:**
 - Option 1 continue the programme in its current state and progress planning activity for the 2025/28 funding period.
 - Option 2 cease the funding for the 2025/28 period which would generate a recurring annual saving of £520k.
 - Option 3 continue the programme with a reduction to the funding (value to be determined).
 - Option 4 continue the existing programme for one further financial year to enable further work to be undertaken on the future of the programme.

4 Report Implications (Resource, Digital and Risk)

4.1 Resource

The fund is currently circa £1.5m over three years. For the Commissioning workstream under Follow the Money, resource (for 6-12 months) was agreed from BTSG at its meeting of 4 September 2023, which has been primarily focussed on Health and Social Care commissioning. Significant progress has been made in this area and it is anticipated that this can continue whilst the remainder of the approved funding is realigned to focus on grants/commissioning in a wider scope. An update on the Health and Social Care work will be presented to BTSG in Spring 2024, with the opportunity for further discussion on this workstream.

4.2 Digital

No implications

4.3 Risk

Significant reputational risk where any changes are made to the funding model and consequential impacts on the service users of no continued funding for projects.

4.4 Ensuring Equalities (if required a separate IIA must be completed)

Any proposed changes would be subject to an IIA.

4.5 Additional Report Implications (See Appendix A)

See Appendix A

Appendices

Appendix A – Additional Report Implications

APPENDIX A – Report Implications

A.1 Key Priorities within the Single Midlothian Plan

The themes in which the funding has been allocated is in line with delivery of the Single Midlothian Plan priorities.

A.2 Key Drivers for Change

Key drivers addressed in this report:

- Holistic Working
- Hub and Spoke
- Modern
- Sustainable
- Transformational
- Preventative
- Asset-based
- Continuous Improvement
- One size fits one
- None of the above

A.3 Key Delivery Streams

Key delivery streams addressed in this report:

- One Council Working with you, for you
- \boxtimes Preventative and Sustainable
- Efficient and Modern
- Innovative and Ambitious
- None of the above
- A.4 Delivering Best Value Not applicable

A.5 Involving Communities and Other Stakeholders

Savings proposals were subject to community consultation in 2022/23 in advance of the Council's budget setting process.

A.6 Impact on Performance and Outcomes

Changes to funding could negatively impact on outcomes for communities.

A.7 Adopting a Preventative Approach

Early intervention through some of these projects can prevent further negative impacts on communities and reduce poverty and inequality.

A.8 Supporting Sustainable Development Not applicable