



CENTRE FOR EFFECTIVE SERVICES

Centre for Effective Services
Strategy

2012 – 2014 and beyond

February 2012

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Foreword

The Centre for Effective Services (CES) is a small, relatively young all island organisation (established in 2008 in the Republic of Ireland, and 2010 in Northern Ireland). This first strategy sets a courageous vision and clarity about what unique added value CES can bring to deliver on our mission.

CES strategy is presented at a time of enormous change in Ireland, both in the Republic and in Northern Ireland. The global economic crisis has had a major impact in both jurisdictions resulting in reduced public spending in services including services for children, families, youth and communities. The strategy reflects this changed environment of 2008 when CES was established.

Running in parallel with the preoccupation with the economy is public discourse on the potential and importance of children for our future and the concept of sustaining strong communities with active citizens. This discourse also significantly influenced our thinking in the strategy.

The strategy has been developed on the back of an Independent mid-term review of the Centre with an extensive consultation with stakeholders and analysis of the impact and our outcomes achieved in the formative three years. The key learning and lessons from the review have influenced the thrust and direction of the strategy.

The original core themes of the organisation – the importance of bringing evidence to bear in policy, services and practice; the need to connect the worlds of research with policy-makers and practitioners – are reinforced in this new strategy. There is also an emphasis on the importance of focusing on the process of implementation across policy, practice and services.

CES wants to contribute to system wide changes and improvements in outcomes in the lives of children. Developments flagged in the strategy include a broadening of the CES approach into other government departments and agencies concerned with children and families lives, namely in education, health and justice, including schools and health services. Area based approaches, particularly to tackling disadvantage, which is a commitment in the programme for Government, will also be a focus of the work in CES.

The strategy is closely aligned with the priorities in the public sector reform agenda, with its emphasis on joined up government and providing services for its citizens in the most efficient and effective way.

The strategy will position CES to embrace the major changes in the world in which we work and provide direction and steadiness for our continued sustainability. We look forward to working closely with existing and new partnerships and collaborations in the implementation of this strategy.

Nuala Doherty
CEO

Part 1

Summary of Strategy

Summary of Strategy

Overview of the Centre for Effective Services

The Centre for Effective Services (CES) was established in 2008 in the Republic of Ireland, and in 2010 in Northern Ireland. The overall remit of the centre was to provide technical and organisational 'expertise' to promote and support the application of an evidence-informed approach to policy making and service provision across the island of Ireland. CES is part of an emerging body of intermediary organisations across the world. The Centre is funded jointly by The Atlantic Philanthropies, the Department of Children and Youth Affairs and the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government for an initial period of five years up to 2013. The staff complement of CES is now 18 people, which includes a number of part-time and shared posts across both jurisdictions. CES has also hosted 3 full-time graduate interns and 5 secondees from a number of Government Departments and Agencies.

Work to date has largely been focused over four key areas:

- Policy Advice and Implementation Support
- Programme Design, Implementation and Practice Development
- Evaluation, Quality and Outcomes
- Knowledge and Communications

The Changing Environment

Since its initial establishment in 2008, the external environment in which the centre operates has changed significantly. There have been changes in the political environment, changes in the economy, globally and locally, and we are living in a time of rapid social and technological change. These changes represent both challenges to and opportunities for CES in developing and implementing this strategy.

Our Vision

Our vision articulates the Ireland, North and South, we would like to see in the long term. Many organisations and individuals are likely to aspire to elements of this vision.

Our Vision for the future

Children, young people, families and communities fulfil their potential in an Ireland, North & South, that respects their rights, meets their needs, and implements what is known to make a positive difference.

CES Mission

Our mission sets out our fundamental purpose as an organisation - who we are and what we do, to work towards the vision which we have defined.

CES Mission

CES works with others to connect and support the implementation of effective policy, efficient systems and good practice, using the best available evidence, so that children, young people, families and communities thrive.

Our mission statement captures the essence of what CES is about. We believe that CES' unique contribution is based on the combination of a number of elements. These elements, taken together, make the CES approach unique.

The CES approach is about:

- **Connecting policy, systems and practice**
- **Supporting implementation** of effective policy, efficient systems and good practice
- **Influencing policy and practice** so that they are informed by relevant evidence, and ultimately **achieve better outcomes for children, young people, families and communities**
- **Using** (and supporting others to use) the best available **evidence for the benefit of children, young people, families and communities** .

One way of describing CES is as a **“think and do tank”**. We make relevant, usable evidence available to policy makers, service commissioners and providers. We help them to generate evidence through their own practices and work with them to support the implementation of effective policy, efficient systems and good practice. CES does not promote particular services, programmes or organisations. Our agenda is to achieve the best possible outcomes for children, young people, families and communities.

The diagram below illustrates CES' mission and the unique contribution that CES can make.



CES Outcomes, 2012 - 2014

CES has identified six high-level outcomes (around five areas) which the organisation plans to achieve within the lifetime of this strategy, i.e. by 2014. The first four outcomes relate to the levers of change which we identified in the Social Change Model (policy and systemic change; innovative service design and implementation; building knowledge, skills and capacity to implement). The final two outcomes are crucial, enabling outcomes around how we do our work.

The six outcomes we have identified for CES are as follows:

	Lever / Area	Outcomes
Primary Levers of Change	Influence Policy and Systemic Change	1. Key policies affecting children, young people, families and communities are more informed by evidence and their effective implementation drives systemic change
	Champion Innovative Service Design and Implementation	2. Services working with children, young people, families and communities are applying relevant evidence from research, practice and service user experiences 3. Innovative service design, redesign and implementation has enhanced the operational efficiency and effectiveness of services
	Build Knowledge, Skills and Capacity	4. Service providers and policy makers use enhanced skills, capacity and relevant evidence to inform decisions and develop services
Enablers	Promote Partnerships and Collaborations	5. CES has the necessary local, national and international relationships to tackle complex problems
	Develop CES Organisational Effectiveness	6. CES has a dynamic all-island multidisciplinary team with effective organisational systems and a sustainable funding model

Definitions of key terms

Evidence is defined as knowledge gained from integrating the best available research with the professional judgement of practitioners and service user experiences.

Innovative services are new or existing services which provide solutions to problems, by applying knowledge and evidence, and are effective and efficient.

Outcomes are defined as changes that occur in a person, group, organisation or population, which come about as a result of something else having changed or been provided (e.g. an intervention, a service or an initiative).

Systemic change involves moving beyond thinking about individual organisations, single problems and single solutions to thinking about changes to systems (policy systems, education systems, social service systems, health systems). Systemic change is a cyclical process in which the impact of change on all parts of the whole and their relationships to one another are taken into consideration.

CES Activities

CES has identified a range of **activities** which will be undertaken, during the lifetime of this strategy, to enable us to deliver on each outcome. The table below summarises the activities defined for each outcome. The activities will be outlined in more detail in the Annual Workplans developed by CES.

CES' experience to date, along with that of similar organisations in Ireland and internationally, indicates that **the cumulative effect of these activities will produce long-term impact.**

Lever of change / Area	Outcome(s)	Activities
Influence Policy and Systemic Change	1. Key policies affecting children, young people, families and communities are more informed by evidence and their effective implementation drives systemic change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work on policy with Government Departments and public bodies, who directly impact on the lives of children, young people, families and communities (including Education, Health, Justice) • Work with Government on the implementation of cross-departmental policies and strategies to support public sector reform • Promote learning from prevention and early intervention initiatives in order to inform government policy and systemic change • Support area-based initiatives in socially disadvantaged communities, working with people across the lifecourse • Develop an all-island cross-sectoral initiative to support and improve Implementation.
Champion Innovative Service Design and Implementation	2. Services working with children, young people, families and communities are applying relevant evidence from research, practice and service user experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roll out the What Works Process • Develop tools for practitioners at frontline and management level • Work with practitioners to build evidence-informed approaches to their practice through the provision of practical support, training, networks and seminars • Work with commissioners/ planners to apply evidence-informed approaches to service design.

Lever of change / Area	Outcome(s)	Activities
	<p>3. Innovative service design, redesign and implementation has enhanced the operational efficiency and effectiveness of services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide advice to services on how best to evaluate their impact and how best to apply evaluation findings • Provide practical support to services on service design, redesign, and delivery • Develop tools to support assessment, planning, evaluation and the use of evidence to inform practice • Provide support to service providers, commissioners and planners on cost effectiveness.
<p>Build Knowledge, Skills and Capacity</p>	<p>4. Service providers and policy makers use enhanced skills, capacity and relevant evidence to inform decisions and develop services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan, develop and implement a range of training events and seminars on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The use of evidence • Implementation • Evaluation approaches • Use of resources • Dissemination • Provide practical support to organisations on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The use of evidence • Implementation • Evaluation approaches • Use of resources • Dissemination • Produce a range of knowledge-based tools and materials.
<p>Promote Partnerships and Collaborations</p>	<p>5. CES has the necessary local, national and international relationships to tackle complex problems</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop strategic relationships with a range of organisations to deliver on joint objectives and common projects • Develop collaborative relationships with researchers and academics to utilise the existing Irish and international evidence base • Develop CES as a hub for knowledge transfer and exchange • “Broker” connections between policy makers, commissioners, service providers, and experts, locally and internationally • Participate in and develop relevant networks which make efficient use of resources • Source partners for consortia which can develop effective solutions to complex issues.

Lever of change / Area	Outcome(s)	Activities
<p>Develop CES Organisational Effectiveness</p>	<p>6. CES has a dynamic all-island multidisciplinary team with effective organisational systems and a sustainable funding model</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review CES governance structures to reflect new leadership challenges posed in next phase • Realign CES's organisation structures and processes to improve performance, flexibility and value for money • Develop and implement a sustainable funding model for CES (core funding and self-generated) • Expand CES graduate intern programme and secondment opportunities • Develop and maintain network of local and international experts and associates • Communicate CES' work and learning to a range of audiences.

Part 2

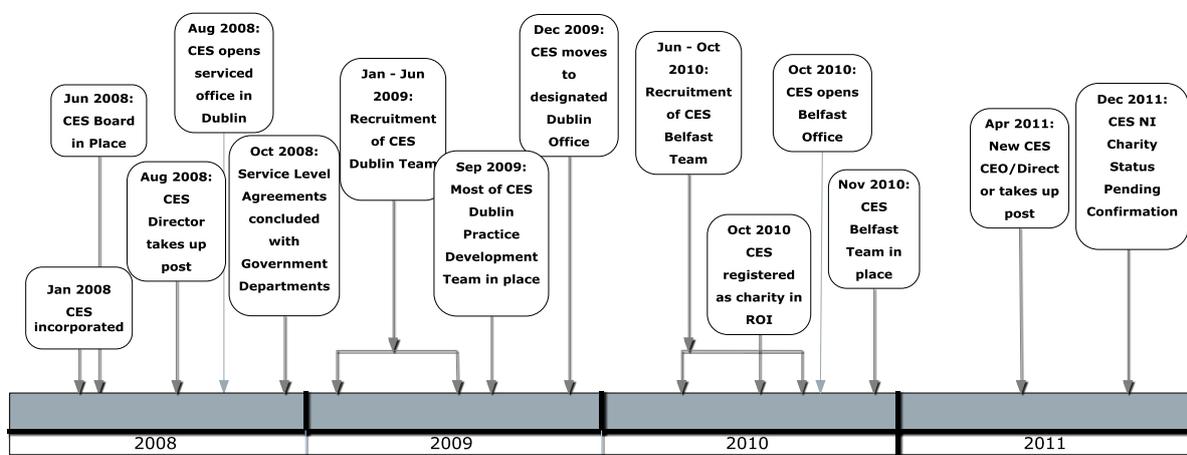
The Strategy

1. Context for the CES Strategy

1.1 Overview of the Centre for Effective Services

The Centre for Effective Services (CES) was established in 2008 in the Republic of Ireland and in 2010 in Northern Ireland. The overall remit of the centre was to provide technical and organisational 'expertise' to promote and support the application of an evidence-informed approach to policy making and service provision across the island of Ireland. The Centre is funded jointly by The Atlantic Philanthropies, the Department of Children and Youth Affairs (formerly the Office of the Minister for Children) and the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government (formerly the Department of Community, Equality and Gaeltacht Affairs), for an initial period of five years up to 2013.

The following diagram is a timeline showing key steps in the development of CES:



CES is part of an emerging body of intermediary organisations across the world. The original **mission** of the Centre was *to connect the design and delivery of services with scientific and technical knowledge of 'what works', in order to improve outcomes for children, young people, and the families and communities in which they live.*

The original core **aims** were:

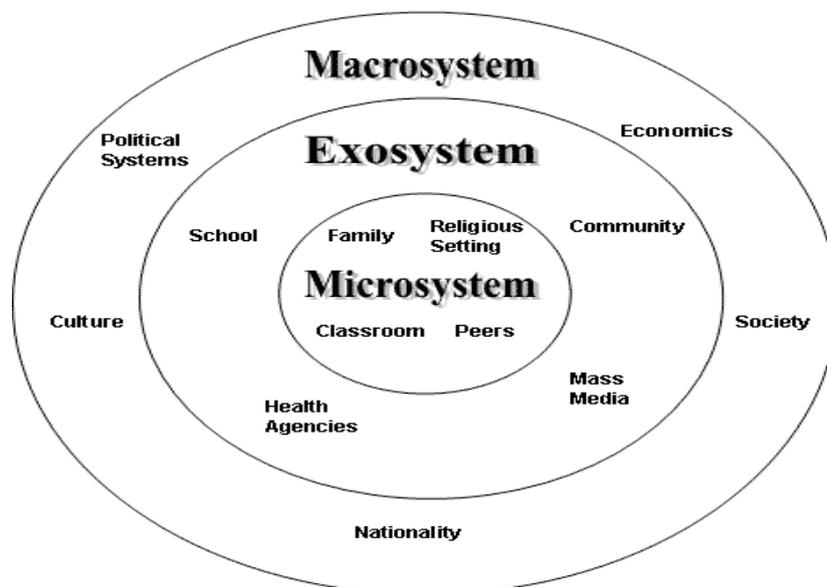
1. To promote and support the application of an evidence-informed approach to policy and practice in child, family and community services
2. To promote the development of collaborative joined up working that is outcomes-focused across research, policy and service providing organisations
3. To build capacity within Ireland and Northern Ireland to take this work forward in the longer term by developing knowledge, skills and competencies.

The full staff complement of CES is now 18 people which includes a number of part-time and shared posts across both jurisdictions. CES has, since the autumn of 2011, hosted 3 full-time graduate interns based in the Dublin office. CES has also hosted 5 secondees over the past three years from a number of Government Departments and Agencies.

CES has employed a multi-disciplinary team with staff coming from a range of diverse professional backgrounds including Practice and Management (Psychology, Social Work, and Youth Work); Research Sciences (Applied Developmental Sciences, Public Health, Evaluation); Community Development; Organisational Development and Management; Knowledge Transfer and Communications.

In developing models for how we do our work, the Centre's thinking is underpinned by an 'ecological perspective', which provides a framework for understanding how critical factors that influence child and youth development nest together within a system of multiple interacting levels. These include the socio-cultural context in which children and families live; community and neighbourhood; family; school and peers; and factors specific to individuals such as their physical or mental health.

The Ecological Model of Human Behaviour **Urie Bronfenbrenner (1979)**



Our work therefore takes in a wide range of policy and service development issues for children, families and the communities in which they live. The work of the Centre has evolved and developed over the past three years and CES has now established a portfolio of work to build on over the period of this strategic plan and beyond.

Work to date has largely been focused over four key areas:

- Policy Advice and Implementation Support
- Programme Design, Implementation and Practice Development
- Evaluation, Quality and Outcomes
- Knowledge and Communications.

Some examples of the work which CES has been involved in over the past three years include:

- Working with a number of government departments and organisations both North and South
- Supporting several policy developments with both the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government and the Department of Children and Youth Affairs
- Providing technical assistance to a range of voluntary, statutory and community organisations working with children and families in both jurisdictions
- Hosting and co-hosting, several conferences, seminars and events
- Delivering a range of inputs at local, national and international conferences
- Facilitating Special Interest Groups for practice development with over thirty organisations represented from both the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland
- Submitting responses to relevant government policy consultations
- Supporting seven organisations through an evidence-informed diagnostic tool.

In the past year, over 160 people across Ireland, North and South, have attended a series of Practice Seminars hosted by the centre; over 75 people have attended Policy Seminars; over 65 people have membership of an all island Implementation Initiative facilitated by CES; and CES has worked with over 20 individual organisations and numerous networks and initiatives.

Although CES works on an all island basis the approach of the centre is responsive to the specific needs, infrastructures, policies and practice contexts in each. Therefore while some of the Centre's activities will have reach across the whole of the area, in some cases CES will operate differently in the North and South. This also reflects the different stages of development in both jurisdictions. CES is more established in the Republic of Ireland and is still working towards this in the North. Significant progress has been made in the past 12 months in Northern Ireland and CES is now engaged with a number of organisations and Government departments and is developing several key partnerships to support policy and practice in Northern Ireland.

All of the work undertaken by CES is underpinned by a commitment to supporting the implementation of the most relevant evidence available to inform policy and practice and ultimately to improving the outcomes for children, young people, families and communities in Ireland, North and South.

1.2 The Strategy Development Process

The strategy was developed by CES in collaboration with the external Consulting Team of Prospectus and Anne McMurray. Highlights of the review and strategy development process are below:

<p>CES Project Team and Strategy Group</p>	<p>The CES project team was set up and a wider Strategy Group was also formed from internal members of staff. The CES project team met regularly on all aspects of the project, and the Strategy Group met for 6 workshops to look at the social change model, vision, mission, outcomes and activities.</p>
<p>External Consultation</p>	<p>A series of face to face and telephone interviews were carried out by the Consulting Team with key external stakeholders, CES staff, funders, and board members.</p> <p>An online questionnaire was circulated to a wider network of CES contacts, including stakeholders, academic institutions, Government departments etc.</p>
<p>International Expertise</p>	<p>The CES project team collaborated with the Center for the Study of Social Policy (CSSP) in Washington DC, USA, and had a number of structured telephone calls with key members of the organisation throughout the strategy and review process.</p>
<p>CES Staff</p>	<p>Two focus groups were held with the full CES staff team, one centred primarily on a review of CES, and the second on the draft CES social change model.</p>
<p>CES Board and Funders</p>	<p>In addition to the consultation interviews, a number of presentations were given to the CES board and funders including the findings of the consultation process, the draft social change model, and the Draft Strategy.</p>

1.3 Key Messages from CES Review 2008 – 2011

As part of the Mid-term Review of CES a number of one to one interviews were carried out with strategic stakeholders and interested parties throughout Ireland, North and South. An online questionnaire was made available and was responded to by a number of individuals and organisations. CES staff and Board members were also consulted. Below is a summary of the key messages coming from the Review. A more comprehensive summary is available in the CES Review of Outcomes and Impact 2008-2011 Report.

The messages about CES' impact to date, from the interviews and the broader consultation process, came from a wide range of respondents with varying degrees of contact with and knowledge of CES. In the three year period covered by the Review, CES has evolved and developed from its early beginnings with a small number of staff working out of shared premises in Dublin to what it is now –an established all Ireland organisation with a portfolio of work and offices in two locations.

The messages below reflect the experiences of those consulted who have had involvement with the centre at different stages of its development.

Positives

- Majority of services and outputs from CES were regarded as high quality and a useful resource to the children, family and community sectors
- Increased awareness and understanding of evidence-informed messages and approaches amongst many of CES' key stakeholders
- Despite a "bumpy" initiation in Northern Ireland, positive relationships are now being developed
- Acknowledgement of the need for what CES offers at all levels.

Challenges

- CES has not managed to clearly articulate its purpose, role, remit and service offering in a manner that is understood by all of its stakeholders, North and South
- Mixed expectations and a lack of shared understanding resulted in a degree of frustration developing between CES and its funders and broader stakeholder group
- CES was considered to be inflexible and overly rigid in terms of who it agreed to work with and how it chose to support external clients. This is particularly true of Years 1 and 2
- CES was perceived by a number of service providers to be detached and inaccessible.

1.4 The Changing Environment

The Changing Environment

Since the initial establishment of CES in 2008 the external environment in which the centre operates has changed significantly. There have been changes in the political environment, changes in the economy, globally and locally, and we are living in a time of rapid social and technological change. These changes represent both challenges to and opportunities for CES in developing and implementing this strategy.

Opportunities and Challenges

Political

Undoubtedly the most significant political change impacting on CES has been that, following a change in Government in the Republic of Ireland in 2011, the two key departments funding the organisation took on new areas of responsibility. The Office of the Minister for Youth Affairs was replaced by the new Department for Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA) which is now charged with leading the development of policy to achieve integrated service delivery for children and young people. The Department now has responsibility for a number of public bodies which previously sat within other Departments and one of its key functions is to deliver on the commitment from Government to reform the delivery of child protection and welfare services and create a new dedicated Child and Family Support Agency. DCYA aims to have this agency operational in 2013 and CES is supporting its development.

A second significant political development directly affecting CES is the transfer of responsibility for 'Community' affairs to the Department of Environment and local Government (now the Department of Community, Environment and Local Government). CES is supporting policy developments in this area.

The establishment of the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER) to drive forward the government's Public Service Reform agenda is also of significant relevance to CES. It heralds a much greater emphasis on efficiency, effectiveness and economy in service development and provision.

In Northern Ireland, devolved government offers opportunities to work closely with key policy makers and influence the implementation of policy affecting positive change for children and young people across several areas. New arrangements for the commissioning and planning of children's services have been put in place in Northern Ireland through the Health and Social Care Board and the establishment of the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnerships and CES can add value to this through increased collaboration with key organisations and building relationships with commissioners and service providers.

Recent government policy consultations particularly in Northern Ireland have highlighted the importance of evidence-informed policy, service commissioning and practice delivery and have a clear focus on achieving better outcomes for children and young people and this is directly relevant to what CES can offer.

Children's Rights remain high on the agenda in Northern Ireland and there is a referendum planned for 2012 in the Republic of Ireland on the issue of children's rights. CES is committed to respecting the rights of children in all our work.

Economic

A global economic crisis has had a major impact in both jurisdictions in which CES operates but particularly in the Republic of Ireland. This has led to reduced public spending, significant job losses in the sector, and an acute emphasis on 'value for money' and cost effectiveness. There has been substantial investment in recent years in Ireland, North and South, from philanthropy which is coming to an end in the near future and this will have an impact on the sustainability of some services for children, young people and communities, particularly in the 'Prevention and Early intervention' field.

Major reductions in frontline staffing of both statutory and voluntary organisations are expected, requiring a reshaping of services and organisations. A recent report by Brian Harvey on changes in employment and services in the voluntary and community sector in Ireland¹ indicates that a dramatic fall in government funding to the voluntary and community sector (in the order of 35%) will lead to a loss of almost 37,000 jobs in this sector by end 2015. The report also points out that the numbers employed in public services are scheduled to fall by 37,500. Services in Northern Ireland are also experiencing the early impact of reductions in government spending.

The difficult economic context has serious implications for the funding, including the long-term sustainability, of CES and many voluntary and statutory organisations. However, it also offers opportunities for collaboration with others and promoting an increased understanding of the value of using robust evidence to make decisions on spending and commissioning of services. CES can play a role in making the evidence about cost/resource effectiveness accessible to decision makers and also in demonstrating efficient use of its own resources.

Social

In recent years, social change in Ireland, North and South, has been rapid. Changes in family structures, changes in demographics through immigration, emigration, and an increase in the ageing population, an increase in youth unemployment, changes in rural communities and the post conflict situation in the North have all impacted on the wider society. The profile of young people in the media has ignited debate and often is at odds with the evidence about the issues and challenges facing young people today. All of this has an impact on the work CES is engaged in.

CES is committed to playing its part in achieving better outcomes for children, young people, families and communities. The social landscape in which we operate calls for the development and fostering of relationships to promote this and to help influence the allocation of resources where they are most needed. In times of social change CES is well placed to work with others to ensure that services are targeted effectively and take account of the long term impact of social disadvantage.

Technological

In a time of ever increasing developments in technology, CES will utilise technological advances in information and communication systems to extend and increase the accessibility of the services it offers. The Centre is already working with a number of online resources, and the CES website offers access to international expertise and resources.

Services working with young people have to adapt to the digital age. Many young people manage their information needs, social relationships and entertainment through use of the internet and mobile phone technology. Knowledge about the impact of this on children, young people and families lags behind practice. This is an area where CES plans to provide evidence and develop knowledge in the future.

¹ Downsizing the Community Sector: Changes in employment and services in the voluntary and community sector in Ireland, 2008 – 2012. Brian Harvey. Commissioned by Irish Congress of Trade Unions, Community Sector Committee

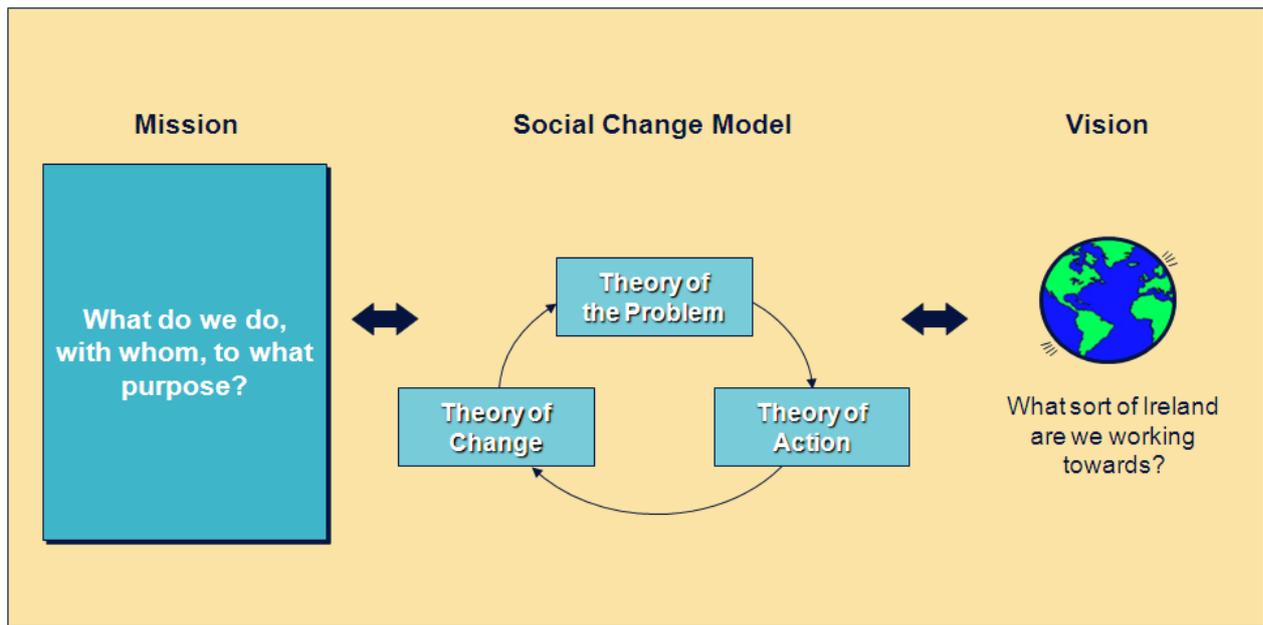
2. The Social Change Model for CES

2.1 Introduction to the Social Change Model

In order to come to a view on what should be CES' focus in the future and where it can contribute most, we decided to develop a Social Change Model for CES. The Social Change Model is a strategy development tool used widely in the not-for-profit sector to clarify mission and vision, through identifying cause and effect of particular activities. The Social Change Model, which originated at Harvard Business School, is particularly helpful for articulating: an organisation's understanding of, and hypothesis about, the social problem that the organisation is trying to solve; the levers necessary to implement change in relation to this social problem; and the organisation's role in using these levers to help solve the social problem.

We used the Social Change Model framework to identify for CES:

- **Our underlying beliefs** – the basic shared assumptions that underpin the work of CES
- **The problem** - our understanding of the problem we are trying to solve, including the symptoms of the problem and our diagnosis of the underlying causes of the problem
- **The theory of change / levers of change** - our perspective on what it will take to solve the problem, including identifying the critical levers of change, and explaining how these levers will address the problem and contribute to the achievement of our vision
- **The activities** – our strategy for using the critical levers to cause change.



Note: Social Change Model framework adapted from David Kantor

The concepts and thinking outlined in the Social Change Model for CES are informed by relevant research evidence, what we have learned from organisations, networks and individuals with whom CES works, and the experience of organisations similar to CES in other countries.

2.2 The social problem

Our aim was to clearly articulate the problem CES is trying to solve, in a single statement. In order to reach this single statement, we also defined the visible symptoms of the problem, and the barriers which need to be overcome to address the problem.

The social problem:

Failure to connect and implement policy, systems and practice, using the best possible evidence, leads to inefficiencies, undermines society's ability to achieve better outcomes for children, young people, families and communities, and contributes to social exclusion

Definitions of key terms

Systems are defined as the formal structures and systems that provide services and supports for children, young people, families and communities.

Evidence is defined as knowledge gained from integrating the best available research with the professional judgement of practitioners and service user experiences.

Outcomes are defined as changes that occur in a person, group, organisation or population, which come about as a result of something else having changed or been provided (e.g. an intervention, a service or an initiative).

CES' analysis of this social problem identified the following visible **symptoms of the problem**:

- Poorer health, education, social and well-being outcomes for children, young people, families and communities
- Lack of a holistic, joined-up approach to planning and implementation of policy and services
- Gaps in service provision, and co-ordination between services
- Wasted resources
- Limited learning from past experiences
- Slow response from the system to new or emerging problems.

CES' analysis also identified the following **barriers** which need to be overcome to address this problem:

- Policy makers, service providers and researchers often operate in separate silos, and there are limited opportunities for them to come together
- The system is slow to change and can be unresponsive
- Poor implementation of policy
- Evidence is not always a primary influencer at decision making levels (Government and Executive)
- The design of services can be self-serving (designed to suit the service, rather than the users of the service)
- Absence of shared budgets
- Management and staff are not rewarded for using or championing evidence, or working collaboratively
- Traditional ways of working are valued and reinforce the status quo (fear of change).

2.3 The levers of change

Having analysed the barriers to change, we identified three critical levers of change, which CES can use to help unlock the problem.

Levers of change	Description of each lever of change
Influence Policy and Systemic Change	<p>Achieving policy and systemic change.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Systemic change</i> involves moving beyond thinking about individual organisations, single problems and single solutions to thinking about changes to systems (policy systems, education systems, social service systems, health systems). Systemic change is a cyclical process in which the impact of change on all parts of the whole and their relationships to one another are taken into consideration
Champion Innovative Service Design and Implementation	<p>Designing, redesigning and implementing innovative services for children, young people, families and communities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Innovative services</i> are new or existing services which provide solutions to problems, by applying knowledge and evidence, and are effective and efficient
Build Knowledge, Skills and Capacity	<p>Building the knowledge, skills and capacities of policy makers, service providers and researchers working with children, young people, families and communities (for example, in relation to producing and using relevant evidence, translating knowledge /evidence into practice, collaborative working, implementation).</p>

2.4 An explanation of the Social Change Model

CES has defined a number of core short and long-term activities which it will undertake in order to effect change relating to the three critical levers of change. By concentrating on these core activities in both the short and long term, **CES will contribute to resolving the fundamental social problem** identified and bring about social change.

The core activities are **dynamic, cyclical and inter-connected**. Each of the activities relate to one or more of the three critical levers of change. The starting point for CES in terms of the cycle of activities will vary from sector to sector, and with different organisations and networks, depending on opportunities that emerge.

The short-term activities will be undertaken by CES within the three-year timeframe of this strategy (2012-2014). Longer-term activities are those that are likely to go beyond the lifetime of this strategy, although CES will begin work on a number of these within the next three years.

CES has identified **five core activities**, which it will focus on, **in the short-term**. They are:

1. Collating and analysing evidence
2. Engaging with, and fostering collaborations between policy makers, service providers and researchers
3. Building common approaches (among the different stakeholders) to addressing gaps and achieving outcomes
4. Identifying key areas of policy, systemic change and practice to support
5. Providing skills, capacity and supports.

The cumulative effect of the short-term activities undertaken by CES will produce long-term impact.

The **four longer-term activities** identified for CES area:

1. Demonstrating the value of collaborative and evidence-informed approaches
2. Advocating for better linkages between policy, systemic change and practice based on evidence
3. Supporting the development and implementation of policy, improved services and system change in areas where issues for children, young people and families intersect with other stages of the lifecourse
4. Applying evidence-informed approaches to the development and implementation of social policy, systems change and service provision.

Delivering these longer term activities will help CES contribute to achieving the vision we have for children, young people, families and communities in Ireland, North and South. CES cannot achieve this vision on its own. The work of many organisations will be needed to achieve this vision and CES will work collaboratively with others in order to achieve this vision.

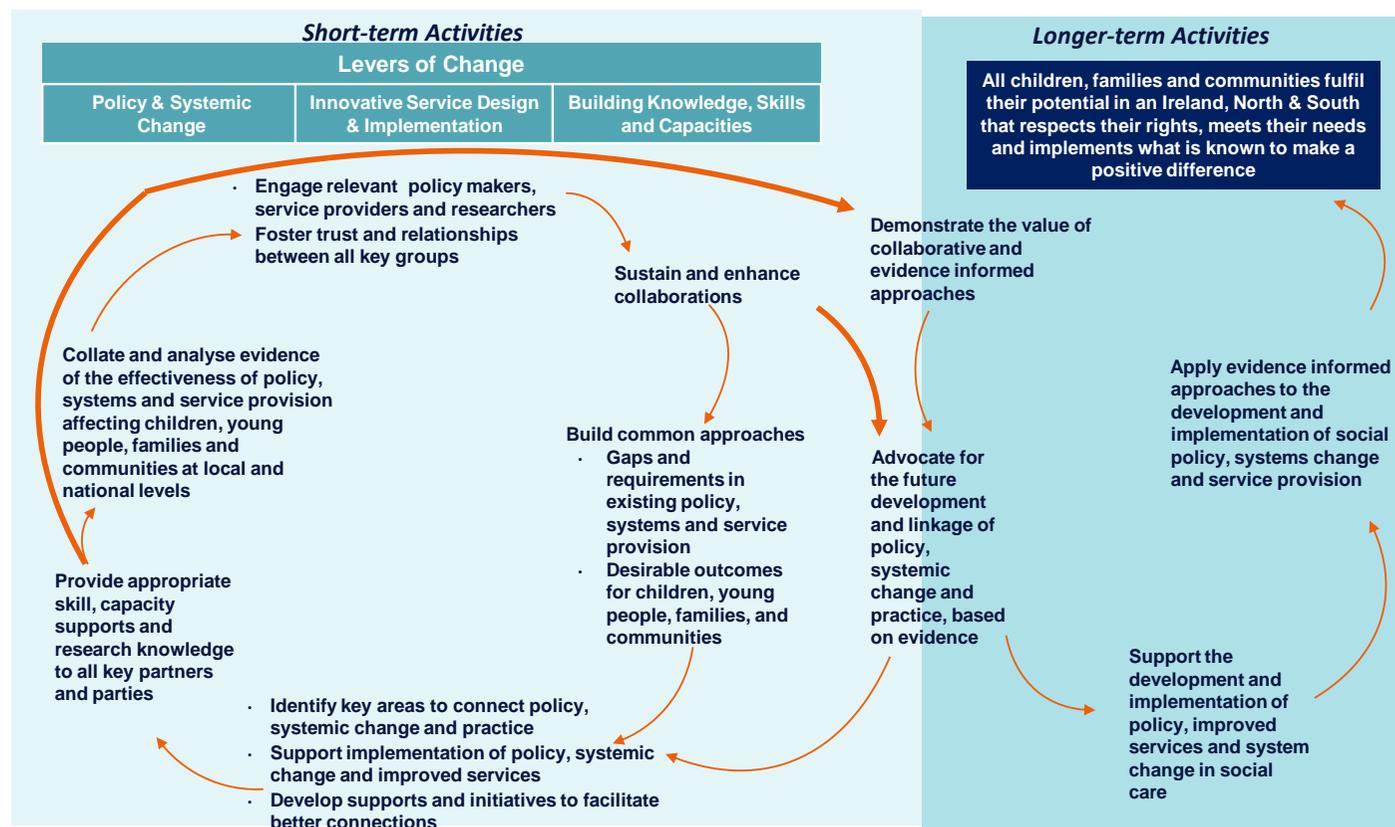
Underpinning the CES Social Change Model is a commitment to, and an awareness of, the importance of, **partnering, collaboration and working with others** in order to connect policy, systems change and practice and achieve better outcomes for children, young people, families and communities.

In the **short-term**, CES activities will **focus primarily on children, young people, families and communities**. This will enable us to develop and test the validity of the CES approach in these sectors. In the **longer term**, CES will **extend its work to areas where issues for children, young people and families intersect with other stages of the lifecourse** (such as older people) and issues that arise for people during their life (such as disability and domestic violence). This will involve CES:

- Working across a range of Government Departments and Agencies involved in social care
- Supporting area-based initiatives in socially disadvantaged communities, working with people across the lifecourse.

The diagram below is a visual representation of CES' social change model. It shows how a number of short and long-term activities by CES, relating to the three critical levers of change, will address the fundamental social change problem CES seeks to address. It **illustrates a clear link between what we do and the change we hope to see**. It shows that the cumulative effect of the short-term activities undertaken by CES will produce long-term impact.

Problem Statement: Failure to connect and implement policy, systems and practice, using the best possible evidence, leads to inefficiencies, undermines society's ability to achieve better outcomes for children, families and communities, and contributes to ongoing inequalities and social exclusion



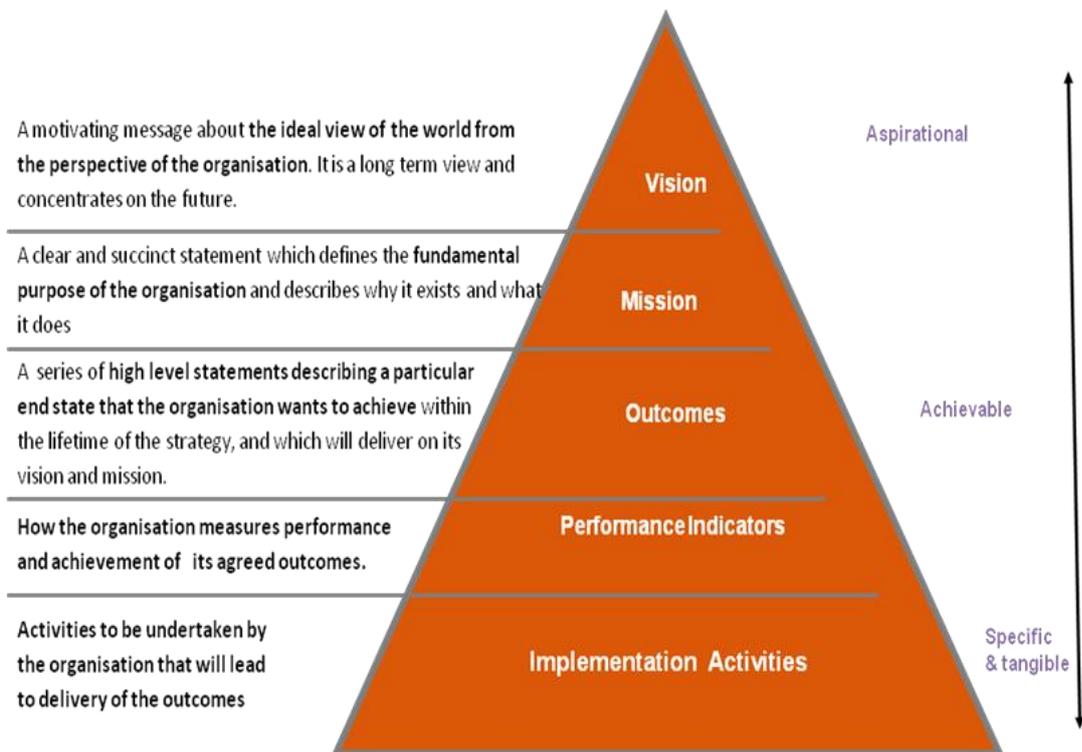
Partnering with, collaborating with, and supporting others

3. Our Strategic Direction

3.1 Introduction

We have articulated the strategy for CES around a vision, a mission statement, six outcomes, and a number of activities, linked to each outcome statement.

Core elements of CES's strategy



3.2 Our Vision

Our vision articulates the Ireland, North and South, we would like to see in the long term. Many organisations and individuals are likely to aspire to elements of this vision.

Our Vision for the future

Children, young people, families and communities fulfil their potential in an Ireland, North & South, that respects their rights, meets their needs, and implements what is known to make a positive difference.

3.3 CES Mission

Our mission sets out our fundamental purpose as an organisation - who we are and what we do, to work towards the vision which we have defined.

CES Mission

CES works with others to connect and support the implementation of effective policy, efficient systems and good practice, using the best available evidence, so that children, young people, families and communities thrive.

Our mission statement captures the essence of what CES is about. We believe that CES' unique contribution is based on the combination of a number of elements. These six elements, taken together, make the CES approach unique.

The CES approach is about:

- *Connecting policy, systems and practice*
- *Supporting implementation* of effective policy, efficient systems and good practice
- *Influencing policy and practice* so that they are informed by relevant evidence, and ultimately *achieve better outcomes for children, young people, families and communities*
- *Using* (and supporting others to use) the best available *evidence for the benefit of children, young people, families and communities.*

One way of describing CES is as a **“think and do tank”**. We make relevant, usable evidence available to policy makers, service commissioners and providers. We help them to generate evidence through their own practices and work with them to support the implementation of effective policy, efficient systems and good practice for children. CES does not promote particular services, programmes or organisations. Our agenda is to achieve the best possible outcomes for children, young people, families and communities.

The diagram below illustrates CES' mission and the unique contribution that CES can make.



3.4 CES Outcomes, 2012 - 2014

CES has identified six high-level outcomes (around five areas) which the organisation plans to achieve within the lifetime of this strategy, i.e. by 2014. The first four outcomes relate to the levers of change which were identified in the Social Change Model (policy and systemic change; innovative service design and implementation; building knowledge, skills and capacities). The final two outcomes are crucial, enabling outcomes around how we do our work.

The six outcomes we have identified for CES are as follows:

	Lever / Area	Outcomes
Primary Levers of Change	Influence Policy and Systemic Change	1. Key policies affecting children, young people, families and communities are more informed by evidence and their effective implementation drives systemic change
	Champion Innovative Service Design and Implementation	2. Services working with children, young people, families and communities are applying relevant evidence from research, practice and service user experiences 3. Innovative service design, redesign and implementation has enhanced the operational efficiency and effectiveness of services
	Build Knowledge, Skills and Capacity	4. Service providers and policy makers use enhanced skills, capacity and relevant evidence to inform decisions and develop services
Enablers	Promote Partnerships and Collaborations	5. CES has the necessary local, national and international relationships to tackle complex problems
	Develop CES Organisational Effectiveness	6. CES has a dynamic all-island multidisciplinary team with effective organisational systems and a sustainable funding model

Definitions of key terms

Evidence is defined as knowledge gained from integrating the best available research with the professional judgement of practitioners and service user experiences.

Innovative services are new or existing services which provide solutions to problems, by applying knowledge and evidence, and are effective and efficient.

Outcomes are defined as changes that occur in a person, group, organisation or population, which come about as a result of something else having changed or been provided (e.g. an intervention, a service or an initiative).

Systemic change involves moving beyond thinking about individual organisations, single problems and single solutions to thinking about changes to systems (policy systems, education systems, social service systems, health systems). Systemic change is a cyclical process in which the impact of change on all parts of the whole and their relationships to one another are taken into consideration.

3.5 CES Activities

CES has identified a range of **activities** which will be undertaken, during the lifetime of this strategy, to enable us to deliver on each outcome. The table below summarises the activities defined for each outcome. The activities will be outlined in more detail in the annual Workplans developed by CES.

CES' experience to date, along with that of similar organisations in Ireland and internationally, indicates that **the cumulative effect of these activities will produce learning and evidence for the long-term impact and strategies that CES will deliver.** It is essential that the cumulative effect of the activities identified in the table below demonstrate the value of collaborative and evidence-informed approaches and make the case for better linkage of policy, systemic change and practice based on evidence.

Lever of change / Area	Outcome(s)	Activities
Influence Policy and Systemic Change	1. Key policies affecting children, young people, families and communities are more informed by evidence and their effective implementation drives systemic change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work on policy with Government Departments and public bodies, who directly impact on the lives of children, young people, families and communities (including Education, Health, Justice) • Work with Government on the implementation of cross-departmental policies and strategies to support public sector reform • Promote learning from prevention and early intervention initiatives in order to inform government policy and systemic change • Support area-based initiatives in socially disadvantaged communities, working with people across the lifecourse • Develop an all-island cross-sectoral initiative to support and improve Implementation.
Champion Innovative Service Design and Implementation	2. Services working with children, young people, families and communities are applying relevant evidence from research, practice and service user experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roll out the What Works Process • Develop tools for practitioners at frontline and management level • Work with practitioners to build evidence-informed approaches to their practice through the provision of practical support, training, networks and seminars • Work with commissioners/ planners to apply evidence-informed approaches to service design.

Lever of change / Area	Outcome(s)	Activities
	<p>3. Innovative service design, redesign and implementation has enhanced the operational efficiency and effectiveness of services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide advice to services on how best to evaluate their impact and how best to apply evaluation findings • Provide practical support to services on service design, redesign, and delivery • Develop tools to support assessment, planning, evaluation and the use of evidence to inform practice • Provide support to service providers, commissioners and planners on cost effectiveness.
<p>Build Knowledge, Skills and Capacity</p>	<p>4. Service providers and policy makers use enhanced skills, capacity and relevant evidence to inform decisions and develop services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan, develop and implement a range of training events and seminars on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The use of evidence • Implementation • Evaluation approaches • Use of resources • Dissemination • Provide practical support to organisations on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The use of evidence • Implementation • Evaluation approaches • Use of resources • Dissemination • Produce a range of knowledge-based tools and materials.
<p>Promote Partnerships and Collaborations</p>	<p>5. CES has the necessary local, national and international relationships to tackle complex problems</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop strategic relationships with a range of organisations to deliver on joint objectives and common projects • Develop collaborative relationships with researchers and academics to utilise the existing Irish and international evidence base • Develop CES as a hub for knowledge transfer and exchange • “Broker” connections between policy makers, commissioners, service providers, and experts, locally and internationally • Participate in and develop relevant networks which make efficient use of resources • Source partners for consortia which can develop effective solutions to complex issues.

Lever of change / Area	Outcome(s)	Activities
<p>Develop CES Organisational Effectiveness</p>	<p>6. CES has a dynamic all-island multidisciplinary team with effective organisational systems and a sustainable funding model</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review CES governance structures to reflect new leadership challenges posed in next phase • Realign CES's organisation structures and processes to improve performance, flexibility and value for money • Develop and implement a sustainable funding model for CES (core funding and self-generated) • Expand CES graduate intern programme and secondment opportunities • Develop and maintain network of local and international experts and associates • Communicate CES' work and learning to a range of audiences.

4. Enablers for Success

There are a number of key factors which will **support the successful implementation** of the CES Strategy 2012-2014. The strategy will be implemented through the Annual Workplans for CES.

Securing Sustainability

The success of this strategic plan and the long term future of CES are largely dependent on having the financial resources to fund the activities and work outputs of the Centre. In order to secure the long term sustainability of the Centre, CES will work from a realistic understanding of the costs involved in running the centre, map out our existing available resources and clarify where there are gaps. We will employ a range of strategies to fill those gaps and secure the centre's future. To this end, CES will continue to work with our current funders to demonstrate the cost effectiveness of the Centre and to display good stewardship of existing funds. CES will work with these three funding bodies to plan for continued funding beyond 2013. CES will also engage with other possible sources of funding, in Government and philanthropy. CES is very mindful of the fact that we have not as yet secured funding from any Government source in Northern Ireland and is taking steps to explore possibilities in this area.

CES will seek to generate income through delivering on specific pieces of work or activities commissioned by other organisations or Government Departments, both North and South.

Becoming a Learning Organisation

CES will use its short term success as an enabler for long term success. CES aims to consolidate the value it has added to practice and policy developments during the lifespan of this strategy and to build on this. CES will operate as a 'Learning Organisation' in which learning gained will be shared internally and communicated with a wider external audience through collaborative partnerships and networks. This will enhance not only the success of CES but will also contribute to the overall aim of improving outcomes for children, families and communities.

Building and Strengthening Relationships

Relationships with a range of organisations, agencies and individuals will be crucial to the successful implementation of the strategy. CES will continue to foster relationships with a wide 'stakeholder' group including:

- Policy makers, Government Departments and Agencies
- Service commissioners
- Service delivery organisations
- Practitioners
- Community and Voluntary Organisations
- Researchers, Academic institutions and Research Centres
- Organisations locally, nationally and internationally with similar and complementary functions, focus and remit to CES.

Some of these relationships will take the form of partnerships or collaborations and CES is committed to working together to add value, complement the knowledge, skills and capacity of other organisations, share our knowledge, skills and capacity and learn from others. CES will be open and responsive to approaches from other organisations and individuals who share the vision of our organisation in working for better outcomes for children, young people, families and communities.

Improving Organisational Capacity

The leadership and staff team in CES will be essential to its future success. CES is currently undergoing a review of governance and organisational structures and processes. The purpose of this is to ensure that the Centre operates to its full capacity and has a robust and effective management structure which enables the full implementation of this strategy, ensures high quality outputs and supports staff development. CES will ensure its Board and staff are representing the organisation effectively externally and that internally all activities are aligned with the agreed annual work plans and that performance is measured and quality assured.

CES has a skilled and experienced staff team and the Centre is committed to developing this level of skill. CES will ensure that the skills mix in its staff team is adaptive and responsive to the changing external environment. CES will strive to maintain a flexible and enriched staff team, by continuing to offer opportunities for secondments from a range of organisations and professions. CES is currently hosting its first graduate internship programme, and will build on the success of this in the future. Central to the ethos of CES is the fostering of relationships with local, national and international partners, with whom we can exchange knowledge, skills and expertise.

In order to enable successful implementation of the current strategic plan, regular reviews of activities, performance and progress toward the outcomes set out in this plan will take place.

Appendix 1 Revised Logic Model for the Centre for Effective Services (to support CES Strategy, 2012 - 2014)

The mission of CES is to work with others to connect and support the implementation of effective policy, efficient systems and good practice, using the best available evidence, so that children, young people, families and communities thrive

Inputs and Resources	Activities and Outputs (2012-2014)	Outcomes	
		Short term outcomes (2012-2014)	Longer-term outcomes (10 yrs)
<p>Funding from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Government in ROI and NI - Atlantic Philanthropies - Self-generated income <p>Multi-disciplinary team in Dublin and Belfast, working across two jurisdictions</p> <p>Access to local and international expertise and associates</p> <p>Review and learning from the first 3 years of CES</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work on policy with Government Departments and public bodies, who directly impact on the lives of children, young people, families and communities (including Education, Health, Justice) • Work with Government on the implementation of cross-departmental policies and strategies to support public sector reform • Share learning from prevention and early intervention initiatives in order to inform government policy and systemic change • Support area-based initiatives in socially disadvantaged communities, working with people across the lifecourse • Develop an all-island cross-sectoral initiative to support and improve Implementation. 	<p>Influence Policy and Systemic Change</p> <p>1. Key policies affecting children, young people, families and communities are more informed by evidence and their effective implementation drives systemic change.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social policy is more evidence-informed and better implemented on the island of Ireland • Service providers and commissioners use evidence-informed approaches to ensure good practice in social care • Practitioners confidently access relevant evidence in decision-making in their work • Social care systems are better connected, resulting in better outcomes and more efficient use of resources  <p>Better outcomes for children, young people, families and communities</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roll out the What Works Process • Develop tools for practitioners at frontline and management level • Work with practitioners to build evidence-informed approaches to their practice through the provision of practical support, training, networks and seminars • Work with commissioners/ planners to apply evidence-informed approaches to service design. 	<p>Champion Innovative Service Design and Implementation</p> <p>2. Services working with children, young people, families and communities are applying relevant evidence from research, practice and service user experiences.</p>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide advice to services on how best to evaluate their impact and how best to apply evaluation findings • Provide practical support to services on service design, redesign, and delivery • Develop tools to support assessment, planning, evaluation and the use of evidence to inform practice • Provide support to service providers, commissioners and planners on cost effectiveness. 	<p>Support Innovative Service Design and Implementation</p> <p>3. Innovative service design, redesign and implementation have enhanced the operational efficiency and effectiveness of services.</p>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan, develop and implement a range of training events and seminars on the use of evidence, implementation, evaluation approaches, use of resources, and dissemination • Provide practical support to organisations on the use of evidence, implementation, evaluation approaches, use of resources, and dissemination • Publish a range of knowledge-based tools and materials. 	<p>Build Knowledge, Skills and Capacity</p> <p>4. Service providers and policy makers use enhanced skills, capacity and relevant evidence to inform decisions and develop services.</p>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop strategic relationships with a range of organisations to deliver on joint objectives and common projects • Develop collaborative relationships with researchers and academics to utilise the existing Irish and international evidence base • Develop CES as a hub for knowledge exchange and translation • “Broker” connections between policy makers, commissioners, service providers, and experts, locally and internationally • Participate in and develop relevant networks which make efficient use of resources • Source partners for consortia which can develop effective solutions to complex issues. 	<p>Promote Partnerships and Collaboration</p> <p>5. CES has the necessary local, national and international relationships to tackle complex problems.</p>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review CES governance structures to reflect new leadership challenges posed in next phase • Realign CES’s organisation structures and processes to improve performance, flexibility and value for money • Develop and implement a sustainable funding model for CES (core funding and self-generated) • Expand CES graduate intern programme and secondment opportunities • Develop and maintain network of local and international experts and associates. • Communicate CES’ work and learning to a range of audiences 	<p>Develop CES Organisational Effectiveness</p> <p>6. CES has a dynamic all-island multidisciplinary team with effective organisational systems and a sustainable funding model.</p>	

The Centre for Effective Services is a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee (company number 451580 in Ireland) and is governed by an independent Board.

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