

Economic strategies for health equality - Building bridges with business and economic development

Thursday, 4 October 2018 | 12.00-13.30 | Room 2

Bridging worlds:

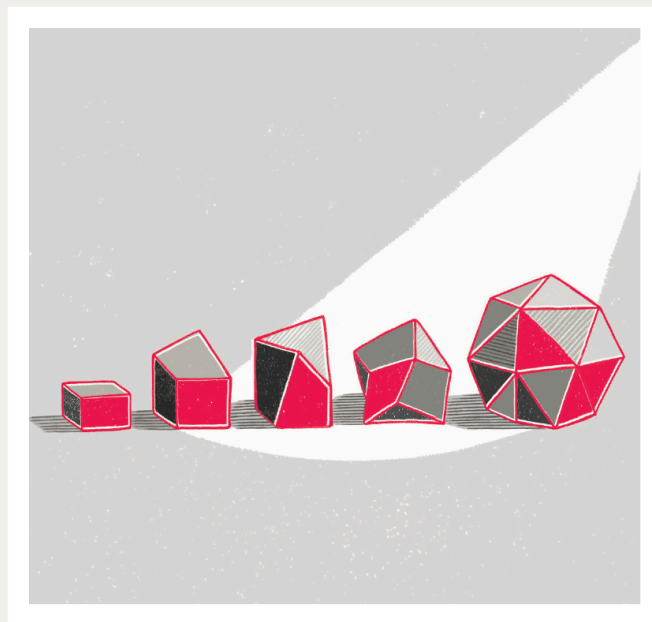
Making the case for greater cooperation across business and economic development sectors

October 2018



About us

- The Health Foundation is an independent charity committed to bringing about better health and health care for people in the UK.
- We connect what works on the ground with effective policymaking and vice versa.
- As the second largest endowed foundation in the UK focusing on health, we spend around £30 million a year on improving health and health care.



We shine a light on
how to make successful
change happen

Healthy Lives Strategy

The aims of the strategy are to:

- Change the conversation so the focus is on health as an asset, rather than ill health as a burden
- Promote national policies that support everyone's opportunities for a healthy life
- Support local action to address variations in people's opportunities for a healthy life.



Inequalities: entrenched and hard to tackle

- 40 years ago, the declaration of Alma Ata made it clear that the level of health inequality was '*politically, socially, and economically unacceptable*'.
- Four decades on, we are still facing the issue of entrenched health inequalities between and within countries.
- As an example of in-country inequalities, across the UK in 2014 to 2016, the gap in healthy life expectancy at birth between local areas with highest and lowest average HLE was 18.4 years for females and 15.6 years for males (ONS, December 2017).
- Significant inequalities in the social determinants of health help explain the large gaps in healthy life expectancy between different parts of the UK.



Money and resources

1 IN 5 of the UK population live in poverty. Over half of these people live in working households. Poverty damages health and poor health increases the risk of poverty.

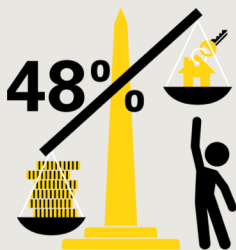
An inadequate income can cause poor health because it is more difficult to:

Avoid stress and feel in control



Living with the day-to-day stresses of poverty in early childhood can have damaging consequences for long-term health

Access experiences and material resources



Money can allow people to access the basics they need to fully participate in society. Yet, 48% of 21-24 year-olds earn less than the living wage

Adopt and maintain healthy behaviours



Healthy behaviours can feel unattainable. It is 3 times more expensive to get the energy we need from healthy foods than unhealthy foods

Feel supported by a financial safety net



A safety net enables people to invest in their future. In a recent study, 40% of people with unmanageable debt said they were less likely to study or retrain

Why business and economic strategies?

- WHO's Commission on the social determinants of health argues, the unequal distribution of people's ability to lead productive and healthy lives is as a direct result of *"a toxic combination of poor social policies and programmes, unfair economic arrangements and bad politics."*
- The role business and economic strategies is often overlooked or put in the 'too difficult' box.
- There is a growing recognition that the proceeds of economic growth should be shared more equally across the population, i.e. that growth should be more inclusive.
- There are great opportunities for health policy makers and practitioners to tap into existing activity linked to the promotion of responsible business and inclusive growth.
- The world of work is changing as are the ways in which business interacts as suppliers and procurers. More could be done to fully understand health impacts.

The Economic Case for investing in good health

Good health is of social and economic value to individuals, society and the economy.

Where a person stands in the labour market – such as whether they have a job that pays enough to live on – is key to their financial security and wellbeing.

- Healthier children have better educational outcomes, which positively impact productivity in adulthood. [Ref: Yamey G et al.2016 and Case A et al 2005](#)
- A healthy working-age population can lead to economic prosperity by being more engaged and productive [Ref: Yamey G et al.2016](#)
- A healthy person is enabled to continue to work as they get older, whereas poor health can lead to forced early retirement. [Ref: Rice NE et al. 2011\)](#)

But access to good work is not universal

Home > Business

Debenhams named and shamed for underpaying shop staff



Asos warehouse staff are unable to take toilet breaks and are being fired for having panic attacks, report claims

Security measures at an Asos warehouse have intensified to the extent that workers are searched upon entering the toilets

Zlata Rodionova | Thursday 29 September 2016 12:20 | 24 comments



SURGE IN GIG ECONOMY WORK LEAVES MILLIONS FACING PENSION POVERTY

🕒 September 12, 2018 at 4:37 pm

👤 Posted by: Barney Cotton

📁 Employment & Skills | Reports

Uber is treating its drivers as sweated labour, says report

Earnings are often less than minimum wage and 'barely sufficient to sustain existence', according to MP Frank Field



Mike Ashley running Sports Direct like 'Victorian workhouse'

MPs' report says retailer used appalling practices in which workers were treated as commodities rather than human beings



Amazon accused of treating UK warehouse staff like robots

Ambulances called out 600 times in three years but online retailer denies GMB's claims of unsafe working conditions



Special Report **Gig economy** [+ Add to myFT](#)

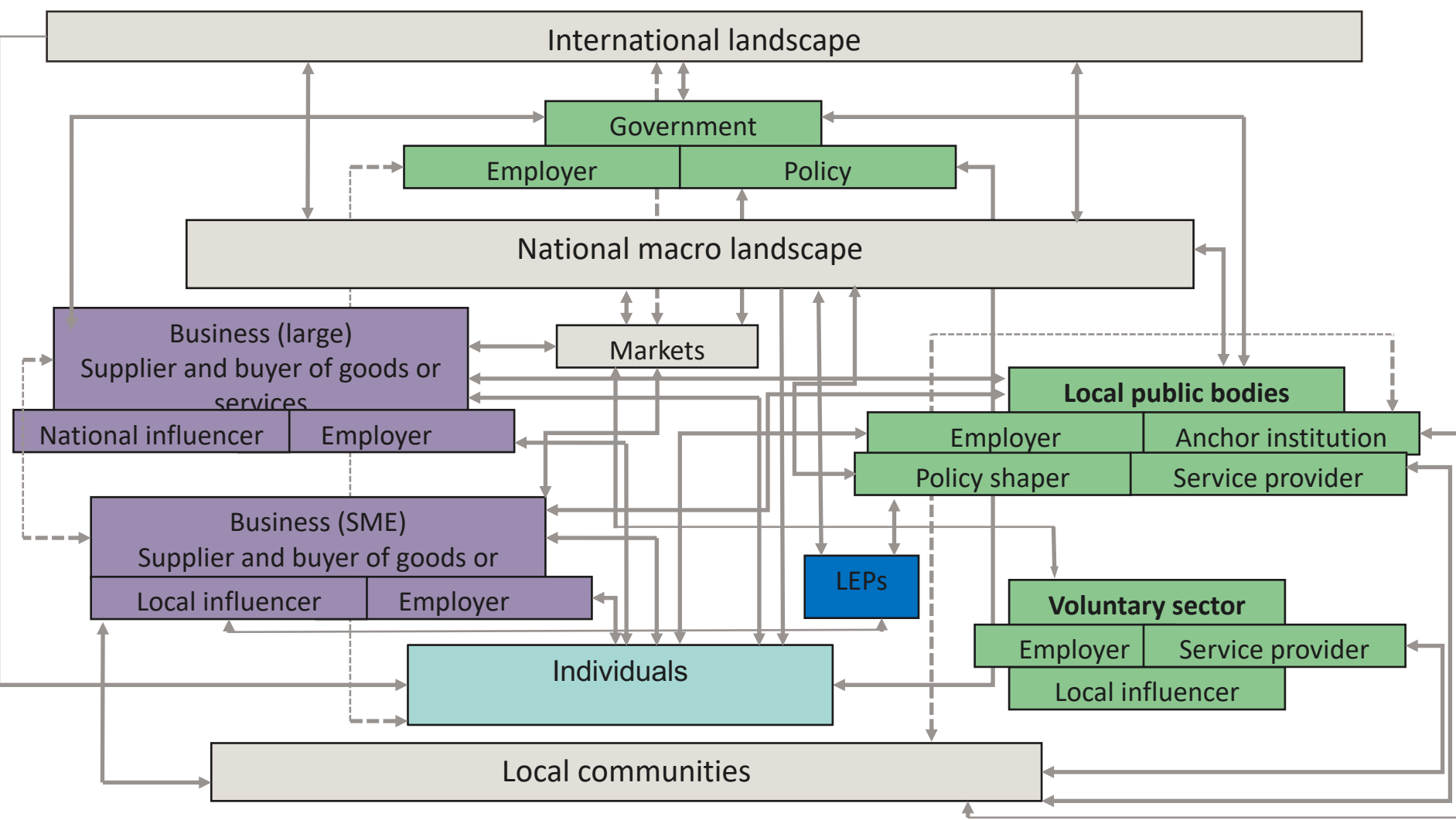
Driven to despair – the hidden costs of the gig economy

Signing up with the likes of Uber or Deliveroo offers flexibility, but the isolation and stress can take their toll

Zero hours workers are 'missing out on paid holidays'

🕒 8 May 2017





How easy is it to embed health in economic decision-making?

The UK has signed up to the Rio Political Declaration on Social Determinants of Health which confirmed a “*determination to achieve social and health equity through action on social determinants of health and well-being by a comprehensive inter-sectoral approach.*”

But... different approach across the 4 Countries. For example:

Wales: Future Generations Act 2015 and Public Health (Wales) Act 2017

England: lack of health impact assessment at a national level. Abolition of Public health Sub-committee, serious funding questions for public health.

Brexit: The unknown impacts.

Lost opportunities....



“The strategy sets out how we are building a Britain fit for the future – how we will help businesses create better, higher-paying jobs with investment in the skills, industries and infrastructure of the future.” HM Government, November 2017

256 pages: Mentions of:

Productivity: 197

Innovation: 230

Inclusive: 4

Inequality/inequalities: 0

Disadvantage: 6

Social Mobility: 1

Population health: 0

Health outcomes: 1

Health: 46 (2 references, 13 life sciences/ health data, 17 describing organisation names or referring to health care sector/professionals but also 7 (healthy places) 5 (healthy aging) and 2 health and work.

Wider determinants/social determinants: 0

Sustainable Development Goals: 0

Can the Sustainable Development Goals play a role in bridging sectors?

- The United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) provide a framework and a call to action for ending poverty, protecting the planet and enabling people to enjoy peace and prosperity.
- The SDG framework provides an excellent opportunity to position a health in all policies approach within a broader comprehensive, intersectoral approach.



Measuring up

How the UK is performing on the UN Sustainable Development Goals

But – no comprehensive plan to achieve SDGs in the UK.

Mutually beneficial policy development – Focus on target 3.4

- The health of a population has a complex, multi-directional relationship with other social and economic outcomes.
- One example that demonstrates this powerfully is target 3.4 which sets an ambitious objective to reduce by one third by 2030 premature mortality from non-communicable diseases (NCDs) such as cancer, heart disease and diabetes.
- Making progress against SDG 1 (no poverty) and SDG 10 (reduced inequalities) is likely to have an impact in supporting SDG 3.4 (and the health goals more broadly).
- Evidence suggests that progress on target 3.4 would have a role in determining the outcome of at least nine SDGs*.

*Ref: Nugent R, Bertram M, Jan S, Niessen WN, Sassi F, Jamison DT et al. Investing in non-communicable disease prevention and management to advance the Sustainable Development Goals, *The Lancet*.2018;391(10134) 2029-2035.

Supporting the Sustainable Development Goals

A core principle of the SDGs is that sustained and inclusive economic growth is necessary for achieving sustainable development.

- **Target 8.3:** Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, **decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation**, and encourage the formalisation and growth of micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises, including through access to financial services.
- **Target 8.5:** By 2030, **achieve full and productive employment** and **decent work** for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value.
- **Target 10.1** By 2030, progressively achieve and **sustain income growth of the bottom 40 per cent of the population** at a rate higher than the national average.
- **17.13** Enhance global macroeconomic stability, including through **policy coordination** and **policy coherence**

Conclusions

- A healthy population is essential for a thriving society and economy. The SDGs provide an opportunity and catalyst for health to bridge barriers and advance mutually beneficial policies.
- Whole system approaches are difficult to deliver in practice but the SDGs, with their emphasis on whole government action, provide new and much needed impetus for innovative approaches to policymaking.
- It is important that action to tackle health inequalities isn't attempted in isolation when there are clear opportunities for alignment and amplification of action with other initiatives.
- Charlotte and Fabrice will detail more on inclusive growth and responsible business – two areas of huge opportunity for further collaboration.

Thank you

