

**Data for Children**  
**Collaborative**

# Annual Report 2023





**Using data  
responsibly to  
improve  
outcomes for  
every child.**

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# Welcome Back!

## Another fruitful year of collaborating

This year was marked by ongoing transformation and tremendous progress across all our activities.

As we transitioned from our initial start-up phase, we feel privileged to be a part of the innovation ecosystem at the Edinburgh Futures Institute, University of Edinburgh.

We continue to collaborate with organisations across the globe to develop data-driven solutions to address challenges facing children.

This year, we have embarked on a journey to apply our methods and expertise to support our diverse partner network in leveraging data for broader societal impact.

Our annual report is a chance for us to reflect on our progress, what we've learned and, most importantly, how we use data to improve children's outcomes. We are excited to share with you some of the highlights, showing how our work continues to create real-world impact.

If you want to find out more about anything we do, please check out our [website](#) or, even better, [get in touch!](#)

We hope that reading and learning more about us can inspire further work in the hugely important domain of Data for Children.

Best Wishes,

*The Collaborative Team*



**Alex**



**Fraser**



**Olivia**



**Iwona**

# Embracing Transition, Amplifying Impact



## Dr. Stefaan Verhulst

Advisory Board Chair Data for Children Collaborative Co-Founder, The GovLab

The year in retrospect was marked by significant societal and geopolitical challenges, notably impacting children's well-being. These challenges provided a renewed relevance and impetus for the Data For Children Collaborative to drive transformational change, underpinning its transition into a pivotal resource hub dedicated to establishing data collaboratives responsibly.

This transition symbolizes a critical step forward in the Collaborative's journey, amplifying its core ethos of fostering a data-driven culture to address children-centric societal challenges. The burgeoning recognition of its efforts, not only within Scotland but globally, is a testament to the unwavering commitment and expertise of its staff and community that has been honed over the years.

The reputation of the Collaborative as a trusted entity has burgeoned, evidenced by a growing demand for its expertise in data collaboration. In a world where data is the linchpin to tackling multifaceted societal challenges, especially those pertaining to children, the role of the Collaborative has never been more pertinent. Its consultative and collaborative approach, documented in the various impact stories, is being increasingly sought after to provide valuable insights and actionable solutions that have a tangible impact on children's lives.

At the same time, the increased recognition and demand underscores the vital necessity for enhanced support and investment.

The significance of the Collaborative is well established and unanimous, yet there's a palpable gap in the commitment towards sustaining and augmenting the capacities it brings to the table.

The discourse around data collaboration is gaining momentum, with many stakeholders underlining its importance. However, the requisite investment and support to propel data collaboration to new heights, remains a domain awaiting earnest engagement.

Looking ahead, the pathway is laden with immense possibilities and equally great responsibilities. The narrative of data collaboration intertwined with children's well-being is not just a narrative of hope, but a clarion call for action. It is an invitation to stakeholders, partners, and patrons to engage, invest, and contribute towards a future where data doesn't just represent numbers, but epitomizes a promise for a better, safer, and prosperous world for all children. The ethos of the Data For Children Collaborative is a beacon that guides us through this journey.

Gratitude to every funder, partner, and member of the community who has walked alongside the Collaborative in this journey of transformation and impact. Your engagement and support are the bedrock of our aspiration to shape a better tomorrow for every child.

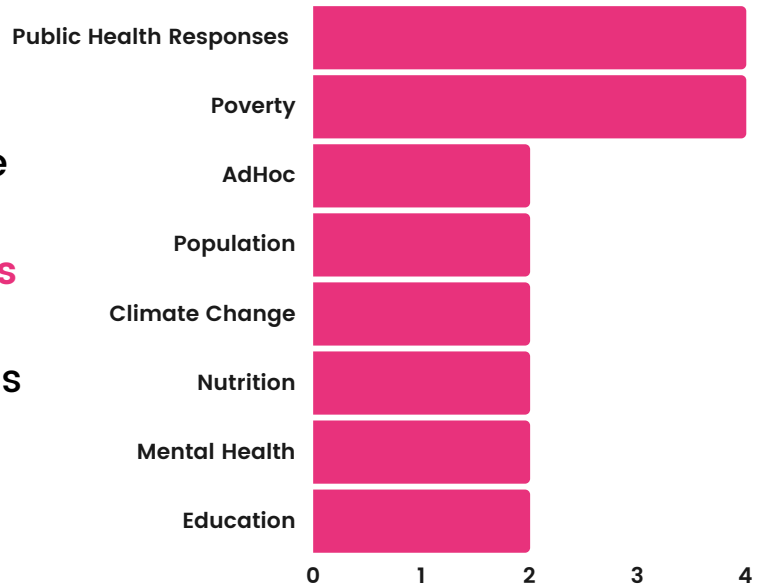
In earnest anticipation of the journey that lies ahead,

Stefaan

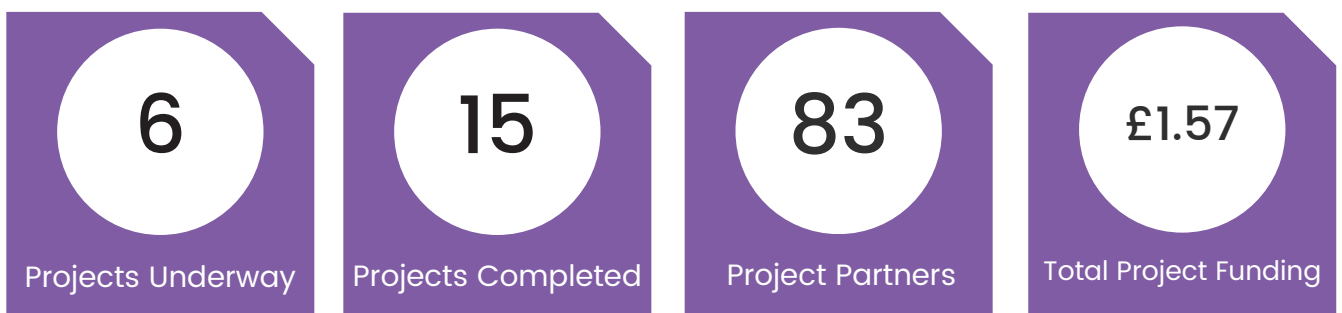
# Demand Driven Research



Our data-driven research is the workhorse of the collaborative. We bring together **unique collaborations** and **novel datasets** to solve the most **complex problems** around the globe, across a number of priority themes.



Number of Projects



# The Ripples of Change

## Collaboration, Data, and Impact: Are we building a better future for children?



**Alex Hutchison**

Director



Pulling together an annual report is such an important step in our high tempo working cycles to pause, reflect and treasure the work that we've done across another remarkable year. We can take pride in our achievements—our well-balanced project portfolio, the relationships we continue to develop across our community, and the substantial increase in both our outputs and the types of initiative we are getting involved in. I think this shows an increase in the level of confidence that we have in our capabilities across the board.

As we review the vast and diverse expanse of our portfolio, encompassing a myriad of themes and data types and sources, we are determined to keep pushing for impact. This is the reason that we are all so engaged in our jobs, our collaborative teams and the successful delivery of our work.

Our philosophy shuns the notion of indiscriminately wielding data and inventing applications for it. Instead, we ardently embrace a challenge-led approach, ensuring that our work is steered by those who possess the insight into how our endeavours can tangibly enhance a child's life. The partnerships that we foster with our challenge owners are absolutely key to the likelihood of our work actually having an impact for those organisations that are working with children. We take the time from the outset of potential project work to assess what the potential outputs, outcomes and impacts could be.

More often than not we are delighted that those outputs, outcomes and impacts actually increase across the life of the project.

As another year has passed, I feel we are even more convinced of the value of collaboration in effecting the outcomes of these projects. Mere proximity does not spark collaboration; it is the cultivation of mutual respect that fosters true synergy. Our methodologies and strategies are all designed to facilitate such collaborations, as we firmly believe that it is the results born from these alliances that will profoundly impact the lives of children.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all of our delivery partners in helping us to make data collaboration a success, as well as of course the Data for Children Collaborative team. This year we have gone through a transition from a partnership model to becoming a standalone specialist unit within the Edinburgh Futures Institute, but we have kept our eyes on our mission throughout – using data responsibly to improve outcomes for every child.

This year we are eager to share our stories about impact across our portfolio with our wide range of partners. Please do not hesitate to get in touch to find out more about any of the stories that we are profiling in this report. Together, we can continue to transform our knowledge into actions that truly make a difference in the lives of children.



## Chris Speed

Director  
The Edinburgh Futures Institute

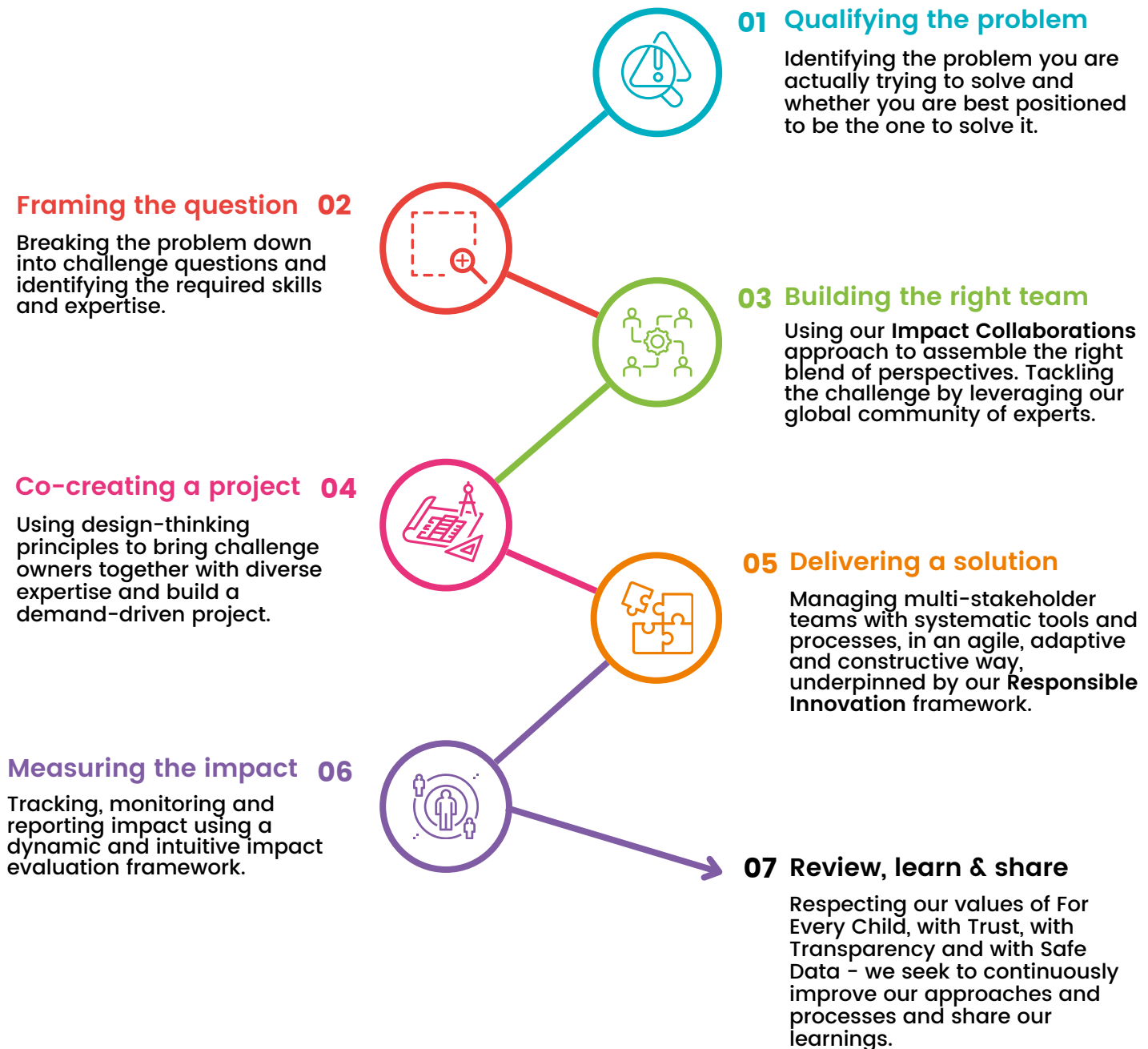
“

Addressing local and global challenges that involve different communities from inside and outside the University requires sophisticated collaboration skills. Data for Children Collaborative bring human-centred sensibilities in communication, empathy and imagination to inspire the many researchers, students and partners that we work with. By combining design thinking methods with data science, the team are able to instil confidence that change is possible for any company or research team.

”



# Our Service Catalogue



Find out more  
and get in touch



# Our Project Portfolio

We work across eight priority themes with six active projects and a number of new projects being formed



Find out more



# Impact Stories

Dive into our Impact Stories and discover the waves of change we're making for children's futures.



# Exposing the impact of heatwaves on children across the world



## Do we really understand where across the world children are most vulnerable to a changing climate?

In 2022, we worked with UNICEF to develop a unique multi-disciplinary partnership to build the first Children's Climate Risk Index (CCRI). The CCRI gave UNICEF a unique insight into the various climatic hazards that impact children. But this only told us part of the story. The real question is:

### How will children be affected by climate change across the world moving forward?

UNICEF need to advocate for change, placing children centre stage in the climate debate. To do this, they need to understand which hazards are most likely to be a concern in the next 30-50 years.

We were uniquely placed to answer this question. Using the expertise established within the CCRI Impact Collaboration, our team developed plausible scenarios in 2050 across climatic and environmental hazards.

The analysis and forecasting showed that the hazard that stood out, particularly in the risk it presented to children, was Heatwaves.

The team generated the data and evidence needed to publish a globally recognised report: 'The coldest year of the rest of their lives: Protecting children from the escalating impacts of heatwaves'. Since its publication and release during COP27 in Egypt, UNICEF together with a multitude of international news outlets (in over 20 countries), have reported on the increasing threat of heatwaves on the world's children.

Our heatwaves collaborative project was shortlisted for the 2023 DataIQ Data For Society award.

**559 million children currently exposed to high heatwave frequency, rising to all 2.02 billion children globally by 2050**

More about the Heatwave Report



More about CCRI Project



Photo credit: © UNICEF/UN010156/Ayene

# A powerful advocacy tool

The report garnered extensive media attention across nearly 20 nations. Distinguished public figures referenced the reports findings, and UNICEF employed it as an strategic advocacy tool during COP27 in Egypt.



## Sunak must stop fossil fuel projects in UK says climate activist Vanessa Nakate

More than half a billion around the world are being exposed to the damaging effects of climate change according to a new report by UNICEF, They warn tha...



## 'Virtually every child' to face frequent heat waves by 2050, UNICEF says

Climate change means children born in the future "are going to exist in the world in very different ways," one expert warned.



The Guardian

## Virtually all children on Earth will face more frequent heatwaves by 2050

New Unicef report finds that in even best-case scenario 2 billion children will face four to five dangerous heat events annually



António Guterres  
@antonioguterres

The last seven years have been the hottest on record.

According to a new @UNICEF report, children everywhere will be exposed to high heatwave frequency by 2050.

The climate crisis is a child rights crisis.



COP27  
SHARM EL-SHEIKH  
EGYPT 2022



Some of the member of the Children's Climate Risk Index at an in-person event in Edinburgh.

# Building data teams to support internet connectivity in remote schools



Half of the world's population has no regular access to the internet. Millions of children leave school without digital skills, making it much more difficult to thrive and contribute to local and global economies. This has created a digital divide between those who are connected and those who are not, a divide that has become even wider during the Covid-19 pandemic. Internet access is a new form of inequality.

## A new type of data partnership.

When connecting schools to the internet via radio links, there must be a line of sight between the school and the nearest antenna. This information is, in general, not readily available. Simply put, there is a need to know if buildings or terrain are higher than the school in a straight line between the school and the chosen antenna. Therefore, the basic information needed is the height of the buildings.

To help address this challenge, we explored a new type of partnership – supporting academics retraining to become industry-ready data scientists. We partnered with Pivigo and their novel Science 2 Data Science programme. The five-week intensive hackathon enables academics to dive deep into a data challenge and develop innovative solutions.

The team used high-resolution data from the region in Brazil to develop and train a machine-learning model that could determine building heights from satellite imagery. Following the five weeks, Data for Children Collaborative supported continuing the work to explore the feasibility of using freely available data and broadening the model's capabilities.

The learnings from the project have been passed on to UNICEF to support their ongoing Giga programme, a joint initiative between UNICEF and the International Telecommunications Union.

As the part of the second phase of the project, the team explored radar images from Sentinel 1 – the first of the Copernicus Programme satellite constellation conducted by the European Space Agency



Images Source: European Space Agency

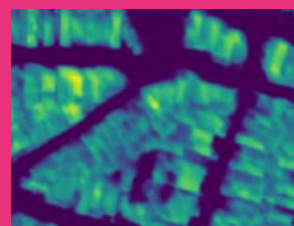


Image generated by the project team

Phase 1 of the project



Phase 2 of the project



# Building a systematic method for enhancing childhood wasting estimations



We had the privilege of working alongside UNICEF and the Jameel Observatory for Food Security Early Action to help transform how countries report childhood wasting estimates. Child wasting refers to a child who is too thin for his or her height and is the result of recent rapid weight loss or the failure to gain weight (source WHO). Wasting is the most immediate, visible and life-threatening form of malnutrition. It is a condition that can have serious impacts on the health, development and life of a child.

The project's inception revolved around a pivotal Challenge Question:

**"How can we enhance the accuracy and temporal consistency of childhood wasting estimates by exploring the influence of survey timing and climate factors?"**

To address this question, we harnessed our innovative Impact Collaboration approach, bringing together a diverse team of experts from the United Kingdom, Ghana, and Kenya. This team brought a wide array of skills in data analysis, public health, and environmental science.

Over the course of a year, our primary goal was to investigate the existence of secondary variables capable of rectifying temporal inconsistencies in sampling. We achieved this by integrating data from various sources, such as census data, Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS), Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS), and earth observation data.

Our project's focus spans four countries: Nigeria, Ethiopia, Burkina Faso, and Bangladesh. These nations were selected due to their high rates of childhood wasting and the availability of pertinent data. To facilitate our research, the team crafted a comprehensive meta-database. This database encompassed survey data, census data, land use and land cover information, crop yield values, infrastructure networks, and market information. This rich dataset provides broad understanding of the factors influencing childhood wasting across the target countries.

Our collaborative project will publish a comprehensive report comparing three statistical models. This report will help illuminate the temporal inconsistencies in childhood wasting estimates and furnish valuable recommendations for the Joint Monitoring and Evaluation (JME) community.

Our recommendations hold the potential to inform policy decisions and enhance interventions aimed at mitigating childhood wasting in our target countries.

More about the project



More about Impact Collaborations



# Steering data policy through lived experience and listening to young voices across Scotland.



Thanks to our extensive experience in running impact data collaborations, we can create a space for amplifying the voices of children and young people and ensure that the lived experience takes a critical place in holistic data analysis exercise.

We partnered with the Observatory of Sport in Scotland (OSS), Abertay University, Optima Connect and Urban Foresight to investigate the data that underpins our understanding of children's and young people's access to sport across Scotland. Specifically, the team were focused on the effects of Covid-19 on the uptake of recreational activity.

A big part of this exercise is mapping out sports organisations, authorities and trusts that provide recreational activities for young people across Scotland, visualising the linkages, and understanding the accessibility of data collected.

A fundamental part of this project is the ability to match lived experience with what the data is telling us. To do this, the team need to listen to children and young people across Scotland about their experiences of sports and physical activity.

With the support of the Data for Children Collaborative and the wider team, researchers at Abertay University conducted a diverse study, which included online surveys for young people, children and their families, focus groups with young people and interviews with sports organisations.

It was essential to give children a range of ways to express their views, while reaching many communities as possible. Children in schools and in focus groups were invited to draw pictures and discuss their experiences of sports and physical activity before, during and after COVID-19. Young people aged 13 to 18 were invited to upload photos in an online survey showing what sports means to them. The team was able to accommodate various accessibility challenges, ensuring the barriers to participation were minimal.

**The team talked to 9 national, 5 regional and 8 local organisations, amounting to nearly 20 hours of interviews!**

We supported our colleagues at Abertay through the application of our Youth Participation Workbook, which ensures meaningful participation, and bespoke ethics process that helps to keep ethical consideration at the center of each project through ongoing reflections and risk identification. We also provided communication support, helping produce materials for dissemination and create an online home for some of the collateral.

Ultimately, the goal of this project is to provide insight into the practical solutions to promote and increase participation. The outputs will be used to support policymakers to make a difference in children's lives across Scotland.

More about the project



More about Impact Collaborations



More about Youth Participation





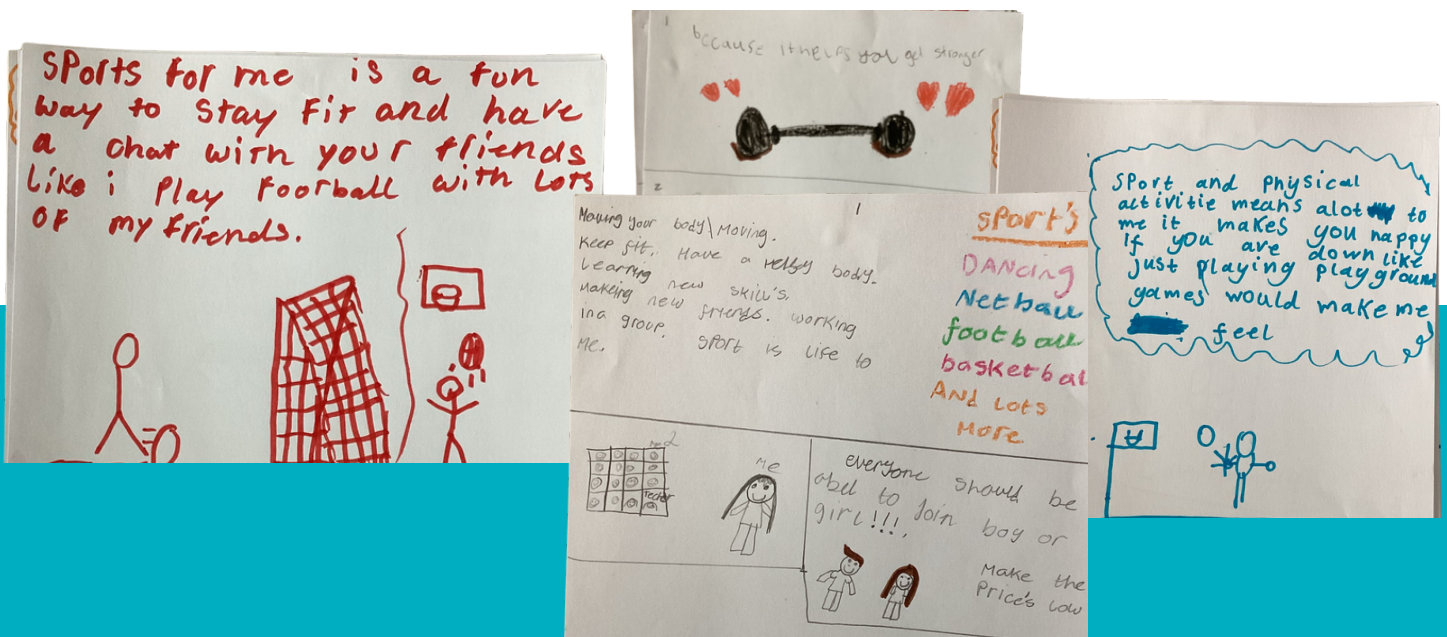
# What did children tell us?



“ At the community centre, there used to be a snooker training thing that I used to go to but now that's closed down. If you want to go to the one in the town they're all really expensive and then that's hard to get to. ”

“ I like sports because it helps you stay healthy and find what you like to do in Life. It makes you go outside more and not stay in your house and play on your PC or PlayStation 5. It's good because it clears your brain from staying inside and getting all stuffed up. It's like something to keep you quite occupied and healthy. It helps your health. ”

“ I think a lot of people don't do certain sports because they get bullied for it, like girls in football or boys in gymnastics and dancing. I don't think that's right - slugging girls for doing sports. I've never done that, but I know some people would. I know some boys would do that. I just think that whole thing needs to be not a thing. Yeah, it's the 21st century. Everyone deserves to do what they want. ”



# Hear from the reserchers



“ This research is about children's experiences of sport activity through COVID-19, and therefore, critical children's voices are included and at the forefront. Children took part in interactive focus groups, including drawing pictures and maps and sharing experiences of sports activities in Scotland. Children's invaluable efforts in participating in this research were inspiring and appreciated. As a researcher, I often find the most enjoyable part of research is listening to participants stories. It was an honour to be let into to children's experiences, in which they shared with such depth and honesty about sport and activity. I especially enjoyed listening to children's ideas and recommendations for the future of sport in Scotland. ”

**Dr Julia Chan**, Teaching Fellow in Sociology of Sport  
Research Assistant, Abertay University

“ From the beginning of this project, the research team has strived to capture children and young people's experiences of sport and physical activity pre and post Covid-19. It was vital that children and young people were provided the opportunity to share their lived experiences as only by capturing these experiences can we begin to propose more targeted approaches. I am grateful to the schools, children, organisations and families who allowed us to capture their experiences with the aim of improving sport and physical activity opportunities. Running the interactive focus groups with children was particularly enlightening and provided unique insights into how they experienced sport and physical activity pre and post pandemic. This experience has emphasised the importance of promoting youth voice. Children and young people have demonstrated enthusiastic views about sport and physical activity and what these should look like in the future. ”

**Dr Paula Murray**, Lecturer in Sport Development and Coaching, CIMSPA  
CoachPractitioner, Abertay University

# Providing UNICEF with data to reach more children needing vital vaccinations



Last year, UNICEF commissioned us to develop tools to shed light on the gender-related barriers to receiving vaccinations and inform critical programming decisions. Our project marked a significant milestone for the Data for Children Collaborative as our first to receive direct funding from UNICEF.

The challenge we faced was establishing scalable and sustainable methods for identifying communities at higher risk of gender disparity in vaccination access.

Gender disparities in accessing vaccination services have been a persistent challenge among a number of different communities. Unfortunately, granular data to identify and address these barriers has been limited.

Our collaboration includes experts across UNICEF, and the University of Edinburgh's School of Geosciences and School of Informatics. The new partnership was born out our work developing innovative travel time maps, a direct outcome of our "Children Access to Services" project. This new partnership is funded by GAVI, The Vaccine Alliance.

Our project is aimed at enhancing availability of timely and detailed data to support future UNICEF vaccination efforts. The team have employed Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to link existing data sources, including population characteristics, health outcomes, and health infrastructure. This approach is providing valuable insights into the determinants of health inequities, particularly in the context of gender-related barriers to immunization.

This project represents a significant step toward addressing gender-related barriers to immunization, and we are proud to have contributed to UNICEF's mission to ensure equitable access to essential healthcare services for all children.

The project is building on research outputs from a previous Data for Children Collaborative project: Child Poverty Access to services. The project was a partnership between UNICEF and University of Edinburgh.

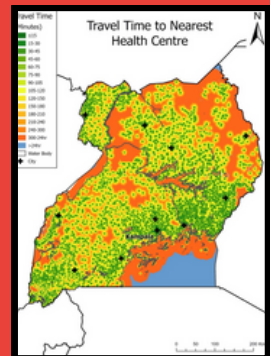


Image Source: Child Poverty and Access to Services Analysis Summary

View project outputs here



More about the project



# Building participatory approaches to machine learning models to contribute to UNICEF's global efforts on mental health



We are delighted to be partnering with UNICEF's Europe and Central Asia Regional Office to build upon prior work that they conducted with the Ukraine Country Office, where machine learning techniques were employed to monitor online mental health discourse among young people.

We have worked with UNICEF to identify the need for a participatory approach, engaging directly with adolescents and young people to inform the machine learning models and validate the story that the data is telling. We are delighted to be working with both the Tajikistan and Kazakhstan Country Offices, who are facilitating the focused discussions with young people.

Our collaboration allows us to understand the online behaviour of young people from the two countries in question, the types of language used (e.g. formal and informal), and the contexts in which they seek mental health information or support. This project will culminate in the development of a transferable model, incorporating participatory data gathering, technical tool selection and context specific adjustments. The resulting analytical tool can offer timely insights into adolescent mental health discourse, with the potential for adoption by UNICEF offices globally.

It is key that organisations that deliver support services to adolescents understand what help is needed most and how to best deliver it. The extent of young people's engagement with the digital world creates an opportunity to deepen the understanding of the most up-to-date discourse among them on issues of mental health, which can in turn inform UNICEF's programming.

By developing this methodology, we seek to contribute significantly to improving the mental health and well-being of adolescents, aligning with UNICEF's mission and global efforts to prioritise the needs of young people in an increasingly digital world.

By using participatory methods, our researchers can build more trust in the insights that their models produce. Dialogue can vary from generation to generation, and is particularly variable in a digital context. Engaging young people in conversations about what they talk about online, how they talk and how we can interpret that is essential to the success of model development.

This is highly sensitive work. Convening groups of young people to talk about a broad spectrum of mental health issues needs much care around how those conversations are facilitated and supported, including how those young people are provided with resources for their ongoing support following these discussions. This is where collaboration with the right partners, detailed planning and wide discussions in preparation for these sessions are essential to ensure we are delivering the highest duty of care in how we conduct our work.

More about the project





## Dr Clare Llewellyn

Principal Investigator for the mental health project with UNICEF, Lecture in Governance, Technology, and Data  
Neuropolitics Research Labs  
School of Political and Social Science and Edinburgh Futures Institute  
University of Edinburgh

“ The support provided by the Data for Children Collaborative has been integral to the project. Their guidance and understanding of the ethical issues in the area have been invaluable in planning and conducting ethically robust research. Their communications and project management have brought together and facilitated a consortium which aims to answer difficult questions in a complex data environment in an innovative manner. The knowledge and awareness of the sector have really added value to this project. ”

# Our Wider Impact

Discover how we support a diverse partner network to leverage data for broader societal impact.



# Fusing expert perspectives in support of the Scottish Government's Ethical Digital Nation Publication

In the past year, the Data for Children Collaborative had the privilege of contributing to an expert group report titled "Building Trust in the Digital Era," commissioned by the Scottish Government. This opportunity resonated deeply with our commitment to ethics, aligning perfectly with our broader mission of being ethical activists.

Substantial groundwork had already been accomplished by a diverse expert group, including citizens from various sectors and disciplines, who provided invaluable insights through a mini-public consultation exercise, expert interviews, and case studies. Additionally, an "Objects of Trust" framework had been developed to guide digital innovation. However, there was still much work to be done.

Our task was to synthesize this wealth of information into a report tailored for an audience that included ministers, policymakers, businesses, civil society, and the people of Scotland. We diligently identified key themes, logically organized the content, and struck a delicate balance between positive and negative aspects of innovation and ethics. While highlighting ethical risks posed by innovation is straightforward, we needed to emphasize the enduring demand for digital innovation while raising awareness of ethical risks and the necessity for collective mitigation efforts.

A key tenet of our assessment of the expert content was to acknowledge the permanence of technology and focusing on responsible navigation. This endeavour underscored the importance of authentic listening, transparency, diplomacy, and strong decision-making. It closely mirrored the collaborative approach we embrace daily, bringing together experts from diverse fields with a shared mission.

However, unlike our usual practice, we didn't start with an exercise to understand personal motivations, which made it somewhat challenging to fully grasp individual contributions.

As the field of data ethics and digital ethics matures, it's time to move beyond setting the stage and start solving the problems. The fact that the Scottish Government commissioned this report demonstrates Scotland's commitment to addressing these issues. The report's primary aim was to provide recommendations for collective action, recognizing trust as the cornerstone of ethical digital activities.

In summary, our engagement in this work reinforced the significance of listening genuinely, transparency, diplomacy, and robust decision-making. It highlighted the alignment of our collaborative projects' principles with the larger context of ethical discussions. Looking ahead, we are committed to not only identifying ethical challenges but also actively working to solve them in collaboration with diverse stakeholders.



"I would like to thank the expert group and wider contributors for their dedication and hard work to produce this detailed report. It highlights the importance of building and maintaining trust as an essential ingredient for a successful digital society."

**Ivan McKee**  
Minister for Business, Trade,  
Tourism and Enterprise



Find out more and read the report



## Using retail data to inform children's wellbeing

We are collaborating with UNICEF to utilize supermarket data, aiding in understanding how local and central agencies in Kazakhstan can effectively support families with children amidst rapidly changing food prices.

Kazakhstan is currently grappling with economic shocks, resulting in supply chain disruptions, currency instability, and significant food price inflation, all of which are likely to negatively impact the wellbeing of children.

UNICEF's objective is to assist children and their families during this challenging period. Utilizing near-real-time monitoring of children's well-being will be a valuable tool for gaining essential insights. The UNICEF Kazakhstan office is working in partnership with a national retail chain to analyze extensive data generated from daily operations, linking it to already available survey and administrative data. This analysis aims to uncover the correlations between the rising cost of living, shopping behaviours, and their effects on nutritional intake across various regions in the country.

We are aiding UNICEF in effectively leveraging this data by facilitating a student partnership with the University of Edinburgh School of Informatics MSc programme, offering expertise in data science. We are fostering this collaborative relationship by utilizing our tools and methods and conducting ethics workshops for all partners. These workshops are based on our Responsible Innovation practices and tools.



## Using Impact Collaborations on a Food Security challenge in East Africa

Our recent collaboration with the Jameel Observatory was a prime example of the transferability of our Impact Collaboration process. It showcased how our structured approach to collaborative project development can be applied effectively across diverse domains.

Working in close partnership with the Jameel Observatory, we explored the various complex issues related to food security in East Africa and developed a well-defined Challenge Question. The challenge question focused on enhancing food security early actions and community resilience against recurrent droughts and other climate shocks in the Horn of Africa.

Once the Challenge Question was formulated, we assembled a review team of experts in relevant fields to evaluate submissions from a broad range of experts and perspectives. Using our design thinking process, a series of workshops served as a platform for collaborative brainstorming and idea generation, setting the stage for addressing the challenge effectively. Our collaborative efforts culminated in developing a primed project that was ready for onward ownership by the Jameel Observatory.

This case study underscores the power of our Impact Collaboration approach, demonstrating its adaptability and effectiveness in driving meaningful solutions across different domains.



Photo credit: ILRI, Stevie Mann

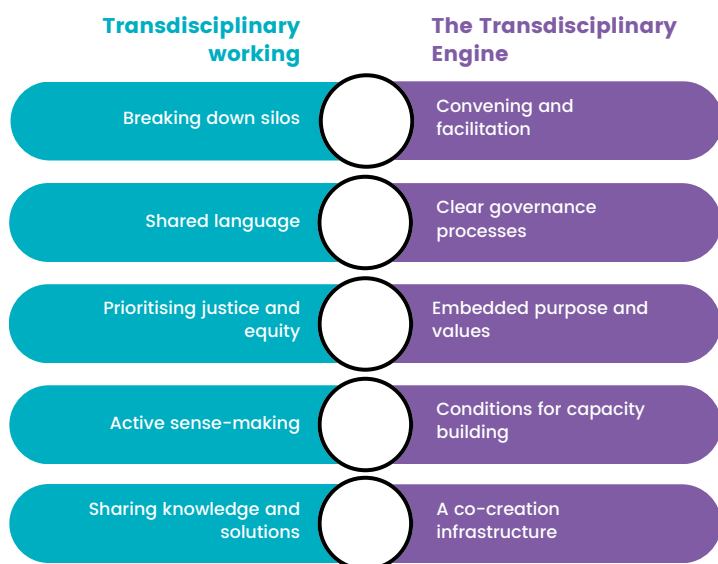


# Building a transdisciplinary network to focus on Antimicrobial Resistance

We have been delighted to broaden our horizons recently in supporting the creation of a new transdisciplinary network to address the complex challenge of antimicrobial resistance (AMR). By fostering a transdisciplinary research and engaging a diverse range of stakeholders, spanning academic disciplines, commercial sectors, policy realms, and affected communities there is real hope that a more holistic approach can help to tackle this wicked issue that spans the human, animal, plant and environmental domains.

Our experience of building collaboration between researchers and other partners (third, public and private sector) sees us supporting some of the key concepts on the creation of this network. Our philosophy of valuing diverse disciplines and perspectives to address complex challenges using systematic approaches underpins this work.

Our role in the network is to act as the 'Transdisciplinary Engine' that will enable the network to deliver their aims.



Transdisciplinarity will shape the whole network from conception, to management, to operationalisation, to delivery and impact. We recognise the considerable challenges that transdisciplinary collaboration poses, such as siloed structures, power imbalances, conflicting interests and motivations. Tackling these by bringing people and disciplines together to spark the unexpected is the ethos of this new network.

This is an excellent opportunity to foster challenge-led, outcome-driven, transdisciplinary collaborations. Please do get in touch if you are interested in joining this network. It is open to all - in line with the ethos of the Edinburgh Futures Institute.



## Developing a Common Outcomes Framework for England

We have been excited to work with partners to support the ongoing development of a common outcomes framework for England. Working with For Baby's Sake, Kindered Squared, and the KPMG Foundation, the team scoped, developed, and facilitated a full-day in-person stakeholder workshop.



The Common Outcomes Framework represents common vision for the well-being of all children and their families, emphasizing their safety, health, happiness, learning, and engagement. Central to this framework is a child-centric approach, placing a strong emphasis on what truly matters to children and their families. The framework adopts a strengths-based perspective, focusing on what can be achieved rather than what must be avoided. The primary aim of the framework is to embed a shared commitment to nurturing the well-being of children and families across England.

The workshop enabled core stakeholders to scope out the conditions in which the Common Outcomes Framework could be successfully developed and used by identifying key barriers and potential solutions. The workshop also aimed to clearly define actionable next steps and challenges that must be addressed to enable long-term uptake. The culmination of the days efforts was a co-created road map to delivery, enabling the creation of a business cases for further financial support.

“ Working with the Data for Children Collaborative has been an excellent experience. They brought insight, challenge and support to the task of facilitating a diverse group of stakeholders around a complex task – helping us to convene and collaborate, working together to navigate our options and develop a roadmap to delivery, all the while helping us to focus on what has the greatest potential positive impact for children.

Elaine Fulton, Director of Strategic Partnerships, The For Babys Sake Trust



## Delivering responsible innovation training

In early September the team at Data for Children Collaborative delivered a half day training for the University of Strathclyde Adolescent Health and Wellbeing in Malawi programme. The training focused on aspects of our tried and tested responsible innovation framework, which ensures projects are carried out in a trustworthy, transparent and safe way.



Within the course, we provided deep dive sessions into our ethics framework and youth participation workbook. The training facilitated practical group work that enabled the participants to apply our methods to their projects. Additionally, we provided an overview of our novel responsible project management processes, including legal, project initiation, and governance.

The course provided an opportunity for Data for Children to demonstrate the applicability of the framework across other research areas. The team at the University of Strathclyde, and online colleagues based in the Malawi were extremely happy with the training and excited to explore how the learning can be applied across their ongoing work.

# Highlights

Reflecting on other achievements of the year.



# Welcoming New Advisory Board

This year, our three-year period of being in a unique partnership with UNICEF, the Scottish Government and the University of Edinburgh's Data Driven Innovation programme has reached a graceful end.

With such a privileged start, the Data for Children Collaborative has grown into becoming a specialist unit at the Edinburgh Futures Institute at the University of Edinburgh.

This means that we can continue to deliver projects with our original partners, UNICEF and the Scottish Government, whilst simultaneously seeking to extend our range of challenge owners and broaden our impact for children around the globe. The transition also meant that our governance model transformed, resulting in the formation of a new Advisory Board.

We have casted our nets far and wide to recruit members for this new exciting conglomeration, and had been fortunate to receive many impressive applications.

The new members of the board bring vast and admirable expertise, lending valuable insights into our mission and operations.

We are grateful to the members who have previously sat on our Steering Board, and to our Chair Stefaan Verhulst who decided to continue their support in the new capacity.

We look forward to working with such a diverse group who bring unique perspectives to support the delivery of our activities.

**“ I’m looking forward to learning a lot from the Data for Children Collaborative as amongst great minds shaping the best methodologies to improve the lives of children- these are great lessons that can be replicated for other marginalized populations. ”**

**Karen Bett**

Senior Policy Manager,  
Data Equity and Inclusion, Global Partnership for Sustainable Development  
Data

**“ With my background in international development, and broad responsibilities for innovative uses of data in Scotland, I’m excited to have the opportunity of steering and learning from the Collaborative’s dynamic and global offer. ”**

**Tom Wilkinson**

Chief Data Officer,  
Scottish Government

See who's  
involved



More about  
Edinburgh Futures  
Institute



# Recognition of our work

## Deputy Director, Fraser Macdonald, Awarded Data for Good Champion

We are immensely proud of our Deputy Director, Fraser Macdonald who was honored with the prestigious 2023 DataIQ Award in the Data for Good Champion category. Fraser was recognized for his exceptional commitment to leveraging data and analytics for societal improvement, particularly in addressing child-centric challenges. Fraser's belief in data's potential for positive impact is evident in his role, where he leads diverse cross-sector teams, creating impactful data projects to address a range of child-focused issues.



His dedication to advancing the concept of data for good is seen not only professionally but also in his role as chair of the data advisory group at Young Scot, one of the biggest Scottish youth charity. Fraser's rich background in cross-sector data initiatives informs his work in the realm of 'Data for Good.' He actively engages with diverse audiences, advocating for responsible data use and fostering collaborations that bring about transformative projects for children and young people. Fraser's passion and dedication to innovating responsibly underscore his efforts to build a community focused on responsible practices, aiming to embed Responsible Innovation in the way data science engages with Data for Good work and beyond, setting a remarkable standard in the field.

## Data for Children Collaborative Shortlisted for two DataIQ 2023 Awards



Our team is proud to have been nominated for two other categories in 2023 DataIQ Awards. We are pleased for our team and all our collaborators and partners to have taken place amongst the most incredible list of shortlisted candidates. It has been a great privilege, given this year has seen a record number of increasingly strong entries.

The first nomination recognized our collaboration with The Promise Scotland for 'Best Use of Data for Non-Profit or Non-Commercial Purpose,' where we supported the development of 'The Promise Data Map' to support Scotland's commitment to children's well-being. This initiative brought together academia, public, and private sectors to enhance understanding and address critical aspects for children and young people in the care system.

The second nomination, 'Data for Society Award,' acknowledged our collaborative effort with UNICEF and academic experts to publish a report on the harrowing impacts of heatwaves on children. The team's in-depth analysis and forecasting emphasized the alarming risk heatwaves pose to children, showcasing commitment to impactful research and societal betterment.

Read more about the DataIQ Awards



More about our work with The Promise Scotland



# Partner with us to tackle complex issues for children across the globe.

The Data for Children Collaborative is on a mission to solve problems facing children around the world for our partner organisations.

We are ready to partner with new organisations on their challenges.

Issues that the world's children are facing are complex and multi-layered. Hopefully we've shown you in this report that data can be a critical player in solving issues for children, where it is used effectively and responsibly. By bringing together access to data, data science expertise and those who really understand the challenges, we can enable our partners to improve forecasting, tailor programmes, and inform policy-making.

If your organisation is seeking to support the delivery of rigorous, ethical and sustainable solutions to global challenges for children, then we would love to talk to you about how we could help.

By working with us you will:

- Access the best academic expertise in multi-disciplinary fields, as well as a wider network of expertise across industries and sectors.
- Partner with the wider network of third, public and private sector organisations with on the ground presence to make an impact.
- Be a leader in best practice responsible innovation in data and data science.

**We must act now, and we must act together.**



# Contact Us

If you feel like our vision, our values and our approaches resonate with your organisation, please do not hesitate to get in touch to discuss partnership opportunities.



[hello@dataforchildren.ed.ac.uk](mailto:hello@dataforchildren.ed.ac.uk)



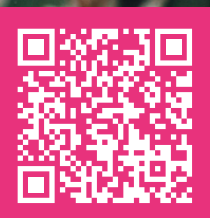
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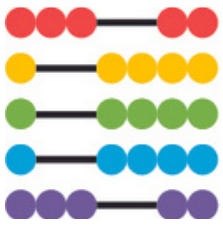


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Our website





# Data for Children Collaborative

