CHANGING LIVES, CHANGING SYSTEMS

HELPING FAMILIES STAY TOGETHER

Contents

THE MOST HELPFUL PART IS JUST BEING ABLE TO GET ALONG WITH MY MUM AGAIN AND UNDERSTANDING EVERYTHING GOING ON RIGHT NOW.

YOUNG PERSON

Introduction

This report is one of a series of ***Changing Lives, Changing Systems*** reports commissioned by Social Finance into its experience of pursuing impact at scale, in order to draw out and share lessons for charities, funders and others involved in social change.

The series covers five initiatives that Social Finance has worked on over the last five years:

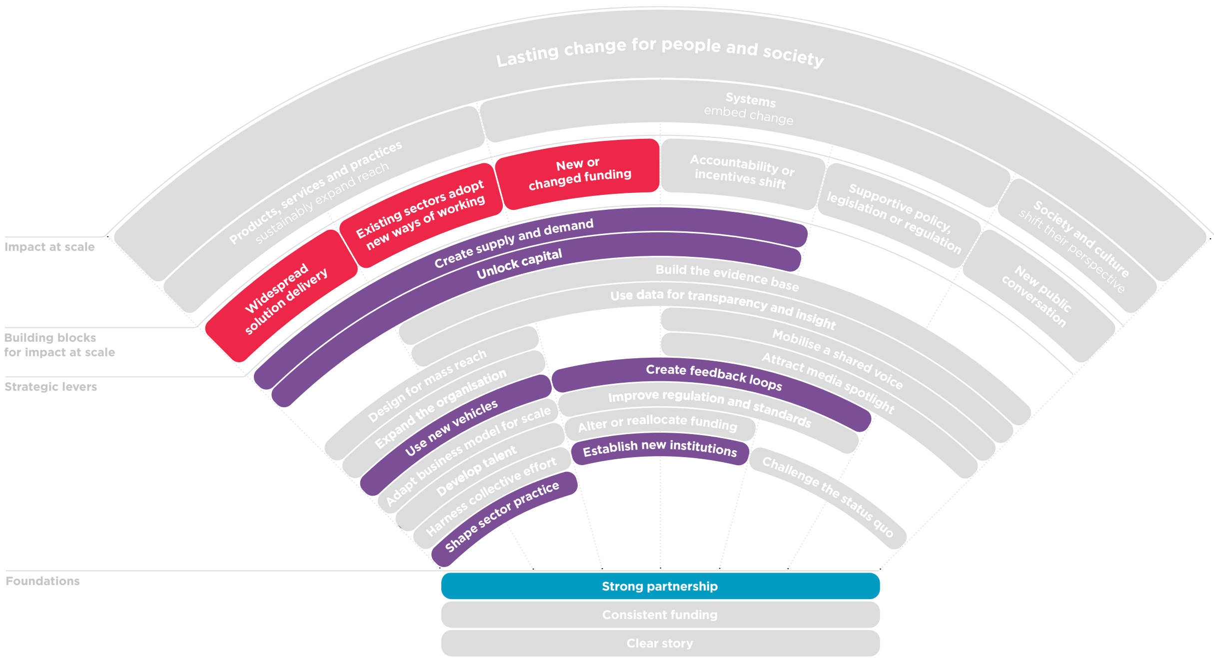
- **Drive** – a 'systems change' initiative aiming to change the way that the criminal justice system, social services and other statutory and voluntary agencies respond to high harm perpetrators of domestic violence and abuse
- **Health & Employment Partnerships** – a 'portfolio' programme which has pursued a wide variety of approaches to develop and spread better models of employment support for people with health conditions
- **Housing Gateway** – an initiative which took an 'open source' approach to share its sustainable model for housing homeless families more widely
- **Positive Families Partnership** – a programme supporting families at risk of breakdown, which was built around a local authority partnership and 'platform' model that enabled multiple areas to commission services jointly
- **Reconnections** – a programme for lonely and isolated older people which Social Finance transferred to a larger specialist organisation with resources to replicate it in multiple areas

Based on our experiences as well as other initiatives that have achieved social impact at scale, we have identified a range of different routes to scale (see Figure 1).

This report sets out the lessons from the Pan-London Care Impact Partnership, an agreement between London local authorities to jointly commission services to prevent family breakdown; and Positive Families Partnership, the 'platform' approach to delivering these services, which is structured to enable new areas to join with minimal difficulty. This is an example of developing a "*new vehicle for scale*" to allow the initiative to grow. We hope that our learning will be of interest to VCSE organisations and funders seeking to structure new programmes and services for rapid growth from the outset.

It was written by Dan Jones, with input from Sophie Armour. Dan is an independent consultant who has worked with Social Finance to capture its learning on impact at scale. He has extensive experience across the social sector in the UK and internationally, most recently as Director of Innovation & Change at the Centre for Ageing Better.

FIGURE 1. THE ROUTES TO SCALE FRAMEWORK



Executive Summary

Positive Families Partnership (PFP) aims to help families to stay together, by repairing and preventing family breakdown. It works in 10 boroughs across London, providing intensive, evidence-based therapeutic support for families at risk of breakdown and children entering the care system. This reduces demand on children's services at the same time as improving outcomes for families.

PFP is commissioned as a Social Impact Bond (SIB) by a partnership of local authorities across London. This consortium model pools caseloads as well as costs, so that they can reach the scale required to sustain resource intensive, specialist services for the relatively small cohort of children and young people at risk of family breakdown.

PFP is made possible by an agreement between a group of London boroughs to commission preventative services jointly - the Pan-London Care Impact Partnership. This important piece of infrastructure enabled the commissioning of a single service that local authorities could then join quickly and easily without repeating their own individual procurement processes. PFP was selected through an open procurement to coordinate and deliver this joint service.

The shared contractual arrangements and payment mechanisms of the Pan-London partnership and PFP have been carefully designed to enable scaling. New boroughs can join the consortium under the same terms as existing ones. Since PFP's launch in February 2018, five new boroughs have joined the original five, a process that has been much quicker and simpler either than the initial SIB development, or than commissioning their own service from scratch. PFP and the Pan-London partnership represents a ***platform for scale*** which has hugely reduced the time and cost involved in scaling, and therefore helped many more families than would have been possible through other commissioning arrangements.

While Social Finance has also sought to grow its work on children's care organically, by supporting other local authorities to develop SIBs, this more traditional route to scale has proven time consuming and uncertain by comparison.

It's also notable that several other authorities have sought to commission their own SIBs to prevent family breakdown – in total around 20 local authorities (~7% of English local authorities) have sought to commission projects. PFP and the earlier Essex Edge of Care SIB that Social Finance also designed and managed have clearly been influential models / examples – often through word of mouth or personal networks.

The PFP experience suggests a number of lessons for organisations seeking to grow new approaches to social problems through a platform approach:

1. *Deliver practical work to demonstrate what's possible and position yourself to do more*
2. *Build for scale* – the Pan-London partnership and platform approach is a structured way of doing this
3. *Invest in delivery and impact*
4. *Invest in relationships*
5. *Find funding for scale as well as delivery*
6. *Consider spreading your approach, rather than your model, as a route to impact at scale*

Funders can support organisations to achieve impact at scale through a platform approach by funding the costs of platform development, quality assurance, recruitment of new joiners and dissemination separately from the costs of delivery.

What is Positive Families Partnership and the Pan-London Care Impact Partnership?

Going into care is associated with a range of poor outcomes – and these can have lifelong impacts. Looked after children are 20 times more likely than other children to be criminalised, and their educational outcomes are 50% worse. It has been estimated that 50% of children in care experience mental health problems. Putting a child or young person into care is also expensive – costing local authority children's social services approximately £40,000 pa.

The aim of Positive Families Partnership (PFP) is to prevent children and young people from going into care in the first place, by repairing and preventing family breakdown. It works with families at immediate risk of breakdown, reducing demand on children's services at the same time as improving the family situation of children and young people. PFP was made possible by the Pan-London Care Impact Partnership, an agreement amongst London boroughs to commission a service jointly.

Since delivery began in February 2018, PFP has proven to be transformative. The great majority of children and young people who have engaged with the programme are still living at home and have not gone into care.

In 2021 there were around 540,000 children and young people on Child in Need and Child Protection plans, often due to problems with family relationships and risk of potential family breakdown. Of these around 28,000 children and young people enter care in England every year – ~100 in each local authority on average. These are not huge numbers by comparison with some other social problems. For this kind of deep, rather than broad, issue, "scale" is probably better understood in terms of the proportion of children and young people at risk helped, rather than the absolute number.

PFP – through its three delivery partners Family Psychology Mutual, Family Action, and South West London and St George's Mental Health NHS Trust – intensive, evidence based therapeutic support for families at risk of breakdown. The programme works with children and young people aged 11–16 who have been identified as at risk of entry into care or custody (see PFP Referral Criteria).

PFP REFERRAL CRITERIA

Criteria for referral include the behaviours of the child or young person, for example:

- Aggressive, antisocial or offending behaviours
- Drug and alcohol problems
- School related problems
- Absconding / going missing

The child or young person must also be living at home or with a main caregiver, or in a short term care placement with an agreed reunification plan to return home within three weeks or less

PFP delivers Multi-Systemic Therapy (MST) and Functional Family Therapy (FFT) to parents / carers and children / young people. These are both licensed therapeutic interventions with "gold standard" evidence of their effectiveness in preventing family breakdown, drawing on multiple randomised controlled trials. Therapy is delivered over a period of three to five months, and can be conducted in the family home or in a more neutral community setting.

Both services require teams of qualified clinical staff with reasonably small caseloads. Specialist advisors provide the MST and FFT delivery teams with ongoing support and clinical supervision, quality assurance and training to ensure that the service is in line with evidence based practice.

The level of resourcing required for this kind of intensive, high quality service typically translates to ~£20,000 per family (depending on the complexity of the case). When set against the cost of going into care – both to the authority and the individual – this represents excellent value for money.

Furthermore, the Pan-London Care Impact Partnership was designed to attract bids from social sector organisations who held a strong belief in the ability of implementation science to dramatically improve outcomes, and the payment level was set such that the successful bidder would need to materially innovate and catalyse continuous improvements during delivery the contract. This encourages bidders to redesign ways of implementing the MST and FFT therapies and invest in innovations to improve their effectiveness and utilisation.

Who is involved in Positive Families Partnership?

As well as a delivery programme, PFP, underpinned by the Pan-London commissioning partnership, is also a ***platform*** – a structure allowing multiple local authorities to form a partnership and buy high quality service without the need for individual commissioning processes.

PFP itself is an social enterprise which acts as the coordinator for the 10 boroughs, including programme management and clinical governance, as well as overseeing reporting, payments to the delivery partners and repayments to the investors.

There are three delivery partners – Family Psychology Mutual which delivers FFT services across all the participating boroughs, Family Action which provides MST in East London, and South West London & St George's Mental Health NHS Trust providing MST in South West London.

On their side, the 10 commissioning boroughs are part of a consortium, the Pan-London Care Impact Partnership. Each borough pays a management fee to the London Borough of Sutton, which manages the outcomes contract with PFP for the consortium.

PFP is funded by a Social Impact Bond. Social investment for this delivery (from Trust for London, Big Society Capital, Pilotlight, The Prince of Wales's Charitable Fund and other organisations) was sourced via Bridges Outcomes Partnerships. Social investors agreed to commit over £4.5m upfront to cover the costs of programme delivery for 5.5 years. Participating local authorities pay PFP for each week that a child or young person on the programme stays out of care. If and only if 410 families are helped to stay together the social investors will receive their capital back. The National Lottery is also a co-commissioner in the programme, which reduces the cost of outcomes payments for the participating boroughs.

There are a number of reasons for this setup. The programme takes a preventative approach, which takes time to generate positive results, and even then any "savings" come in the form of managing demand rather than reducing current spending. Local authorities have limited funds for prevention, especially in service areas with high levels of urgent / crisis demand such as children's social care. Issuing a standard contract for services would mean finding additional money to pay the provider upfront from social care budgets that are already heavily squeezed. By contrast, in this payment by results contract, boroughs pay if and only if families stay together following the intervention.

Social Finance's involvement in the development of the Pan-London partnership and PFP grew out of its work with Essex County Council to design, launch and performance manage the first Edge of Care Social Impact Bond. This provided MST to families with children / young people who had significant behavioural problems and were at high risk of entry into care.

In 2014, on the back of the Essex SIB, Social Finance secured a development grant from the Greater London Authority to review preventative work with adolescents at risk of entering care across six London boroughs. Between 2014 and 2016, Social Finance then worked closely with the GLA and participating boroughs to develop the partnership and joint contracting arrangements – the Pan-London Care Impact Partnership. It also supported them to secure additional Lottery funding to contribute towards outcomes payment. PFP was selected to deliver the Social Impact Bond service through an open procurement process. Social Finance supported Bridges to develop their successful bid along with the other consortium partners.

IT HAS HELPED ME TO KEEP MY CHILDREN TOGETHER, LOVING THEM AND LOOKING AFTER THEM.

CARER

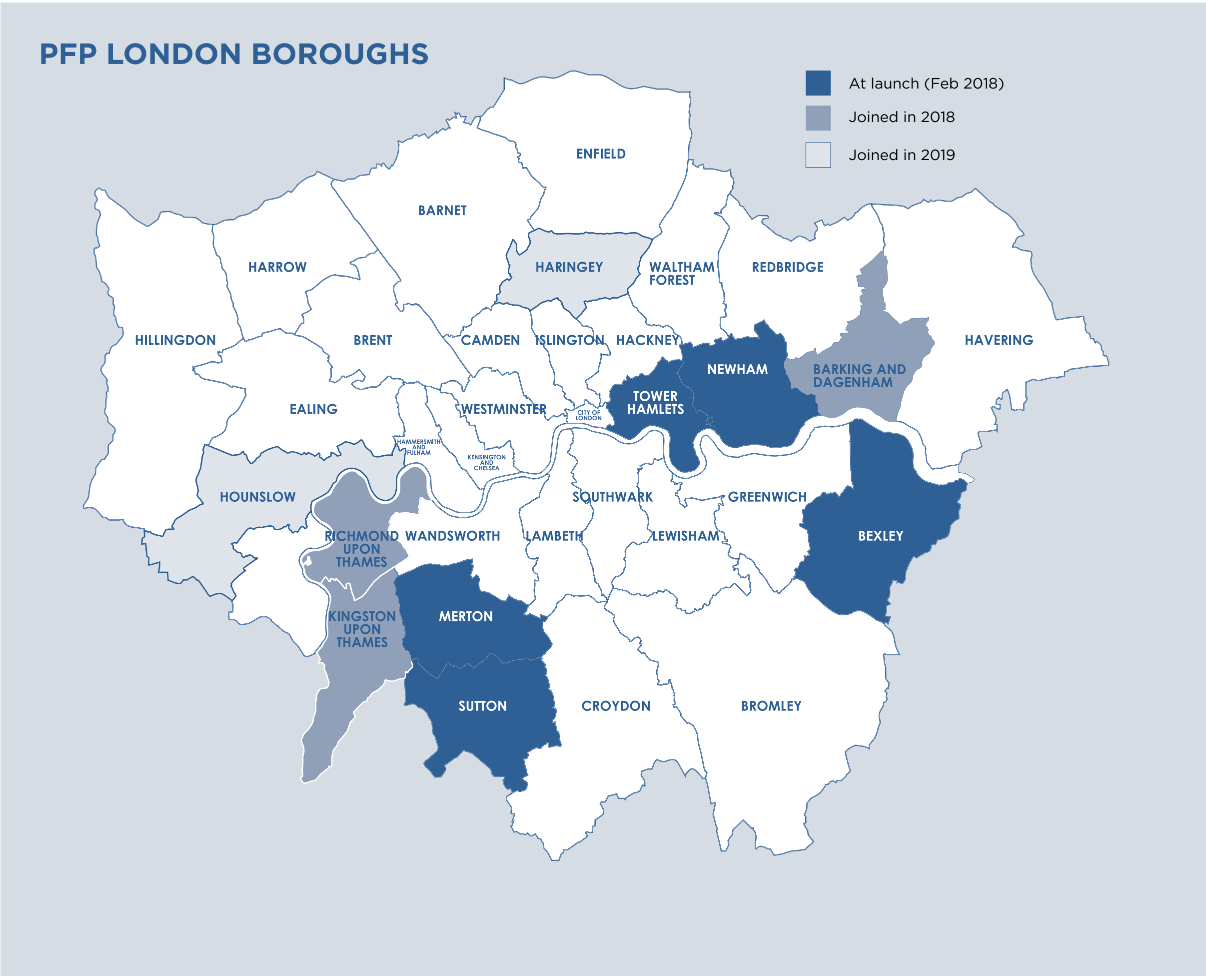
Strategies for scaling

As well as reaching a significant proportion of children and young people at risk in the areas where PFP delivers services, Social Finance has pursued wider impact and scale through three main routes (which map on to different levers in our framework for impact at scale):

- **Creating a platform for scale** – *find a new vehicle for scale*
- **Supporting the adoption of similar models** – *shape sector practice*
- **Building the market for edge of care social investment** – *create supply and demand, unlock new capital*

CREATING A PLATFORM FOR SCALE

PFP has also rapidly scaled its geographic coverage, with five more boroughs joining since the launch. While Social Finance worked to develop the Pan-London commissioning partnership with the GLA and the first group of boroughs between 2014 and 2016, once PFP had been procured the newer boroughs came on board in under six months. The PFP platform, an established structure for collective contracting which new local authorities can join quickly and easily, has been critical to this more rapid engagement and growth. Rather than simply focus on delivery, PFP was developed as a *vehicle for scale* from the outset.



The contractual and funding arrangements and payment mechanisms have been carefully designed to enable scaling. The platform structure allows new boroughs to join the programme under the same terms as existing ones, and to access the additional Lottery funding for outcomes payments.

SUPPORTING THE ADOPTION OF SIMILAR MODELS

While the main route to scale has been by extending PFP, Social Finance has also supported other SIBs for children's social care, helping to *shape sector practice* more widely. However, this has proved both more complex and much slower to bear fruit, despite the profile, knowledge and credibility that has been built up through PFP.

For example, Social Finance supported three local authorities in the East Midlands to develop a collective SIB for children in care from design to the point of procurement. This SIB involved four different cohorts, and new outcomes related to step down and foster care as well as preventing family breakdown. Even so, with the benefit of their experience with PFP, Social Finance was able to support commissioners to issue the tender more quickly than in London by a full year.

Social Finance also provided some advice to Gloucestershire County Council to scope their SIB for foster care recruitment. And earlier in its exploration of this field, Social Finance advised Manchester City Council in their development of a Social Impact Bond for adolescents in foster care, similarly aimed at avoiding placement into residential care.

BUILDING THE MARKET FOR SOCIAL INVESTMENT TO PREVENT FAMILY BREAKDOWN

The success of PFP and similar Social Impact Bonds that Social Finance developed with Essex (see below) and Manchester has attracted wider interest. A number of other local authorities including Suffolk, Bradford, Southampton and Lancashire have sought to commission their own SIBs for family breakdown, step down care and other children's services.

PFP is clearly one of the models / inspirations for these local authorities. As well as Social Finance's own communications about PFP at conferences and online, it has been used as a case study by Government Outcomes Lab (Blavatnik School of Government, GO Lab), the Cabinet Office and others seeking to grow the market for Social Impact Bonds and outcomes based financing in the UK. Although this "market seeding" approach does not represent a deliberate strategy by Social Finance, it is one of the main ways in which the model has spread in practice, helping to *create supply and demand* and *unlock new capital* for edge of care services.

Rationale – why has Positive Families Partnership taken a platform approach?

The PFP collaboration platform was always critical to Social Finance's strategy for scaling. This represented a deliberate response to three key parameters:

- The change Social Finance was trying to achieve
- The organisation's distinctive competences and constraints
- The external context

The main ***change*** Social Finance sought was to improve support for children and families at risk of breakdown, through providing FFT and MST services. This is a relatively small group – individual local authorities might only refer 20–30 children and young people a year. In addition, both FFT and MST are sophisticated interventions, requiring dedicated specialist teams. This creates two significant mismatches:

- Between the caseloads and budget that any single borough can commit to fund, and the costs for the provider of running the service and maintaining the necessary standing capacity
- Between the effort involved in specifying and managing contracts for these services and the relative scale of the problem they can address.

The platform approach allowed multiple boroughs to pool caseloads as well as overheads, to reach the necessary number of referrals for sustained provision. The upfront transaction costs of commissioning specialist provision for such a small group are a major disincentive to busy and overstretched local authorities. The Pan-London commissioning partnership and PFP delivery platform allowed new boroughs to join the existing deal at greatly reduced cost.

This was also an important consideration from the perspective of organisational ***constraints***. Social Finance knew from the Essex experience that each new project would require significant efforts and development costs from both itself and the commissioner. The platform structure has hugely reduced the cost and time involved in growing PFP, and this in turn enables further economies of scale to cover the costs of central performance management.

The ***context*** was not particularly supportive for scaling PFP. The Children's Social Care Innovation Programme, launched by DfE in 2014, included a range of edge of care projects, including at least one MST pilot, and there was wider interest in these approaches. However, work on edge of care was only one policy focus among many. In both policy and practice, the pendulum has tended to swing between prevention and protection, meaning that there was no consistent movement in favour of interventions like PFP. In particular, a series of high profile child protection scandals in the early 2010s had led to increased numbers of children and young people entering care.

More broadly, children's services operate under extraordinary pressure, which is rarely conducive to trying new approaches, especially not in an area of such high risk and high levels of urgent / crisis demand. The cohort of children and young people at risk of family breakdown and entry into care is much smaller than the number already in care, and for most local authorities these looked after children will be front of mind.

The platform approach did seek to respond to this wider context by making it relatively easy for new authorities to join. However, the PFP experience suggests that a more deliberate strategy to build the market and foster wider demand for edge of care services might have been more fruitful in reshaping a challenging context.

WITHOUT THE SERVICE THINGS WOULD HAVE BEEN DIFFICULT. AS A SOCIAL CARE DEPARTMENT WE WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN ABLE TO PROVIDE THE INTENSIVE FAMILY WORK AND...THE FAMILY'S RELATIONSHIPS WOULD HAVE BROKEN DOWN. THE FAMILY NEEDED THIS INTENSIVE THERAPEUTIC INPUT.

LOCAL COMMISSIONER

Lessons

The PFP experience suggests a range of lessons for other organisations interested in taking a platform approach to grow new approaches and solutions to social issues.

1. DELIVER PRACTICAL WORK TO DEMONSTRATE WHAT'S POSSIBLE AND POSITION YOURSELF TO DO MORE

From Essex to London to the East Midlands, each children's services Social Impact Bond that Social Finance worked on has increased their visibility and credibility, and led to further work. Developing and delivering new solutions that demonstrate what is possible has always been central to Social Finance's approach to change.

Even where Social Finance hasn't been directly involved, the success of the Essex SIB has clearly been a factor in motivating other local authorities to develop their own SIBs in this area. The Essex SIB and PFP have demonstrated that the timeframe to improving outcomes and reducing demand on children's services is relatively rapid, and this has doubtless been significant in engaging other local authorities.

Indeed, this has built interest in the intervention, even in the absence of a payment by results mechanism. For example, Southampton City Council has now decided to develop an edge of care service in-house, despite this requiring upfront funding by the council rather than defraying this cost to investors.

Organisations seeking to grow new ideas and approaches should explore how they can deliver concrete activities to demonstrate that a new approach is possible and build wider interest.

They should explicitly consider how programme delivery contributes to making the case for their approach more widely, for example by demonstrating the potential to manage demand / cost.

2. BUILD FOR SCALE

The PFP platform has allowed multiple local authorities to share the caseloads and costs involved in an intensive preventative intervention with a relatively small cohort. Within children's services, both service providers and local commissioners typically need to invest significant time and resource setting up each new service. The PFP experience shows that buying into a ready made platform can make this process significantly faster and easier for all parties.

The relative speed with which new boroughs have been able to join PFP shows that it is possible to develop structures which help reduce the due diligence and development costs of new projects – at least once they are up and running. However, it was still challenging to persuade local authorities with their own teams and systems for managing contract performance and risk to hand contracting over to a different borough.

Individual authorities have required adaptations or tailored solutions, such as their own referral pathways rather than a pooled referral system. Most still maintain some degree of dedicated performance management alongside the core post funded through PFP.

In working through these challenges, Social Finance, in helping to establish the Pan-London Care Impact Partnership, established a set of share documentation, including contracts, payment mechanisms, inter-authority agreements, service specifications, outcome measures, data sharing processes and so on. New authorities joining PFP now sign up to all of this "off the shelf", and this has been enormously helpful in allowing them to join the programme relatively quickly.

Social Finance has still had to devote time and effort to developing relationships with new boroughs and helping them to join the partnership, and the setup of PFP does not cover these costs. Even with a clear case for change and examples of successful practice, adoption of new approaches is not simple or straightforward, and requires active encouragement and support. Engaging new local authorities and commissioners has still required substantial effort by Social Finance, Bridges and Sutton Council – working through existing networks, as well as speaking at conferences and events, identifying and pursuing promising leads, meeting commissioners and members, and then conducting initial feasibility work and analysis to develop a business case.

Organisations seeking to grow new ideas and approaches should consider how they can build a platform or similar structure to enable faster scaling and adoption.

As well as the basic structure and contractual arrangements, scaling through a platform requires development of detailed process documentation, and organisations should invest in the necessary technical capacity for this. As part of this, it is important to clearly define non-negotiables for new joiners, as well as allowing for local adaptation.

Even with a platform structure to support scaling, recruitment of new joiners still requires significant effort, and organisations should seek ways to meet this cost separately from the costs of delivery.

Funders can support platform approaches to scaling by funding these platform development and recruitment costs, in addition to programme delivery.

3. INVEST IN DELIVERY AND IMPACT

Central to Social Finance's route to impact and wider scale for the PFP approach is to demonstrate that the interventions work – for children and families, and for social care departments. Unlike other programmes at an earlier stage of innovation, which seek to develop and test new models and ways of working, where it can be just as important to show that something doesn't work, PFP aims to grow proven interventions by showing that they can be effectively commissioned and delivered. So it's essential to ensure that PFP does work – not just in terms of the therapeutic interventions, but as a mechanism for getting these interventions to more children and young people.

This includes the specialist teams and clinical supervisors within the delivery partners, ensuring high quality delivery in line with the evidence base for FFT and MST.

It also includes active performance management, maintenance of robust data systems, and ongoing troubleshooting by the PFP team and the London Borough of Sutton, supported by Bridges. On top of this routine programme management role, Bridges has invested additional resource in delivery innovation, for example better clinical management, using data insights, and enhanced programme coordination that ultimately enabled working with more families and achieving better outcomes. This was in part the rationale for commissioning the programme as a Social Impact Bond.

Organisations pursuing a platform approach to scale need to ensure that any programme delivery is effective, investing in quality assurance, troubleshooting and other support for implementation, monitoring and reporting.

Funders should be prepared to fund the costs of this kind of central support.

4. INVEST IN RELATIONSHIPS

One of Social Finance's key roles was creating the conditions and commissioning structure that encrouaged and enabled the PFP team to build and broker relationships – with and between local authorities, the investor and providers. The analytical and procedural support has sat alongside developing relationships of mutual trust among these different actors. This is a major reason why design and engagement of the initial participating boroughs were so time consuming.

Similarly, individual buy-in has been at the heart of mobilisation and securing referrals, whether from senior leads, operational leads and budget holders, or frontline workers.

The spread of preventative children's services SIBs to local authorities with connections to PFP also demonstrates the importance of relationships for scaling. While some places, such as Southampton and Lancashire, seem to have come to the PFP model independently, most have links to organisations or people involved in PFP. For example, Bridges has been involved in a similar partnerships, such as in Suffolk and Norfolk with Family Psychology Mutual. Although Social Finance and PFP have not invested significantly in wider marketing or dissemination activities, the power of these kinds of informal networks and contacts is clear.

> Organisations seeking to grow new ideas and approaches need to invest in relationships at every level.
>
> They should also consider how they can use existing formal and informal networks and relationships to spread their message and approach more widely.

5. FIND FUNDING FOR SCALE AS WELL AS DELIVERY

The PFP experience highlights the importance of funding for scale in addition to funding for delivery. Local authorities are incentivised to join the platform – since the Lottery is also a co-commissioner this reduces the cost of outcomes payments. This time bound subsidy has been critical in making the internal business case to new boroughs to join PFP, and focusing decision making on this specific option (if we join PFP, part of the cost is met with Lottery funding) rather than the general approach.

However, even though the platform approach has reduced the time and cost of brining new boroughs into the partnership, it hasn't removed these costs altogether, and the PFP team still invested significant time in building and managing new relationships.

Social Finance has instead had to concentrate on new authorities who will pay for initial advice and scoping support. As we have seen, this route to scale is intrinsically slow and uncertain.

> Organisations seeking to grow new ideas and approaches can reduce the costs of scaling through a platform structure. However, they will still need separate funding for scaling activities.
>
> Funders can support platform approaches to scaling by funding these costs and subsidising the costs of adoption.

6. CONSIDER SPREADING YOUR APPROACH, RATHER THAN YOUR MODEL, AS A ROUTE TO IMPACT AT SCALE

The SIB model developed for PFP has enabled a number of local authorities to launch a new preventative service which they would otherwise have struggled to resource, and provided them with confidence that their money will only be spent on the outcomes that matter to them. As well as the upfront delivery costs being met by a private investor, the eventual outcomes payments are partially subsidised by Lottery grant funding.

However, the model is complex, and has required a great deal of time and effort to get off the ground. It is also very different from the existing mental models and approaches used by both commissioners and service managers, and this has posed ongoing challenges for delivery and scaling. The Southampton example shows that some commissioners are now sufficiently convinced of the value of the service to go ahead, even if this means bearing all the cost upfront. At the same time, in the absence of the Lottery as co-commissioner, the SIB model may be less attractive.

It could be argued that the successful building and scaling of the PFP model has made the case for the approach. Even without deliberate investment in communications, it's clear that PFP has attracted interest around the UK – apparently often by word of mouth.

This creates new opportunities to achieve impact at scale by promoting evidence-based services that prevent family breakdown in general, rather than by continuing to sell the PFP "model". As this report shows, the SIB model and the PFP platform have been critical for bringing new resources to bear and demonstrating that FFT and MST services can be deployed together effectively.

However, Social Finance is not committed to a particular financial or delivery model. Its aim has always been to improve support for children and families at risk of breakdown. Now that the context has shifted, partly thanks to the success of PFP, it may be time to consider new routes to achieving this, focused on communications and telling a new story about family breakdown.

Organisations seeking to grow new ideas and approaches should consider whether they want to scale a particular model or promote an approach – and develop a scaling approach accordingly.

If they want to spread an approach, a platform can be a helpful vehicle to show that it can be implemented effectively in multiple places / contexts. They should also consider how to maximise the demonstration value of this group of early adopters, for example by:

- *Supporting them to communicate and share their experiences*
- *Building a wider narrative / framing and investing in communications and "marketing" of the approach*

Funders can support scaling by funding the costs of this kind of dissemination activity.

Summary of lessons

The PFP experience suggests a number of lessons for VCSE organisations seeking to develop a vehicle to enable rapid scaling:

DELIVER PRACTICAL WORK TO DEMONSTRATE WHAT'S POSSIBLE AND POSITION YOURSELF TO DO MORE

- Explore how you can deliver concrete activities to demonstrate that a new approach is possible and build wider interest
- Consider how your programme delivery can contribute to making the case for your approach more widely, for example by demonstrating the potential to manage demand / cost

BUILD FOR SCALE

- Consider how you can build a platform or similar structure to enable faster scaling and adoption
- Invest in the technical capacity you need for detailed process documentation
- Clearly define non-negotiables for new joiners, as well as allowing for local adaptation
- Seek ways to meet the costs of recruiting new joiners separately from the costs of delivery

INVEST IN DELIVERY AND IMPACT

- Ensure that your programme delivery is effective, investing in quality assurance, troubleshooting and other support for implementation, monitoring and reporting

INVEST IN RELATIONSHIPS

- Invest in relationships at every level
- Consider how you can use existing formal and informal networks and relationships to spread your message and approach more widely

FIND FUNDING FOR SCALE AS WELL AS DELIVERY

- You can reduce the costs of scaling through a platform structure – however, you will still need separate funding for scaling activities

CONSIDER SPREADING YOUR APPROACH, RATHER THAN YOUR MODEL

- Consider whether you want to scale your organisation, a particular business or delivery model, or whether you want to promote an approach – and develop a scaling strategy to match
- A platform can be a helpful vehicle to show that an approach can be implemented effectively in multiple places / contexts
- Consider how to maximise the demonstration value of your initial work, for example by supporting early adopters to communicate and share their experiences
- Build a wider narrative / framing and invest in communications and "marketing" of the approach

Funders can support organisations to develop a vehicle for scale, by meeting the costs associated with developing a platform or similar scaling strategy, as well as direct delivery – for example:

- Platform and process development
- Recruitment of new joiners
- Quality assurance, troubleshooting and other forms of implementation support, monitoring and reporting
- Subsidising the costs involved in adopting the approach
- Dissemination, communications and marketing of the approach

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Social Finance is a not-for-profit organisation that partners with government, the social sector and impact investors to find better ways of tackling social problems and improving the lives of people in need.

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